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FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE
DEATH OF LOUIS XIV.

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ELIZABETH M. SEWELL

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LONDON
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1876

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PREFACE.

It has been my wish, in undertaking to write a Popular History of France, to give some of the picturesque details of the events narrated as well as the important general outline. I have hoped in this way to awaken a more vivid interest in the subject, and to give a more lifelike character to the actions of the various persons whose lives have influenced the fortunes of the great nation so intimately connected with ourselves and yet in many respects so widely differing from us.

The history of Michelet,¹ the most brilliant of French historians, has been my chief assistance throughout. There are, indeed, many portions of the present volume which can claim no greater merit than that of being a free translation from this distinguished French writer.

I am also largely indebted to Miss Freer for the anecdotes collected in her entertaining 'Lives of the French Sovereigns from Henry III. to the Regency of Anne of Austria.'

¹ I am unwillingly compelled to say that M. Michelet's history is quite unfit to be put into the hands of the young.
Miss Costello's 'Life of Anne of Brittany' and James's 'Life of Louis XIV.' have been consulted, and the Memoirs of Madame de Motteville, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, and the Duc de St. Simon have also been found most useful.

But for the ultimate authority as to the main facts I have depended upon the 'Student's History of France' and the histories of Cardinal de Bonnechose and M. Duruy.

Should the present volume be found to answer the purpose for which it was written, I propose (if life and health be granted me) to continue the History down to the present day.

Ash Cliff, Bonchurch:
April 18, 1876.
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HISTORY OF FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

GAUL UNDER THE EMPIRE.

B.C. 58—A.D. 406.

The history of France, like that of England, must be traced back to a time when the country itself was known by another name. But the characteristics of the people inhabiting it, although they have been modified by intermixture with other races, have been preserved in a great degree unchanged through centuries. The Gauls—a branch of the great Keltic race who, in prehistoric times, migrated from the east, and spread themselves over various parts of Europe—are, says a Roman writer, \(^1\) irritable, and delight madly in war. They are always ready to fight, and care little for what cause. . . . If made angry they march straight up to an enemy, and attack him in front without enquiry. They are very capable of instruction and have a turn for literature. Trusting in their size, strength, and numbers, they assemble in multitudes and are prepared at any moment to take up the cause of those whom they consider to be oppressed.

The description carries us in thought to the struggle for Italian independence, rendered successful by the aid of France. The soldiers who fought so bravely on the plains of Lombardy, at Solferino and Magenta, are the natural descendants of the people who poured down upon Rome in the days of the republic, and can never be said to have been conquered until Caesar crossed the Alps and made Gallia a recognised portion of the Roman dominions. Whilst in like manner, when the Roman writer tells us that the Gauls were greedy of glory, could make no long efforts, and were unbearable as victors and hopelessly dejected if vanquished, we seem to see the modern Frenchman

\(^1\) Stobæ.
Gaul under the Empire.

such as he has exhibited himself in our own days and almost before our own eyes.

But the Gauls possessed only a portion of the land which we now call France. Quite in the south the Greeks had very early established a colony, with Massilia, or Marseilles, for their head-quarters; and from thence they carried on a successful trade with the countries bordering the Mediterranean. Nice, Monaco, Antibes, were amongst the early names of Greek civilisation, and between them and the settlements of the Gauls there could have been little in common.

The Greeks were interested in commerce. The Gauls cared only for the maintenance of their rude liberty. Conflicts would be the natural result. As a further element of discord the Belgæ, another family, Keltic like the Gauls, but differing from them in many important particulars, had taken possession of the country to the north of the Seine, and partially filled the valley of the Loire. The exact geographical limits of these tribes cannot be distinctly traced, but their characteristics are clearly marked, more especially with regard to religion. Both professed Druidism, and obeyed the rule of the priests in civil affairs, and allowed the education of the young to be carried on by them; but only the Belge seem really to have cared for the doctrines taught by them. There was much of truth mixed up with this degraded worship. The belief in an infinite but unknown God, a recognition of Eternity, a hope of immortality, a dread of future retribution, were all to be found in it; and when the Gauls revered the mistletoe, it is said that they saw in it the type of life in death—the flower blooming in winter and the green branches twining around the sacred but bare and wintry oak.

But the great power of the Druids lay in fear, the terror of magic arts and human sacrifices and mysterious rites practised in dark groves and hidden solitudes. There was no sense of union between them and the people.

In many parts of the south of Gaul they were unable to maintain their authority; and when the inhabitants of the provinces to the north-east quarrelled among themselves, and applied to their neighbours to help them in their wars, it was not to the Druids that they turned, but to the Suevi—strangers living beyond the Rhine, and knowing nothing of Druidism, who poured into Gaul as the Saxons in after years poured into Britain, and ravaging the country, compelled the terrified people to look to another quarter for aid.

The Romans were then the protectors as well as the conquerors of the world, and to them both the invaders and the defenders of

1 Michelet speaks of these tribes as Kymri. They may be traced amongst the tribes of ancient Britain.
Cæsar's Invasion—The Vercingetorix.

Gaul under the Empire.

Gaul appealed for support. Little mattered it to the haughty lords of Italy which side they espoused, still less was it of consequence to the ambitious general, who looked upon the appeal merely as the means by which he might obtain the prize of glory. Julius Cæsar was then craving for fame, and though slight in figure, pale, and delicate, was endued with inexhaustible energy. The countries beyond the Alps were unexplored, and at the head of his legions, marching through rain and storm, swimming rivers, riding by the side of the litters in which his secretaries were carried, dictating four or even six letters at a time, writing an account of his campaign for future generations, he crossed the Alps, B.C. 58, entered Switzerland, then called Helvetia, and made his way into the north of Gaul, for the purpose of opposing the Suevi. In former years the leader of the Suevi had been honoured with the title of the ally of Rome. He marvelled now that he should be thus attacked. ‘This is my Gaul,’ such was the message which he sent to Cæsar; ‘you have yours. Leave me to myself. Know you not what kind of people we are? For fourteen years we have never slept under the shelter of a roof.’ Cæsar mocked at the alarm which these bold words caused his soldiers. ‘You may abandon me,’ he said, ‘but still I shall pursue my object. Give me but the tenth legion and I shall be satisfied. The troops were roused by the scoff. The Suevi were defeated, and the greater part destroyed, in a fierce battle on the banks of the Rhine, whilst almost all who escaped perished in the river.

The barbarians were followed into their own land, and in ten days Cæsar threw a bridge across the Rhine, not far from the present city of Cologne, and having vainly sought for his enemies amongst the forests beyond, repassed the Rhine, traversed Gaul, and prepared to cross the sea to Britain, the sacred island of the Druids.

The Druidical Gauls never forgave this intrusion. They broke out in insurrection; the feeling of enmity spread, and tribes hostile to each other joined in opposing the haughty conqueror on his return to Gaul. The Vercingetorix, or general-in-chief of the united army of the Gauls, was a young man of the tribe of the Arvernes, whose father, the most powerful of all the barbarians of his day, had been burnt alive because he had aspired to be king. In the public assemblies at the religious festivals the Vercingetorix never failed to animate his countrymen against the Romans. But Cæsar was too powerful, and the Gauls were defeated and massacred. To weaken the power of their enemies they burnt their own towns; but the contest was hopeless. The Vercingetorix alone preserved his noble spirit; to save his people he resolved to give himself up as the sole author of the war. Arrayed in his richest armour and mounted on his war-horse, he entered the Roman camp, and riding a circle round the throne on which Cæsar sat in judgment, he threw his spear, his
Gaul under the Empire.

javelin, and his helmet at the feet of the conqueror, and yielded himself a prisoner without uttering a word. Cæsar had no pity. The young Gaul was loaded with chains and carried to Rome, where he languished for six years in prison and fetters, and then, after being dragged forth from his cell to adorn the triumphal chariot of his conqueror, died by the hand of the executioner, B.C. 46.

From the period of the submission of the Vercingetorix the war may be said to have been over, and Cæsar no longer treated the conquered Gauls with severity; even the tribute which he exacted was disguised under the honourable name of military pay. The best warriors were engaged at a high price to form a legion, the members of which bore a lark as the crest on their helmets, and were thence called Alaudae. Under this national emblem of morning watchfulness and gaiety they crossed the Alps under Cæsar’s banner, singing their joyous songs, and encountered and defeated the solemn and silent legions of Pompey at the battle of Pharsalia. As a consolation for the loss of liberty the Gauls retained the sword which Cæsar had lost in the last war. It was suspended in a temple, from which the Roman soldiers would fain have torn it; but when they appealed to their general for permission, Cæsar answered with a smile, ‘Leave it; it is consecrated.’

The conqueror appreciated the spirit of the people whom it had cost him so much to subdue; he admitted Gauls to a seat in the senate, and would willingly have made them one with the Roman people; but his career was cut short, and his successor, Augustus, instead of bringing Gaul into Rome, desired rather to establish Rome in the midst of Gaul. He expelled the Gallic members from the Roman senate, placed military colonies in many of the principal cities of the province, and established a central government for the administration of justice at Lyons.

Tiberius followed the example of Augustus, but his successors, for the most part, adopted a different system. Caligula kept some of the most distinguished Gauls near him. Claudius, who was himself born at Lyons, and always showed sympathy for the people amongst whom his infancy had been passed, formally restored to them the privilege of becoming members of the Roman senate, and the discourse which he pronounced on that occasion is still preserved at Lyons, engraved upon tablets of bronze. Under him the bloody worship of the Druids was proscribed, and the people who clung to the old religion were driven to take refuge in Britain.

The contests which generally preceded and accompanied the election of a new emperor were almost always carried on in the distant provinces, especially in Gaul, and thus the influence of the barbarians, as it seems natural to call them, was particularly felt in military and political affairs; but the genius of the people exhibited
DECAY OF THE EMPIRE.

Gaul under the Empire.

itself also in a mere permanent form. The little Greek colony at Mars-elles was a school of art and civilisation for the adjoining country, and the Gauls of the south, by nature gifted and enthusiastic, did not fail to profit by such teaching. They became clever actors, mimics, scientific physicians; they distinguished themselves in literature, and were so remarkable for eloquence that the Romans took Gauls for their masters even in their own language. In art there was evidently the same tendency to exaggeration which is discoverable in the modern French schools of painting. Zenodorus, a Gallic sculptor in the reign of Nero, erected in a town of the Arvernes a colossal statue of Mercury. Nero, struck with admiration of its prodigious size, summoned the sculptor to Rome, and commanded him to raise at the foot of the Capitol a statue of the emperor himself 120 feet in length, and which might be seen from the Alban Mount.

In the first ages of the empire Gauls assisted to make emperors; but when decay showed itself in the central authority, the object of the province was to form itself into an independent state. The signs of this decay showed themselves soon after the establishment of the imperial power, yet they cannot justly be attributed to the misgovernment of the emperors. The evils which were undermining the empire were not political, but social. They were chiefly the result of slavery. Slavery existed in Gaul before its conquest by Rome, but it increased during the wars which attended the establishment of the Roman power, for it was based upon the right of the victor over the vanquished. In the countries under the dominion of the empire the land was for the most part divided amongst large proprietors, and was cultivated by the assistance of slaves, who were treated with great cruelty. Taken, as many were, from civilised nations, they were compelled to exert, for the profit of their lords, the arts in which they excelled. There are few things more touching and deplorable than the proofs which exist of the little estimation in which these unhappy caterers for their masters' pleasures were regarded. At Antibes the following inscription has been discovered: 'To the manes of the child Septentrio, aged twelve years, who appeared two days at the theatre of Antibes, danced and pleased.' No regret! no mention of parents or friends! the slave had no family. One might even marvel that a monument should have been erected to him, except that the Romans did often erect them even to their broken toys, as Nero, we are told, raised a memorial to the manes of a vase of crystal. When this more refined race of slaves had melted away, as skilled artisans became more and more rare, the products of their labour were sold at a fabulous price, whilst the ordinary necessaries of life were so dear as to be almost unattainable by the poor. In the reign of the em-
MISERY OF THE PEOPLE—BAGAUES—CONSTANTINE.

Gaul under the Empire.

peror Diocletian a pound of beef cost what would now be half-a-
crown, a pound of pork about 8s. 6d., a goose about 1l. 18s., a
hundred of oysters 18s., and a fowl 1l's. 6d.; whilst the very
roughest kind of boot or shoe could not be purchased for less than
18s. As a natural consequence of the expense of living, the
soldiers were constantly crying out for an increase of pay, and the
country people, who were taxed to support the soldiers, sank under
the burdens imposed upon them.

The emperors were at last obliged to dress and feed the soldiers,
but they could not in like manner take charge of the tillers of
the ground, and the misery of the unfortunate people almost surpasses
description. The country swarmed with the public officers who
collected the government revenues. The fields were measured, the
trees counted, the cattle enumerated, the men registered. Scourging
and torture compelled everyone to reveal precisely the extent of his
property, so that the due payment might be exacted. The faithful
slave was called upon to depose against his master, the wife against
her husband, the son against his father; and, to complete the general
wretchedness, barbarous tribes from the neighbouring countries at
this time poured into the land, ravaging and spoiling the scanty
remains of property and food which had been left by the rigid
tax-gatherer. The peasants in Gaul at length rose in insurrection. Under
the name of Bagaues they armed themselves, burnt several towns, and
devastated the country. Maximian, who was then emperor, crushed
the rebellion, but his victory could not restore energy to the con-
quered, for the empire in its decay only brought destruction upon
all the nations it subdued.

A dawn of hope appeared, indeed, when Constantine, the first
Christian emperor, ascended the throne, A.D. 323. In the triumph
of the Cross of a merciful Saviour the people might have hoped to
see the end of their sufferings. But though Constantine would fain
have governed justly, the evils which he had to combat were too
deeply rooted to be eradicated even by the spread of Christianity.
Laws were made to protect the peasants, but they were ineffective.
If the labourer was spared, the proprietor of the land declared him-
self unable to pay the taxes, and in desperation the rulers of the
empire adopted a system which put the finishing-stroke to the
wretchedness of their subjects. The revenue collectors were com-
pelled by law to accept their office, and made answerable for the sums
which it was supposed they ought to raise. Empty titles of honour
were conferred upon them, but they were never permitted to escape
the charge, which brought with it inevitable ruin. These offices were
made hereditary, and those who bore them were compelled to marry,
so that they might be handed down from father to son. The burden
became at last so great that all classes—owners of property, public
EFFECTS OF ROMAN CONQUEST.

Gaul under the Empire.

officers, cultivators of the soil alike—sank down in utter hopelessness. The land was left to become desert, and this not only in Gaul but in all the provinces of the empire. The emperors strove to rouse their subjects by the prospect of greater liberty of action. Gratian offered them the privilege of meeting in public assemblies to discuss and arrange their own affairs. Honorius not only proclaimed these meetings in Gaul, but even threatened with punishment those who refused to take part in them. But it was all useless. The emperor was powerless, and the people knew it, and they turned their eyes to another quarter for help. A miserable help indeed it was, but it seemed to them better than the living death under which they were groaning. They allied themselves with the barbarous German tribes who were their neighbours, and the authority of the emperor was by degrees entirely lost.

It must not be supposed that the influence which had been so long exercised left no traces behind it. On the contrary, its effects were of the very greatest importance. Before the Roman conquest the Gauls were a scattered people living in villages. The Romans introduced cities, and with cities civilisation. They built theatres, circuses, and aqueducts, the enormous ruins of which are to be seen at the present day. They encouraged commerce, and even the tribute exacted by them worked in one sense for the good of the people. It was paid not only in gold and silver and iron, but in linen, and this circumstance was an encouragement to the employment of women in spinning; and women also wove woollen cloth for mantles—the wool being chiefly brought from Britain, with which country an extensive trade was carried on. In the south of Gaul the Romans encouraged the cultivation of the vine, which had previously been grown only on the southern coasts of Italy, and these and other improvements at first reconciled the people in a great degree to the foreign yoke. Politically also the Romans had impressed certain inerasable ideas upon the Gauls. They had compelled them to submit to a strong central government instead of the dominion of petty chiefs. This change in their rulers influenced their habits and thoughts, and left traces which are felt even at the present day. But more than this, they had aided in introducing and firmly establishing the government of the Christian church. The same divisions which were used for the purposes of civil government were used for the order and regulation of the church. The people were required to obey their ecclesiastical as well as their civil rulers, and when the Roman government was at an end, and there were no longer Proconsuls or Proetors as governors, there were still Ptiarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops. In the general disorder of the period the church was, in fact, the only power in which was to be found anything approaching to order.
CHRISTIANITY—BARBARIAN INVASIONS.

Clovis.

Yet Christianity spread itself but slowly amongst the Gauls. It was introduced into the country in the middle of the second century by some missionaries from the church of Smyrna, who were sent by St. Polycarp, the disciple of the apostle St. John, to preach the Gospel beyond the Alps. These missionaries established themselves at Lyons under Pothisus, their bishop, about the year 160.

The savage pleasure of the Romans in the combats of the gladiators excited the indignation of the Christians. They opposed them by word and by example, and in consequence the whole of the pagan society of the great city were their enemies. An edict against Christianity issued by the emperor Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 171, gave an opportunity for the full exhibition of this feeling, and the persecution which followed the edict has rendered the church of Lyons memorable throughout all ages. Pothisus, the bishop, who was then ninety years of age, was stoned by the people, and forty-seven martyrs perished with him, being torn by wild beasts or dying by the hand of the executioner. Ireneus succeeded Pothisus as bishop of Lyons, and again gathered the scattered members of the church together, and under various alternations of prosperity and adversity the little body of Christians in the southeast of Gaul lived on till about the middle of the third century, when seven bishops were sent forth by the bishop of Rome to attempt the conversion of the rest of the country. Among the most celebrated of these missionary bishops was St. Denis, who stationed himself on the banks of the Seine, in a town then called Lutetia, but since known as the world-famous city of Paris. He was beheaded near the city, on the Hill of Mars (Montmartre), and was buried in the plain which still bears his name. The work thus begun was carried out more completely in the fourth century by Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, and St. Martin, bishop of Tours; the former noted for his defence of the true faith, and the latter remarkable for his zeal and charity; and at length, as the emperors themselves professed Christianity, the religion was gradually but firmly established in the country.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS TO THE DEATH OF CLOVIS.

A.D. 406–511.

The chief divisions of the nations who destroyed the Roman empire were three in number—the Teutons, or Germans; the Goths, who were originally settled in Scandinavia; and the Tartars. These
again were subdivided into various tribes. We hear of the Germans as Saxons, Allemans, Suevi, Vandals, Franks, &c.; of the Goths as Ostrogoths and Visigoths; whilst of the Tartars the chief tribe was that of the Huns.

But the Franks cannot, strictly speaking, be called a tribe; they were rather a confederation of the Germans, who had settled themselves between the river Weser and the Rhine, and who, finding themselves harassed by their northern neighbours, united in self-defence, and took the common title of Frank, a name which in their language signified fierce or warlike. Long before the final destruction of the empire these various tribes had begun their invasion, but it was not at first with the idea of destruction; they were driven southward in consequence of incursions made upon themselves from the north, and when they first entered the Roman territories their wish was to live under the protection of the Roman laws. The chiefs ardently coveted the Roman titles, and made it their great ambition to unite themselves by marriage with the imperial family. By degrees they gained a firm footing in the country, and many of them forming what were called military colonies, were allowed to keep possession of a portion of land on condition of defending the frontier of the empire against other invaders. The Romans gave to two of the Frank tribes the name Salic or Salian, apparently from the country in which they had first settled, on the right bank of the Yssel, or, as it was called in Latin, the Isala. Another branch of the Franks, known as the Ripuarian tribe, occupied the shores of the Rhine. It was a law amongst the Salian Franks, as well as among various other German tribes, that no woman should inherit the land, which was considered the joint property of the tribe, and this law, known as the Salic law, and handed down to later generations, was the origin of the French law against female sovereignty.

About the year 406 the Franks were again in commotion, for the empire was crumbling to pieces; various races were precipitating themselves upon it, fighting with the Romans, fighting with each other, and every province was a scene of desolation. The history of this period is too complicated to allow of any details being given. It will be sufficient to mention the chief tribes who were connected with Gaul, and consequently with the establishment of the future kingdom of France. Amongst these one of the most important was the tribe of the Burgundians, who established themselves between Mayence and Strasbourg. They were Vandals by origin and heretical in faith, having received the Christian religion from the Arians, who denied the divinity of Christ; the Franks were of the orthodox faith, and this distinction was the cause of much enmity between the two races. The Visigoths were another important race, who were also Arians. They had established themselves in the south of Gaul,
and passing the Pyrenees, had succeeded in driving the Vandals from Spain. Armorica, the country between the Somme and the Loire, remained for the most part Roman, whilst Brittany became a refuge for the exiles from the island of Britain, who were driven from their homes by the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons.

To add to the confusion, the Huns, a wild Scythian race, left the borders of the Black Sea, and, headed by Attila, known by the epithet of the Scourge of God, rushed over Europe. Entering Gaul, they were only stopped by the united efforts of the Romans and Visigoths, who defeated them near Chalons-sur-Marne and forced them to retire, A.D. 457.

It seems strange, and indeed almost incredible, that the final triumph of the Franks in Gaul should have been due to their adherence to the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity; yet there seems little doubt that such was the case. In the confusion which then reigned in the country the bishops alone retained definite authority. They were the representatives of the Roman power, and looked to the bishop of Rome as their head; and they were absolutely opposed to the heretical doctrine held by the Visigoths and Burgundians. Their feelings were shared by the people, and to this fact may be attributed the ultimate success of Clovis, chief of the Salian Franks, and generally considered the founder of the French monarchy.

The names of two other chiefs, Pharamond and Mérovée, have indeed been handed down as predecessors of Clovis; they were, however, only kings of the Frank tribes. The existence of Pharamond is uncertain, but the first line of French kings has received the name of Merovingian from Mérovée, or Merwig, who was the grandfather of Clovis.

It was in the year 496, when the last remnant of the Western Empire, under Romulus Augustulus, had been overthrown by Odoacer, chief of the Heruli, that Clovis, a bold heathen leader of the Salian Franks, placed himself at the head of a small band of warriors on the left bank of the Rhine, to oppose the passage of a vast body of Alamans, who threatened to cross the river. On such occasions the bravest warrior was elected to be the head of the joint tribes, and Clovis had undoubtedly this claim to distinction, for he had already successfully opposed a Roman general. He was also a man of importance from his personal connection with the Burgundian chief, whose daughter, Clotilda, he had married. Clotilda belonged to a tribe professing Arianism, but she had embraced the orthodox faith; and from her Clovis, though a pagan, must have imbued some sense of the superiority of the Christian religion.

On the occasion of his battle with the Alamans, finding himself in danger of defeat, he made a vow that if he might but obtain the
victory he would worship the God of Clotildas, and when at last he
triumphed he kept his oath, and was baptised at Rheims by
St. Remi, bishop of that city. 'Bow thy head,' said the bishop, as
the fierce chief knelt before him; 'burn that which thou hast
hitherto adored, and adore that which thou hast hitherto burnt;' and
in outward act the command was obeyed, but the conversion so
ignorantly effected did little to humanise the new Christian chief,
and neither he nor the three thousand warriors who followed his
example in professing to be converted to the religion of peace gave
proof by their subsequent conduct that they understood its real
teaching.

Once baptised, the bishops of Gaul gave Clovis their unhesitating
support. He had already established his authority at Soissons, and
now all the towns of the north-west, from the river Loire to the pro-
vince possessed by the emigrant Bretons, opened their gates to him
and his soldiers. The bishops established in the Burgundian territory
also entreated him to deliver them from their Arian lords, and Clovis
without hesitation declared war against the reigning Burgundian
king, who had been the murderer of Clotilda's father, and compelled
him to become his tributary and to embrace the Catholic faith.

Zeal for the orthodox creed was his excuse for new conquests.
Six years afterwards he prepared to attack the Arian Visigoths in
the south, who possessed the country between the Rhone, the Loire,
and the Pyrenees, having Bordeaux for their capital. Assembling
his warriors, he said to them, 'It displeases me that these Arians
should claim dominion in any part of Gaul. Let us go forth against
them. With God's help we shall conquer them.'

Confident in his strength, and trusting that he was espe-
cially favoured by God on account of his zeal for the true faith,
he advanced to Tours, whilst Alaric II., the Visigothic king, retired,
to await the aid of his father-in-law, the great Theodoric, king of the
Ostrogoths in Italy.

In the church at Tours dedicated to St. Martin the psalms were
chanted day and night without ceasing. Clovis sent some of
his soldiers thither, telling them to remark the precise words which
the priests might be uttering at the moment they entered the sacred
building. The eighteenth psalm had been begun, and the priests
were repeating the fortieth and forty-first verses: 'Thou hast also
given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that
hate me. They cried, but there was none to save them; even unto
the Lord, but He answered them not.' Clovis accepted these words
as a sign sent from Heaven to himself that his projects would be
successful, and continued on his way assured of victory.

The Visigoths had advanced to the neighbourhood of Poitiers
to meet the Franks. They were defeated; the king of the Visigoths
was killed, and Clovis pursued his way southward to the sunny plains of Languedoc. He might even have carried his conquests over the Pyrenees into Spain, but he was stopped by the Ostrogoth Theodoric, who had arrived with his army from Italy too late indeed to save the life of his son-in-law, but not too late to guard his daughter and her infant son, and to protect Provence and Spain from invasion.

After a battle gained by Theodoric peace was concluded. Clovis took possession of Aquitaine. Theodoric kept for himself the province of Arles, and the infant king of the Visigoths was allowed to retain, besides his dominions in Spain, a small territory of which Narbonne was the capital. Clovis next turned his arms against Armorica and compelled the great towns to pay him tribute; but the Bretons in the little corner of land in which they had taken refuge resisted him and kept their independence, and we shall find that in after times the lords of Brittany were almost the rivals of the kings of France.

The Emperor of the East, Anastasius, had not so entirely relinquished his claim upon the west as to look with indifference upon these contests. Unable to contend against Clovis, he thought it best to flatter him by offering him the Roman dignity of consul; and Clovis, after his campaign in Brittany, went to Tours, publicly to receive the title. Mounted on horseback, a diadem on his head, and the chlamys, or Roman scarf, over his shoulders, he made his solemn entry into the city, and repairing to the cathedral returned thanks to Heaven for his victories, and from that day the titles of Consul and Augustus belonged to him.

It is a strange contrast which meets us, when we turn from Clovis, humbly ascribing his triumphs to God, to Clovis carrying on his warlike career, for the means by which he enlarged his dominions form a history of mingled fraud and cruelty as repulsive as it is strange. The north of Gaul became the scene of his conquests after his acceptance of the title of Consul. Sigibert the Lame, king of Cologne, was old and infirm. Clovis sent a secret message to his son Cloderic: 'Thy father is old; he halts with his weak foot. Should he die thou shalt have his kingdom and my friendship.' Cloderic took the hint and caused his father to be murdered. Clovis sent him another message: 'I thank thee for thy goodwill; show thy treasures to my envoys, and thou shalt have full possession of all.' Cloderic obeyed. He showed the messengers a chest, saying, 'In this coffer my father piled up his gold pieces.' 'Plunge thy hand into its very depth,' said the envoys, 'that thou mayest discover all it contains.' Cloderic bent forward, and one of the envoys standing behind him lifted up his great hatchet and crushed his skull.
CLOVIS AND THE BISHOPS.

When tidings of the crime reached Clovis he went to Cologne and assembled the people. 'I am in no way an accomplice in these actions,' he said. 'These princes are my relations. I am forbidden to shed their blood. But, since such deeds have been committed, I offer you my advice. Take it as it shall please you, and place yourselves under my protection.' The people shouted and clashed their bucklers in concert, and, according to their custom, raised Clovis upon them, and thus he became, by free election, their king. So it was in other cases; by treachery and cruelty all who opposed him—even his nearest relatives—were removed out of his path. It seemed at last that none were left to be his enemies or his rivals, and he one day exclaimed in an assembly of the people, 'Alas, miserable that I am! even as a traveller among a strange nation! I have no relatives to succour me, if by chance adversity should befall me.' 'He said this,' observes Gregory of Tours, the old church chronicler, who reports the anecdote, 'not because he regretted the loss of his relations, but because he wished to find out if there were any still remaining, in order that he might kill them.'

Gregory excuses Clovis for these acts of extermination because the petty princes, his relations, were heathens. 'He was successful in all things,' is his comment upon the life of the Frank king, 'because his heart was right before God.'

But there were some Christian bishops who ventured to lift up their voices against him. After a series of murders Clovis came to Tournay, the chief city of the diocese of the saintly bishop Eleutherius. He repaired to the church to pray. The bishop stood on the threshold, awaiting him. 'O king!' he exclaimed, as Clovis drew near, 'I know wherefore thou art come to me.' Clovis protested that he had nothing to say. 'Speak not so,' continued Eleutherius; 'thou hast sinned, and thou dost not dare own it.' Touched by these words, the monarch confessed that he felt himself guilty, and, bursting into tears, entreated the bishop to implore of God the pardon of his sins.

For his devotion to the external interests of the church, the Pope bestowed upon Clovis the title of the Eldest Son of the Church, which has been transmitted to his successors; but professed submission did not imply absolute submission. Clovis gave, indeed, immense donations of land to the clergy; he allowed certain privileged places to be considered as sanctuaries to which criminals might flee for safety; he exempted the property of the church from taxation, and recognised the right claimed by the clergy to be judged only by their ecclesiastical superiors. But, in return for these important privileges, it was decided in a council of bishops, convoked at Orleans, that no freeman should receive sacred orders without the permission of the king, nor any slave without the consent of his
master. The protection offered to criminals by the sanctuaries was limited, and bishops were not allowed to excommunicate the person who pleaded against them. These were no doubt wise precautions, for the peculiar privileges bestowed upon the clergy were certainly in some respects dangerous; but in the uncivilised state of society the church was the only power which could give safety and protection to the weak and the oppressed. The lands bestowed by Clovis upon the churches were so much taken from violence and brutality; and although individual bishops and priests may have failed in their duty, there can be no question that upon the whole their power was exercised for the benefit of their suffering fellow-creatures.

The work of Clovis was accomplished when, by the decrees of the Council of Orleans, he had settled the relations between the church and the state. In the same year, A.D. 511, after dividing his dominions amongst his four sons, he died, at the age of forty-five, at Paris, where for some time he had resided. He was buried in the church founded by himself and Clotilda, which afterwards became the abbey church of St. Genevieve.

CHAPTER III

SUCCESSORS OF CLOVIS.

A.D. 511-752.

With the conquests of Clovis ended the barbarian invasions which had for so many years desolated Gaul and destroyed the civilisation introduced by the Romans. When houses were burnt and bridges broken down, commerce was impossible; the people lived apart, and the spirit of industry and the genius of invention were crushed. In the towns alone could anything like settled habits of life be found. Whilst the Romans possessed the supreme power, we hear of governors of provinces, consuls, and presidents, who administered justice both in cities and villages. But in the sixth century, when the barbarian chiefs had the ascendancy, military chiefs living within the walls of the town were the only rulers, and not understanding civil government, their exactions pressed heavily upon the people, and misery and conflict were the result. The destruction of the petty Frankish kings by Clovis, though accomplished by evil means, was therefore a great boon to the country at large, since it placed the supreme authority in the hands of one man, and for a time put an end to the quarrels and the ambition of many. But
Gaul, or, as it was thenceforth called, France (the land of the Franks), was not, it must be remembered, the France of the present. Burgundy to the north-west, Brittany to the west, were powerful independent states. As Egbert, the first king of the Saxons, ruled only a portion of Britain, so Clovis and his immediate successors ruled only a portion of France.

Amongst the Franks the supreme authority was not hereditary. At the death of a king it was usual for the people to assemble for the purpose of choosing his successor, but the election was generally made from one family, and thus members of the Merovingian family had for many years been the chiefs of the Salian Franks. The ceremony by which Clovis was recognised as head of the Franks of Cologne was common to the whole race. The chosen warrior was lifted up upon the bucklers of the soldiers, and with loud acclamations publicly accepted as king. His duty was to head his troops in their warlike expeditions, and he received the largest portion of their booty and of their conquests, often consisting of towns with the portions of territory attached to them. These cities and lands constituted the domain royal, which was inherited by the king’s sons, who, being thus richer than their companions, were the more likely to obtain their votes for the succession to the throne. Thus it was that the supreme authority was transferred from father to son in the race of Clovis, that which was at first only custom becoming by degrees the established law. The authority of the kings was entirely military; the power of making laws belonged to the whole nation, who usually assembled for this purpose in the month of March or of May. These meetings were in consequence known as the champ de mars or champ de mai (field of March or May). At first they were held every year, but the people by degrees grew negligent; the meetings were no longer regularly convoked, and the legislative authority passed into the hands of the sovereign, his officers, and the bishops. The church was then the only power capable of contending with the fierce passions of the conquering races. The pomp of its ceremonies seized upon their imagination, and the fact that the clergy were upheld by an authority which had its centre in Rome invested them with somewhat of the awe that in former days had gathered round the imperial government. The clergy were, moreover, for the most part, men of real worth, and made earnest endeavours to touch the consciences of king and people; though the barbarians were still so ignorant of the true nature of religious influence that they flattered themselves they might disarm the anger of God against sin by the gifts with which they liberally enriched the church, to which they professed to submit.

After the conquest of Gaul by the Franks the nation may be considered to be divided into three classes: 1. The possessors either
of allodial or free lands, which could not be transmitted to females, or of fiefs which were held upon the condition of military service. 2. The colonists, who cultivated the soil, paying a certain rent. 3. The serfs, who were either entirely dependent on some master, or were bought and sold with the land.

The offices of duke or count held by the great nobles were not at first capable of being inherited by their children; but after a time the bravest warriors succeeded in making both their estates and titles hereditary, and this paved the way for the contests between the sovereign and his powerful vassals which made France the scene of perpetual violence.

But the first conflicts after the death of Clovis were amongst his sons, the joint sovereigns. Thierry lived at Metz, the capital of eastern France; Clotaire at Soissons, Childerbert at Paris, and Chlodomir at Orleans. The last three divided amongst themselves the conquered portion of Aquitaine.

Thierry and Clotaire showed their power at first by the conquest of some of the German tribes beyond the Rhine, but a war based upon personal enmity was soon entered upon.

Sigismund, king of Burgundy, had murdered the father of Clotilda, the wife of Clovis, and now the queen called upon her fierce sons to take vengeance.

Chlodomir and Clotaire entered Burgundy and took Sigismund prisoner. Into a deep well they flung him, his wife, and his children, and covering the opening with stones, left them all to perish. A terrible revenge overtook Chlodomir. The brother of the dead Sigismund met him in battle, and he fell, pierced with a hundred wounds, A.D. 523. He left three young children, who were placed under the care of their grandmother Clotilda. Childerbert, fearing that she would use her influence to secure to the little ones a share in their father's kingdom, sent a secret message to Clotaire: 'Our mother guards the children of our brother. She desires to give them the kingdom. Come thou speedily to Paris. United in counsel, we will determine what must be done. Either must their hair be cut, so that they may lose the distinction which belongs to the blood royal, or they must be killed. We will divide the kingdom.' Clotaire came to Paris. The rumour spread among the people that the young children of Chlodomir were to be raised to the throne. It was an artifice of the two brothers, but Clotilda, who was then in Paris, believed it. When the message came from the two kings: 'Send us the children, that they may be raised to the royal dignity,' she called two of the little ones to her, one ten, the other seven years of age, and making them eat and drink she sent them away, saying, 'My son Chlodomir will not be lost to me if you, his children, inherit his kingdom.'
Then Childebert and Clotaire sent a second messenger to the queen. He took with him scissors and a naked sword, and thus addressed Clotilda: 'Thy sons, our lords, O glorious queen, desire to know thy will. Shall the hair of the children be cut off, or shall they be strangled?' 'If they may not be raised to the throne,' exclaimed the terrified queen, 'better would it be for them to die than be shaven.' And the messenger returned to the two kings, saying, 'Let your project be carried out; the queen approves.' Then Clotaire, seizing the eldest of the children, plunged his knife into his body. One of the little brothers cast himself at the feet of Childebert and clasped his knees. Childebert's heart was softened. He turned to Clotaire. 'Grant me the child's life,' he said; 'I will give thee what thou wilt for his ransom.' But Clotaire burst forth in reproaches: 'Thou shalt die in the child's place. It was thou who didst urge me to the deed, and now thou wouldst draw back.' Childebert released himself from the hands of the boy, who was instantly killed by Clotaire. He then mounted his horse, and rode with his brother into the city, both of them careless and proud as if no crime was upon their consciences.

Clotilda ordered the two little bodies to be laid upon one bier, and they were carried with solemn chants and great mourning to the church of St. Peter, where they were buried side by side. Clodoald, the youngest child of Chlodomir, escaped the fury of his uncles, being carried away by some of his attendants, who rushed into the room and seized him from them. He became a monk, and after his death was canonised. His name, since altered into St. Cloud, was given to a monastery which he founded near Paris, and was afterwards retained as that of the summer palace inhabited by the French sovereigns.

Thierry I, the eldest of the sons of Clovis, took the least part in the family cruelties. He tempted his soldiers indeed to conquer the southern province of Auvergne by the promise of plunder, but this was merely according to the warlike customs of his time.

Clotaire survived his brothers, and became ultimately king of the whole country. The portion which had belonged to his brother Thierry, and which was called the kingdom of Austrasia, was inherited by Theodebert, the son of Thierry, and passed from him to his son Theodebald, but when Theodebald died without children, Clotaire immediately took possession of the kingdom and united it to his own. A horrible tragedy marked the latter years of his reign. His son rebelled against him, and being taken prisoner, was condemned by his father to be burnt alive, together with his wife and daughters. The sentence was carried out, but deep remorse after

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1 This palace was destroyed during the Franco-German war in 1871.
this seized upon the unnatural and cruel Clotaire, and precisely a
year afterwards he died exclaiming, 'Who is the great King
of Heaven, who thus kills the great kings of the earth?'

A fresh partition and renewed war and cruelties followed the
death of Clotaire. It would be useless as well as painful to attempt
to follow the history minutely; it is but a record of crime. Clotaire
left four sons, and each took a portion of his dominions, but the
division which was now most permanently established was that of
the two kingdoms of Austrasia and Neustria.

Austrasia, or Oster-rike, the kingdom of the eastern Franks, lay
between the river Meuse and the Rhine. Its exact limits are
uncertain. In the present day we should look upon it as a German
kingdom; and the inhabitants were for the most part simply Franks,
a Teuton race with little or no admixture of the Romanised Gauls.
The Austrasian chiefs held large landed property, and were from the
beginning nearly as powerful as the sovereign, and by degrees the
whole government of the country fell into their hands.

Neustria, or Ne-oster-rike, the kingdom of the western Franks,
which lay between the Meuse and the ocean, was, on the contrary,
inhabited by a more mixed race, but the people were chiefly Romanised
Gauls. The kings of Neustria were comparatively powerful. They kept
their chiefs in subjection, and thus the spirit of the two countries
became by degrees wholly opposed. Austrasia, aristocratic in its
government, and Neustria, monarchical, were naturally rivals; and
the history of France for nearly a century is really a history of the
struggle between these two principles, though carried on by rival
princes.

The great division of the kingdom of Clotaire took place in the
year 567. At that time Caribert, the youngest of his sons, was
dead, and having left no male heirs, his dominions were, as was usual
in such cases, divided amongst his brothers—one part being taken by
Sigebert as king of Austrasia, another by Chilperic as king of
Neustria, and the third by Gontran as king of Burgundy. The three
brothers made a singular agreement with regard to the town of Paris,
each of the kings pledging himself not to enter it without the con-
sent of the other two. From this time the chief events of the period
are connected with the rivalry of Sigebert and Chilperic, or rather of
their queens, Brunehaut and Fredegonda.

Brunehaut, the wife of Sigebert of Austrasia, was a daughter
of the king of the Spanish Visigoths. She was a woman of great
personal attractions, graceful and intellectual, for her mind had been
formed by Roman civilisation.

1 Caribert was the father of Bertha, the wife of Ethelbert, king of Kent.
It was through her that Christianity was first introduced into Britain.
FREDEGONDA—BRUNEHAUT—MAYOR OF THE PALACE.

Successors of Clovis.

Fredegonda, on the contrary, was a barbarian by nature and education, as well as by birth; yet her wonderful beauty and her great talent captivated the heart of Chilperic of Neustria, a man of some cultivation of mind, able to write Latin verses, hymns, and prayers, but with a disposition so cruel that he is known as the Nero of France. Fredegonda was at first the favourite only, not the lawful wife of Chilperic. He had married Galeswinda, the sister of Brune- haut, but Fredegonda had insisted upon retaining her own position and having a residence in the palace. Galeswinda refused to submit to this insult, and before many weeks had passed was found strangled in her bed. The crime was universally attributed to the instigation of Fredegonda, who without delay became the wife of Chilperic. The indignation against them was great. Chilperic was abandoned by his chief retainers and compelled to appear before the chief judicial court of the Franks. His life was declared forfeited, but at the interposition of his brother Gontran, king of Burgundy, it was spared. Bruneaut henceforth became the implacable enemy of Fredegonda, and in consequence war broke out between the two kings Sigebert and Chilperic. Sigebert, supported by the neighbouring German tribes, poured into Neustria, slaying and taking captive. Chilperic shut himself up in Tournay with his wife and children, and Sigebert seized the kingdom. Great rejoicings followed. In the midst of them two emissaries sent from Fredegonda struck A.D. 575 Sigebert with poisoned knives, and he died, A.D. 575. His army was dispersed, and Chilperic regained his crown.

Bruneaut was then in her turn a captive in the hands of Chilperic and Fredegonda. Yet her life was spared, and by the assistance of Mérovée, the son of Chilperic, she escaped from her enemies and returned to Austrasia. Mérovée had become wildly in love with her. In his blind passion he married her; but it was for him a marriage with death, for his father caused him to be killed.

Childebert, the little son of Sigebert, was at the time of his father's murder a prisoner in Paris in the king's palace. An Austrasian noble contrived his escape. The child was let down by a basket from a window, and a faithful servant took charge of him and carried him before him on his own horse to Metz, where he was proclaimed king of Austrasia, A.D. 575, whilst Bruneaut under- took to govern the country in his name. Her government was on the whole wise and good, but love of power seems to have been her great temptation, and through it she made enemies both of the nobles and the people. It had long been the custom for one of the nobles to have the superintendence of the royal domains, and latterly this officer had received the title of 'maire du palais,' or mayor of the palace, but he had never been more than the king's chief servant. Now however, the nobles chose themselves to elect the 'maire du
palais,' and insisted that he should be the tutor and guardian of the young monarch. Bruneaunt was compelled to yield, but she secretly inspired her son with a hatred of the persons who surrounded him, in order that he might one day revenge what she deemed her injuries.

Fredegonda and Chilperic in the meantime pursued their course of cruelty in Neustria. The old monkish chronicler Gregory of Tours gives a vivid account of their criminal life, which was not, however, unmarked by occasional fits of remorse.

'In these days,' he says, 'king Chilperic fell grievously ill, and when he began to recover, the youngest of his sons, who was not yet regenerated by water and the Holy Ghost, fell ill in his turn. Seeing the child in extremity, they washed him in the waters of baptism. Shortly after he began to amend, but his elder brother was seized with the same malady. Then Fredegonda, touched with contrition, said to the king, 'Behold, for a long time has the mercy of Heaven borne with our crimes. Already some of our children are dead, and now the tears of the poor, the trembling of the widow, the sighs of the orphans, will bring upon us the loss of those who remain. There will be none to inherit our wealth. Therefore, if thou wilt consent, let us now burn these unjust registers of taxes, and for our royal treasury let us content ourselves with that which was sufficient for thy father, Clotaire.' Then the queen cast the registers of the cities which belonged to herself into the fire, and entreated the king to do the same with the record of taxes. Chilperic consented, but repentance came too late. The sword of Heaven's judgment (so says the old chronicler) was stretched out not to be withdrawn. But twenty days before the deadly disease seized the two young princes Gregory was walking in the court of the royal palace, conversing with a bishop, his friend, from whom he was about to part, when the bishop, looking up, exclaimed, 'Dost thou not see above that roof what I see? ' 'I see,' replied Gregory, 'a small building which the king has lately erected.' And the bishop answered, 'Seest thou nought else? ' 'Nothing,' was the reply; 'but if thou canst see more, tell me.' Then the bishop breathed a heavy sigh, and said, 'I see the drawn sword of divine wrath suspended over this house.'

'And truly,' adds Gregory, 'the words of the bishop were not lying words, for twenty days after the two sons of the king died.'

A.D. 584. A short time afterwards Chilperic himself perished by a violent death, A.D. 584. He was assassinated, some say by the emissaries of Bruneaunt, others by a lover of Fredegonda. Fredegonda herself, with an infant son, sought the protection of the good Gontran, king of Burgundy; --good according to the judgment of the times, because he was simple in intellect and more devoted to pleasure than to cruelty, and was accused of only two or three murders. The death of his brothers had deeply touched him. He took an oath to pursue
the murderer of Chilperic to the ninth generation, that he might, as he said, 'get rid of this bad practice of killing kings.' He believed his own life to be in danger. On a certain Sunday, after silence had been proclaimed before the commencement of mass, he turned himself to the people and thus addressed them: 'I conjure you, men and women who are here before me, kill me not as you have lately killed my brothers. Let me at least live three years, that I may provide for the education of my nephews, whom I have adopted as my sons; otherwise, which may God forbid, after my death you all will perish with these little ones, for there will be no strong man able to protect you.'

The bishop and people of Tours desired the preservation of Gontran, being aware that he alone could protect Burgundy and Neustria against Austrasia, Gaul against Germany, the church and civilisation against the barbarians; but Poitiers, the rival of Tours, preferred a king at a greater distance, whilst the people of Aquitaine and Provence wished for a king of their own creating. A spirit of discontent had in fact spread itself through the country, and it soon showed itself in open revolt. There was at that time living at Constantinople, under the protection of the Eastern Emperor Maurice, a certain prince named Gondovald, said to be an illegitimate son of Clotaire. To him a message of invitation was sent by Gontran Boson, a great Austrasian noble, inviting him to repair to Gaul and claim the inheritance of his father, Clotaire. At the same time Maurice was encouraged by Gontran Boson to support this new claim, a hope being held out to him of recovering his lost supremacy over the southern provinces.

Gondovald landed at Marseilles, rich with the treasures which the emperor had bestowed upon him, and expecting to receive the support promised him; but Gontran Boson, a man of perfidious character—like many of the great nobles of the period, half civilised Roman and half barbarian Frank—was tempted by the sight of the treasures, and seizing upon them returned to Austrasia, leaving Gondovald to his fate.

Childebert, the young king of Austrasia, had up to this time remained undecided as to the support to be given to Gondovald, for the pretender did not interfere with himself, but only professed to claim the special inheritance of Clotaire. He had, however, no wish to quarrel with his uncle Gontran, if he could obtain any advantage from remaining at peace; and he therefore sent Boson and some other deputies to Burgundy to request compliance with certain demands which he felt himself justified in making. 'Thy nephew Childebert,' said one of the deputies, when the party was admitted to the presence of king Gontran, 'entreats thee to restore to him the cities which were once his father's.'
These cities were granted me by treaty,' was Gontran's reply; 'therefore I will not restore them.'

Then stood forth another deputy: 'Thy nephew prays thee to deliver into his hands the great sorceress Fredegonda; so will he revenge upon her the death of his father, his uncle, and his cousins.'

'She cannot be delivered up to my nephew,' answered Gontran, 'since she has a son who is king. And for those things of which you accuse her, I believe them not to be true.'

He then poured forth a torrent of execrations upon Boson and Gondovald, declaring the latter to be the son of a miller. The courtiers and people assembled laughed, and the deputies, seeing that they had made no impression, prepared to retire, saying, 'We bid thee farewell, O king, since thou wilt not restore thy nephew's cities. But well we know that the axe which severed thy brothers' heads is ready for thine.'

Brunehaut and Childebert now favoured Gondovald, and even Fredegonda was induced to treat with him. The clergy also supported him, and their defection, for which Gontran was totally unprepared, obliged him to be reconciled with his nephew, the king of Austrasia. He gave back to Childebert all which had been demanded, and also adopted him as his son, promising at the same time to leave Brunehaut some cities in Aquitaine which had been her sister's dowry.

When this alliance was made known, Gondovald's supporters became as eager to abandon the pretender as they had once been to support him. He was obliged to shut himself up in the city of Comminges, which was built on a high rock and surrounded by strong fortifications. Here, supported by Mummolus, the governor of Avignon, who professed to be his friend, he hoped to defend himself from his enemies. But the nobles who were in the city gathered round him and accused him of being an impostor. 'Tell us,' they said, 'most miserable of men, who led thee to these shores, who inspired thee with the audacity to approach the dominions of our kings.'

Then Gondovald entered into the history of his life till he was urged to assert a claim to the throne. 'I received Gontran Boson's oath for my safety,' he said, 'in twelve sacred places. But he has violated it. He has carried away my treasures and retains them as his own. I call upon you, therefore, now to acknowledge that I am a king. If not, let me return from whence I came.'

Mummolus answered, 'We have sworn to thee an oath of fidelity. Listen, therefore, to our wise counsel. Present thyself to thy brother. He would fain have thy support, for few are there remaining of thy race. There are brave warriors who wait for thee at the gate. Unloose now my gold baldric with which
thou art girded, so that thou mayst not appear to go forth in pride. Take thine own sword, and restore to me mine.'

'Thy words are clear,' answered Gondovald. 'I am despooiled of that which I received and wore as a token of friendship.' But Mummolus affirmed, with an oath, that he meant no harm.

Gondovald, at length persuaded, went with him to the gate of the city. Boson and the count of Bourges were on the outside. They came forward to receive Gondovald; and Mummolus and his followers re-entered the town, closing the gates firmly. Then Gondovald, seeing himself betrayed, lifted up his eyes to heaven, praying that God would avenge him, and making the sign of the cross followed his foes, who immediately led him away from the gate of the city and cruelly murdered him. But the treachery did not profit the traitors. The army of king Gontran rushed into the town and set it on fire; priests, soldiers, all the inhabitants, perished in the flames. Mummolus was not spared. The fact that he had once supported Gondovald was enough to efface all other services. Gontran sentenced him to death, and he was killed in the midst of the victorious army, which owed its success to his treachery.

Gontran and Childebert then entered into a solemn agreement, called the treaty of Andelot, by which the survivor of the two kings was recognised as the successor of the other; and Childebert, thus supported by his uncle, ventured to punish the pernicious Boson. He was condemned by both kings in the meeting at Andelot, A.D. 587, and having taken refuge in the house of a bishop, the house was set on fire by the order of king Gontran, and Boson was killed as he endeavoured to escape.

Gontran died A.D. 598. According to the treaty of Andelot, his nephew then became king of Burgundy. Childebert attempted also to take possession of Neustria, but Fredegond had never given up her claim to it, and when Childebert and his followers entered the country he was alarmed by what appeared to be a movable forest advancing to meet him. It was the army of Fredegond carrying huge branches of trees. She had adopted the device which in after years terrified the Scottish usurper Macbeth, when Birnam wood advanced to Dunsinane, and the result was complete success; for Childebert's troops fled in affright. Childebert himself did not long survive his defeat. He died in 596. The succession to the whole of the kingdom of Gaul was then left in the hands of three children—Clotaire II., the son of Fredegond, who succeeded to the inheritance of Neustria; and the two little sons of Childebert, Theodebert and Thierry, who were acknowledged as kings of Austrasia and Burgundy, and were under the control of their grand-mother Brunehaut. The following year, A.D. 597, Fredegond died, and Brunehaut was left without a rival.
The young Theodebert was king of Austrasia. His grandmother thought to govern him by leaving him to the free indulgence of all his inclinations. But the very means which she took to gain her end proved her ruin. She allowed him to be entirely under the influence of a young female slave, supposed to be devoted to her interest, and the girl being won over by the nobles, who once more sought independence, joined in a conspiracy against her. To save her life Brunehaut was compelled to leave her palace as a fugitive and take refuge in Burgundy with her other son, Thierry. Here she followed the same plan of education, and with greater success. Thierry was utterly corrupted, and the nobles of Burgundy, being much less independent than those of Austrasia, allowed Brunehaut to rule undisturbed.

After such an education dissensions naturally arose between the two young kings, which were directed by Brunehaut to her own ends; yet she contrived at first to unite them in a war against their cousin Clotaire II. of Neustria, and it was not till he was defeated and taken prisoner that Brunehaut allowed the smouldering enmity between her sons to burst forth. Then open war was declared. It was carried on in Austrasia in the neighbourhood of the Rhine. A great battle took place at Tolbiac, near Cologne, A.D. 611. Theodebert was entirely defeated, and fled with a few followers across the Rhine, and Thierry entered Cologne and despatched his chamberlain in pursuit of the fugitive king. Theodebert was soon overtaken, and being brought to Cologne was loaded with chains and sent to Chalons to his grandmother Brunehaut. Death soon followed, for he was killed by Brunehaut's orders. And now the great project of Brunehaut’s life—the union of all the Frank kingdoms under one head, seemed on the point of realisation. But the clergy raised their voices against her. St. Didier, bishop of Vienne, endeavoured to save Thierry from the influence of his worthless favourites, and to bring back to him his lawful wife, from whom he had been separated. St. Columba, the celebrated Irishman, who was then at his court, spoke openly to him, reproving him for his vices, and in consequence was banished.

The antagonism of the clergy was a most important obstacle to Brunehaut's plans, but still greater difficulties soon arose. Thierry died suddenly in 613, and his four little sons had the right to divide his inheritance. Brunehaut determined to give all to Sigebert, the eldest, who was not yet eleven years of age. The Austrasian nobles resisted. They hated Brunehaut. She was a Goth, educated by Romans. She had no sympathy with them as Germans, much less could she submit to their habits of independence. They rose in rebellion, and called to their support Clotaire II. of Neustria. The leader of this movement was Pepin of
DEATH OF BRUNEHAUT—DAGOBERT.

Successors of Clovis.

Landen, a powerful noble whose inheritance lay in the neighbourhood of Liege.

Bruneaut sent away the young king Sigebert under the guardianship of the Burgundian mayor of the palace. But the trusted noble was a traitor. When the joint armies of Burgundy and Austrasia met the Neustrians on the banks of the river Aisne, in Champagne, he joined Clotaire; others followed his example, and the battle was thus in fact won even before it was fought. Bruneaut fled, but was overtaken near Neufchateau. They brought her captive into the presence of Clotaire, the son of Fredegonda, her life-long enemy, and her crimes were enumerated. Ten kings, they said, had been murdered through her means. Clotaire overwhelmed her with reproaches. For three days he gave her up to every kind of torture and insult; and then he caused her to be fastened to the tail of a wild horse till she was dragged to death and her body trampled to pieces.

Bruneaut was taunted with her crimes, and no doubt they were great; but the real cause of the hatred of the nobles seems to have been her attempt to civilise them by introducing the system of taxation and the forms of justice which she had herself learnt from her own nation, the Visigoths, as they had acquired them from the Romans. Her character, in fact, exhibited that singular union of fierce passions and strong impulses for good which can only display itself in its full force in a half-savage state of society. She founded churches and monasteries, and monasteries were then schools. She favoured the missions sent by the Pope for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain. She was a liberal patron of the arts; her reputation as a supporter and encourager of works for the public good lasted for centuries, and even those which were really begun by the Romans were at length attributed to her. The remains of Roman roads in Belgium, and in the north of France, are still called 'chaussées de Bruneaut.'

The three kingdoms of Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy, which were now united into one, were placed under the government of a mayor of the palace, chosen by the nobles and clergy. Clotaire II. had the title of king, but he had no real power. His reign, like that of his predecessor, ended in bloodshed and rebellion. In 628 his son Dagobert rebelled against him, why is not known, except that Dagobert was brave and clever, and could not submit to be second in the kingdom.

He is the most famous of the Merovingian kings—the only one, in fact, after Clovis who has left behind him distinct marks of government. Pepin of Landen, the great Austrasian noble, was distrusted by him. He sent him from the court and gave his confidence to Audouen, or St. Ouen, bishop of Rouen, and Eligius, or St. Elot,
DEATH OF DAGOBERT—PEPIN D'HÉRISTAL.

Successors of Clovis.

bishop of Noyon. The latter had been originally a goldsmith, or filigree-worker, and was especially celebrated for the manner in which he ornamented the abbey of St. Denis. The two ministers aided the king in his efforts to dispense justice. Dagobert's fame spread. Heraclius, Emperor of the East, solicited his alliance. The Lombards, in the north of Italy, applied to him to settle their differences. The king of Brittany did homage to him. His royal palace of Clichy, near Paris, was filled with the presents of silk, gold, and precious stones, brought to him by ambassadors from distant countries. But the temptation of power and luxury was too much for him. The Solomon of the Franks, as he has been called, he gave himself up to self-indulgence; his excesses exhausted his revenue, and, in order to raise money, he imposed exorbitant taxes and confiscated the property of his nobles. The natural result followed. In an expedition against a Scelavian tribe in the valley of the Danube his Austrasian troops abandoned him, and he was totally defeated. The Austrasian nobles refused to submit to him longer, and he was obliged to recognise their independence, though they accepted his son Sigebert as their king.

A.D. 638. Dagobert died in 638. With all his vices he must be regarded as one of the most remarkable persons of his age.

After the death of Dagobert the Merovingian kings may be said to be only phantoms of royalty. The title by which they are commonly known, the 'rois fainéants,' or do-nothing kings, sufficiently describes their character and position. Austrasia and Neustria were divided, but both kingdoms alike were nominally ruled by the imbecile descendants of Dagobert. It is useless even to give their names; the real power rested in the mayor of the palace. This office originally involved only the superintendence of the internal affairs of the palace, and a certain amount of authority in consequence; but by degrees the dignity and power connected with it increased. The mayor of the palace became often the leader and adviser of the nobles, and at length he was appointed by them and not by the king, and was permitted to hold his office for life; and the later mayors were not so much mayors of the palace as mayors of the kingdom. Pepin Landen, who lost the confidence of Dagobert, failed indeed to obtain his great desire that his office should be hereditary, but his descendants carried the point, and Pepin d'Héristal, in 657, not only succeeded in establishing his own authority, but transmitted it to his son.

A.D. 687. Pepin gained his power by a successful battle fought against the Neustrian mayor of the palace, at Testry, in the Vermardois, for through the nine-and-forty years which had elapsed since the death of Dagobert Neustria and Austrasia had been perpetually at enmity. His victory made him the master of France. Thierry,
the helpless king of Neustria, was indeed allowed to retain his title, and a palace was given him for his residence; but Paris was no longer the seat of government; Pepin usually resided at Cologne or at Héristal on the Meuse. Once a year only, in the month of March, according to an ancient custom, the nominal king Thierry met his people at an assembly called the Mallum. Dressed in his royal robes, his long hair floating in the wind, he was conveyed to the place of meeting in a car drawn by oxen; a throne of gold was prepared for him, and on this he took his seat and gave audience to foreign ambassadors, received the compliments of his nobles, and repeated mechanically the few words which were put into his mouth. The ceremony over, he was re-conveyed in state to his palace, situated between Compiègne and Noyon; and Pepin administered the government at home and abroad with justice and prudence. His reign, for such it must be called, though he never took the royal title, was one of continued and successful warfare. He made the power of the Franks felt by the German tribes, and compelled them to own his supremacy; and this fact, though at the present distance of time it may appear unimportant, was in reality of the greatest possible consequence to the future of Germany. When the Franks were victorious they opened a way for the labours of Christian missionaries, chiefly of the Anglo-Saxon race, by whom the conversion of the Germans was in a great measure accomplished. Winfrid, or St. Boniface, a native of the kingdom of Wessex, was among the most noted of these missionaries.

It was in the year 714 that Pepin d’Héristal, feeling his end approaching, prepared to appoint a successor, who was still, however, to carry on the government in the name of the king. His eldest son he made duke of Champagne, his second son, Grimoald, was to be mayor of the palace. There was a third son, Charles, but he was illegitimate, and between his mother and Plectrude, the mother of Grimoald, there existed a deadly enmity. Pepin was at Liege lying on his death-bed, with Grimoald in attendance upon him, when some murderer, entering the chamber, seized the unhappy prince and strangled him almost in his father’s presence. Pepin, though nearly at his last gasp, roused himself sufficiently to order the instant execution of the assassin. His son Charles, whom he thought to be an accomplice in the crime, was sent away a prisoner to Cologne, and the young son of Grimoald, a child of only five years of age, was appointed to succeed to the office of mayor of the palace. This last act of the wise and energetic Pepin d’Héristal was a fatal mistake. The people would not submit to be governed by a child; and

In 715 Charles, the son of Pepin (generally known as Charles Martel), escaped from his prison at Cologne, placed himself at the head of the Austrasian nobles, and after a short struggle with the Neustrians
was acknowledged as the supreme lord in act, though not in name, of
Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy. Southern France remained a
separate kingdom under the dominion of Eudes of Aquitaine.

The high position of Charles had been gained by the aid of his
soldiers; it was necessary to reward them. The property of the
bishoprics and cathedrals lay at the mercy of the new mayor of
the palace; he seized and redistributed it amongst his followers,
upon the usual feudal conditions of military service. This act
gave him the full support of his army, and enabled him to meet
promptly any danger which might arise; and it was not long before
a peril threatening not only France, but Europe, called forth his
highest energies. The south of France, especially the territory of
Eudes of Aquitaine, was invaded by the Saracens. They had been
invited into Spain by the treachery of a nobleman who had a per-
sonal quarrel with Roderick, the last of the Goths; and having over-
run and taken possession of almost the whole of the peninsula, they had
traversed the passes of the Pyrenees and poured down upon the sunny
plains of France. Their first invasions had been repelled in 731,
but now the soldiers of Abderrahman, lieutenant-general of the
Spanish Saracens, once more made their way through the rugged
gorge of Roncesvalles and entered Gascony. The Aquitanian army
which confronted them was routed in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux,
and Eudes, in despair, sought an interview on the banks of the Loire
with Charles Martel, hitherto his enemy, and impressed him for the
sake not only of France, but of Christian Europe, to assist in repel-
ling the invader.

Charles exacted of Eudes an acknowledgment that from thence-
forth Aquitaine should be in subjection to the king of the Franks,
and then marched against the enemy. The battle which followed
in the neighbourhood of Tours is one of the most important in
history. As the defeat of the Persians at the battle of Marathon
checked the advance of eastern despotism and luxury, so the defeat
of the Saracens at Tours checked the advance of Mahometan mis-
belief and fierce bigotry. On the 17th of October, 732, Abderrah-
man spread his immense army in order of battle and began the
attack. The Frank warriors, on their powerful German horses, reso-
lutely withstood the rush of the Saracens, and the field was
encumbered with the dead, when shouts of dismay arose from the
Saracen army. Eudes of Aquitaine was assailing them in their
rear, and his soldiers were pillaging their camp. Numbers of the
Saracen horsemen abandoned their ranks and hurried to the rear in
the hope of saving their rich spoils. Charles ordered a general
advance of his whole army, and the Saracens fled in confusion.
When morning dawned, only the deserted white tents of the Arabs
covered the plain. This was the final effort of the Saracens to extend
their dominions beyond the Pyrenees. They were not, indeed, actually driven from the lands of which they had taken possession till several years afterwards, but their power was broken, and they gradually retired southwards.

The title of duke of the Franks was still the only dignity assumed by the victorious Charles; but after the battle of Tours the surname Martel or Marteau (Hammer) was given him, it is said, in remembrance of the blows which he had inflicted upon the Saracen army.

He had now made himself a world-wide name, and his support was sought abroad. Pope Gregory sent an envoy to him demanding his aid against the Lombards, who had made themselves masters of northern Italy, and even threatened Rome itself. The recompense proposed was the dignity of consul and patrician of Rome. When the envoys made this request, offering at the same time to the Frankish duke the keys of St. Peter's tomb, Charles was evidently dazzled by the splendour of the prospect before him. Rome was still in many respects looked upon as the centre of the civilised world. The way was, in fact, thus opened to the mayor of the palace for reviving once more the lost title and dignity of Emperor of the West; but at the age of fifty-two Charles was already an old man, worn with warfare and toil, and before he could attempt to put in execution the dreams of ambition which seem to have floated before his mind he died at Kieres-sur-Oise in the year 741.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CARLOVINIANS.

PEPIN LE BREU (THE SHORT). A.D. 752-768.

CHARLES MARTEL divided his possessions, or, in other words, the Frank empire, between his sons. Carloman had Austrasia, with the territories beyond the Rhine, whilst Pepin had Neustria, Burgundy, and Provence. At the time of the death of the great duke of Merovingian king was reigning, even nominally. When Thierry IV. died in 737, Charles Martel had not deemed it worth while to appoint a successor; but now Pepin and Carloman, thinking probably to sustain their own authority, called forth from the cloister Childeric, one of the weak royal race, and proclaimed him king of
the Franks. Soon after Carloman, who had no taste for government, retired to the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino in Italy.

It would seem that the ambition of being a king then first seized upon Pepin. Ambassadors were sent to Rome to demand of Pope Zacharias whether the Merovingian throne did not more rightfully belong to him, who bore the responsibility of government, than to princes who were utterly insignificant. The Pope without hesitation answered in the affirmative. Pepin accordingly summoned a meeting of bishops and nobles in the month of March 752, and being anointed with oil by the hands of St. Boniface, whose efforts for the reformation of the church he had warmly supported, was proclaimed king of the Franks, whilst Childeric was formally deposed and immured in a convent at St. Omer, where three years afterwards he died. So ended the first line of the Merovingian kings.

The new dynasty which succeeded, taking its name from that of its renowned founder Charles Martel, is known as the Carolingian, or more correctly Carolingian. Before we proceed to the details of the reigns of these monarchs it may be desirable to obtain a clear view of the extent of the territories of which they took possession. Confusion upon this point causes perplexity in the after history of France. The settlements of the Franks began in the north on the left bank of the Rhine, and only spread southwards by degrees. The claim of the modern French to the Rhenish provinces has, therefore, so far, a foundation of a very early date. But it must at the same time be acknowledged that the Frank empire and the French kingdom can in no way be considered identical. In the Frank empire there were two great divisions: Austrasia and Neustria; and though they were from time to time united under one king, or one mayor of the palace, yet in themselves they were distinct in the spirit of the government as well as in the habits and tone of the people, Austrasia being in many respects German, and Neustria Gallic.

The Frank empire may be said to have had for its boundaries the North Sea, the ocean, the Pyrenees, the Mediterranean, the Upper Danube, and the Rhine; for the various races which inhabited this vast territory recognised the authority of the Merovingian kings, though some were directly subject to them, whilst others were only tributary.

The Romans had regularly portioned out their conquered territories into provinces, but these divisions were now only recognised by the church. The chief city of every province had given name to an archbishop. The lesser cities of these provinces, with certain districts attached to them, formed dioceses ruled by bishops. These ecclesiastical divisions remained almost unaltered to the fourteenth century;
CIVIL DIVISIONS—PEPIN’S CHARACTER.

but the civil or territorial divisions were completely changed by the
colleagues of the barbarian tribes, who for the most part gave their
names to the lands which they conquered. The countries directly
subject to the Merovingian kings were governed by military officers
known as dukes or counts, the limits of these dukedoms or counties
varying according to the pleasure of the king. But in two districts
of Gaul the inhabitants were enabled for several centuries to
maintain their independence. One known as Septimania lay be-
tween the Rhone, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Pyrenees. The
other, Vasconie or Gascony, to the south-west, was the land of the
Wascons, a people descended from the Iberians, the original inha-
bitants of Spain.

Pepin le Bref, or the Short, received his name from his small
stature, but he is said to have been gifted with wonderful courage
and prodigious strength. Moral influence he possessed not only from
his own character, but from the traditions of his forefathers. For
the space of 150 years his family had held the highest positions in
church and state, and the fact that they had not long before seized
the supreme power can only be accounted for by the superstitious
mystery which surrounded the secluded Merovingian princes, and
which probably led the ignorant people to regard them with a feeling
of awe, as beings of a different nature from themselves, even as in
many countries a special sacredness is considered to attach to the
persons of idiots. But Pepin’s strength of character might have
failed to secure his dominion over his rough nobles if he had not
been able to show them that, notwithstanding his deficiency in size,
his was fully their equal in muscular powers. A story which, if
rather legendary, is doubtless a true illustration of Pepin’s character
and conduct, shows the means by which he proved the physical
superiority, so highly prized and at the time so absolutely im-
portant.

The combats of savage animals were among the chief amuse-
ments of the Frank kings. Pepin was present on one occasion when
a lion attacked a bull; the bull fell. Pepin pointed to the ferocious
combatants, and exclaimed to his nobles, ‘Which of you will dare
to separate them?’ No one replied. The king threw himself into
the arena and overpowered both the animals, and as he tossed away
his bloody sword asked proudly of the assembled warriors, ‘Am I
worthy to be your king?’ Certainly he was worthy, even if courage
and strength were the only requirements for a sovereign; but he was
also worthy from his moderation and prudence. It was by him
that the kingly power over the turbulent nobles was firmly esta-
lished, and it was his character which caused it to be universally
respected.
32 SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH—WAR WITH THE LOMBARDS.

Pepin le Breff.

The most noteworthy fact connected with the Carolingian dynasty is that its strength was derived from German influence. Pepin was an Austrasian—a Teuton—and the Teuton character is marked by some of the best features of man's nature. Bravery, respect for authority, and reverence for religion are among the chief characteristics of the earlier Carolingian kings, and may be traced even in their less worthy descendants.

Pepin owed his throne in a great measure to the church; during his whole reign he showed that he considered the support of the church the greatest of his regal duties. The labours of the missionaries in Germany were especially assisted by him. He was the friend of St. Boniface, and when he undertook warlike expeditions into Germany it was with the express object of bringing the barbarians into subjection to the Pope. For that was the one idea of religious obedience in those days; and the public acts of Pepin can only be fairly judged when it is remembered that they were undoubtedly based upon what he deemed a due recognition of the first bishop of Christendom, and of the gratitude which he himself personally owed him.

Protection against the Lombards was then the great need of the Pope. The fierce people who had settled in the north of Italy were a source of constant dread to Rome and its inhabitants; and when Zacharias by his powerful support seated Pepin on the Frank throne, he requested of him to become the champion of the Holy See, and free her from her enemies.

Two years afterwards Pope Stephen, the successor of Zacharias, was himself in France, claiming the fulfilment of the engagement. Astolf, king of the Lombards, was thundering at the gates of Rome. There was no hope for Italy save in the valour of the Frank king. Pepin was prepared to redeem his word. The year was drawing to its close. Let the next year open, and he would cross the Alps with his army and rescue Rome from its enemies. He asked but one favour in return. Would the Pope renew with his own hands the coronation which Pepin had already received? It was a request soon granted, not so soon forgotten. The ceremony took place at the abbey of St. Denis, and the Pope, as he consecrated Pepin king of the Franks, granted him also the authority and title of patrician of Rome. What was the power implied by this title neither Pepin nor the Pope fully understood. Neither could they have known all the importance of the act of consecration. Their actions and words had reference only to their own respective positions at the moment. The long course of contests and miseries which were to follow from ill-defined privileges derived from an ill-defined authority were hidden from human foresight.

The following year Pepin, with his fierce troops, scaled the
Alps by the Mont Cenis, and poured down upon Lombardy. The Lombards were defeated, and in their humiliation undertook never again to make war upon the Pope; but no sooner had the Franks recrossed the mountains than the fierce people again laid waste the country up to the gates of Rome. Once more, in 755, Pepin listened to the appeal of the Pope and crossed the Alps. This time the faithless Lombards were entirely subdued, and the whole of their territory remained at the disposal of Pepin.

There was indeed one portion, the Exarchate of Ravenna, claimed by the Greek emperor, but Pepin rejected the demand. One of his ministers was sent to receive the keys of the principal towns of the district, and was then despatched to Rome to lay them on the altar of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, thus signifying that he surrendered his conquest to the bishop of Rome. The Donation of Pepin, as it is called, was a religious act in conformity with the spirit of the times, but it was also the beginning of the temporal power of the Popes. Up to this period they had been bishops, claiming only spiritual authority. From henceforth they were princes ready to assert their power, if needful, by arms. Whether Pepin actually gave up to the Pope the actual government of the conquered provinces, or whether he only allowed him the enjoyment of the revenues to be derived from them, is uncertain, but in either case the boon was vast. The Popes were made independent of the Emperors of the East, and the city of Rome was secured to them as their capital, whilst the reverence and submission of Pepin gave an apparent validity to the claim, which they afterwards more and more strongly asserted, of setting up or depositing sovereigns at their will.

The remainder of Pepin’s reign was chiefly occupied in wars in Septimania and Aquitaine. The Saracens had kept possession of many of the chief cities in Septimania even after their defeat at Tours; but when Narbonne, the capital, was taken by Pepin in 759, they were finally driven back across the Pyrenees.

The reduction of Aquitaine was more difficult. Though Charles Martel had assisted Eudes, duke of Aquitaine, in his contest with the Saracens, there was no real sympathy between the people whom they respectively governed. The luxurious Aquitanians looked upon the rough Franks as savages, and Gaufer, or Waifer, the grandson of Eudes, had a special enmity against Pepin, whom he regarded as the oppressor of his race. For eight years he kept up a contest with the Frank king, and at length being deserted by his army, he retired with a few faithful followers to the hills south of the river Dordogne, and there, hunted like a wild animal from covert to covert, he made a show of resistance until he was betrayed into an ambush laid for him by his own people and murdered.
He was the last of his line, and Aquitaine thenceforth became an integral portion of the great empire of the Franks. But for centuries the inhabitants retained their distinguishing characteristics, and cherished their ancient antipathy to the Franks. They had been civilised by the Romans, and the marks of this civilisation could not be effaced by their rude conquerors.

Pepin le Bref was returning from the conquest of Aquitaine, when he was attacked by a dangerous fever. His attendants with difficulty carried him to St. Denis, and there he recovered sufficiently to assemble the chief counsellors, and in their presence, according to the traditional usage of the Franks, to divide his kingdom between his two sons, Charles and Carloman.

He died on September 24, 768, leaving a name, not perhaps in its military story so dazzling as his father's, but which must always be honoured as that of a prince who raised the character of his people and established the French monarchy on a firm basis.

CHAPTER V.

CHARLEMAGNE.

A.D. 768-814.

The division of his kingdom made by Pepin le Bref was not destined to last long. Charles—better known by his name of Charlemagne—was the sovereign of Austrasia and the states beyond the Rhine, whilst Carloman was the lord of Alsace, Burgundy, and Provence; Neustria and Aquitaine were divided equally between the two princes.

But in 771, three years after Pepin's death, Carloman died somewhat suddenly; and as he had quarrelled with his brother shortly before, his widow feared lest she and her infant sons might be treated with violence, and therefore fled to the court of Didier, the king of Lombardy, leaving Charlemagne to take possession of Carloman's inheritance, with the full consent and election of the nobles and prelates. Ermenegarde, the daughter of Didier, was the wife of Charlemagne, but he had repudiated her, and sent her back to her father, only one year after the marriage;—why, was never known. It would seem to have been an act of mere caprice. Now was the moment for Didier to revenge his daughter's honour. He took up the cause of the two infant sons of Carloman, appealed to the Pope, Adrian I., for support, and when Adrian refused to give it, invaded the papal territory, and even besieged Rome. The Pope sent
CONQUEST OF LOMBARDY—WAR WITH THE SAXONS.

Charlemagne

messengers in urgent haste to entreat the assistance of Charlemagne, who without delay crossed the Alps. Didier fled to Pavia. His son, with the widow and children of Carloman, shut themselves up in Verona. Both cities were besieged; and whilst Pavia was invested by the Frank troops, Charlemagne took the opportunity to visit Rome. The Pope received him with distinguished honour in the portico of the great church of St. Peter, yet the Frank king himself went through every outward act of humility, and when he visited the Pope's palace kissed each step of the entrance by which he ascended to it.

Charlemagne no doubt desired to show his reverence for the Supreme Pontiff, but it would seem that he also wished to retain him as his viceroy in governing his newly acquired Italian dominions. He confirmed, and some say he even enlarged, the grant which his father, Pepin, had made to the Pope, but Charlemagne's will was to be supreme. Adrian was to be in reality the vassal of the Frank king, though nominally his spiritual lord.

After a few months Pavia and Verona were compelled to surrender, and Didier with his wife and daughter and the widowed queen and her sons fell into the hands of Charlemagne. The fate of the young princes and their mother is uncertain. Probably the former were compelled to take monastic vows. Didier was kept as a prisoner.

Lombardy now formed part of the dominions of Charlemagne; and crowning himself with the iron crown of Italy, he entitled himself king of the Franks and of the Lombards.

It was the beginning of a claim transmitted in one form or another to our own day, and which only ceased when, after the battles of Magenta and Solferino, fought between Italy and France on the one hand, and Austria on the other, Lombardy was declared to be part of the kingdom of Italy, and the Teutons or Germans were obliged finally to relinquish their rights.

But the war in Italy was not the chief event of Charlemagne's reign. The conquest by which he rendered his name famous above others was that of the Saxons—then a considerable people, divided into a number of small republics, and inhabiting the greater part of northern Germany from Bohemia to the Baltic Sea and the Northern Ocean, whilst they had also formed a settlement in Britain.

Both Franks and Saxons were of the same stock, but the Franks had embraced Christianity and been civilized by their intercourse with the Romanised Gauls, whilst the Saxons had retained their idolatrous religion and their barbarous habits. Scattered over wide plains, or secluding themselves in the depths of their thick forests, in which it is said that the squirrel could pass for several miles from tree to tree without having occasion to touch the ground,
the Saxons retained their wild independence; and territorial divisions and strict government were abhorrent to them. Missionaries were sent amongst them, but it would seem that these teachers were wanting in worldly wisdom. In one of the great national assemblies of the Saxons a Christian priest, finding the people steadfast in their idolatry, threatened them with the power of Charlemagne. He had no sooner uttered the words than he was murdered, and the Saxons marching to the church which the Franks had built in the neighbourhood, burnt it to the ground. The tidings brought to Charlemagne roused his indignation, and gave an excuse for the undertaking which had in all probability been already contemplated. It began in 772, and before the fierce Saxons were finally subdued there were no less than thirty-three years of warfare.

The chief sanctuary of the Saxons was on a spot rendered dear to them, there is every reason to believe, by the celebrated victory they had there gained over the Roman army under Varus in the reign of Augustus Caesar. Here they placed their national idol Irmensul, a symbolical image of the country.

The Franks rushed upon and destroyed it, and war on all sides was the natural result. As it went on Witkind, a redoubtable Saxon chief, became the hero of his people. No defeat could quell him. For the moment he retreated into the forests of Scandinavia, but after a few months he reappeared again at the head of fresh masses of his countrymen.

It was in 779, at Rokholt, on the Lippe, that the most fearful slaughter took place.

Charlemagne was victorious, and when the battle was ended he traversed the entire territory, and caused thousands of the inhabitants to be baptised. The sincerity of such converts may well be doubted. For a time, indeed, the conquered Saxons submitted to the rules of their new religion, but when after three years the high-spirited Witkind reappeared, they gave up their faith, murdered their priests, and cut to pieces a body of Frank troops stationed amongst them.

Charlemagne hastened to the support of his army, but even before he could arrive the Saxons had been defeated. Witkind fled to Denmark. The king of the Franks, unable to revenge himself on the leader of the insurrection, ordered a massacre of between four and five thousand of the helpless Saxons. It was a barbarous act and produced grievous consequences. The Saxons were driven to desperation, and for three years the country was a scene of most terrible bloodshed; until at length Charlemagne was induced to make proposals of peace to Witkind, promising him even rewards and honours if he would lay down his arms and embrace Christianity. Witkind consented, and was baptised at Attigny-sur-Aisne, in the presence of Charlemagne and his whole court.
His example was followed by many of his soldiers, and the Saxons were for a time tranquillised.

The next war was in the south. Spain was at that time in the hands of the Saracens, with the exception of the small state which the Gothic Christians had been able to maintain in independence in the mountains of the Asturias. But the Saracens were divided amongst themselves; the governor of Saragossa was at strife with the emir of Cordova, and needing aid, sought it from Charlemagne, promising in return to become tributary to him.

Charlemagne was as anxious to subdue the Mahometans of the south as the pagans of the north, even if he could only do so by assisting them to destroy one another. His usual good fortune, however, forsook him. Little is known of the details of his expedition; but it would seem that the governor of Saragossa proved faithless, and that the Saracens rose against the Franks who had come to help him. Charlemagne was compelled to negotiate and agree to leave the country on condition of receiving a large sum of money. He took the route through Navarre. The passes of the Pyrenees were strongly occupied by the Basques, the most ancient inhabitants of the country. The mountaineers leagued with some of the treacherous Saracen governors on the Spanish borders, and intercepted the retreating army in a narrow defile. The main body of the Franks passed safely, but as the rearguard wound slowly round the side of the great mountain which overhangs the pass of Roncesvalles, an avalanche of rocks, uprooted trees, and missiles of all kinds was thrown down upon them from the woods and cliffs above. A panic ensued. The Basques rushed forth from behind the rocks, and the unfortunate Franks were cut off to a single man. Amongst those who perished was the celebrated Roland, the nephew of Charlemagne and prefect of the Marches or frontier of Brittany. His fame has been preserved in the legends of the country. The immense breach in the mountains opposite Pau, known as the 'Brèche de Roland,' and from which a clear eye can gaze at will either upon the towers of Toulouse or of Saragossa, is declared to be the work of a stroke of his sword, Durandal. The famous horn of ivory with which he summoned Charlemagne to his aid—blowing so lustily as to awaken the echoes of the far distant Fuentarabia—is said to have been buried with him, together with the sword, in the church of St. Romain, at Blaye, though the body was afterwards removed to Bordeaux. The Germans, however, appear to have been unwilling to leave the memory of their hero to a foreign land, and the traveller on the Rhine, who looks up to the rock of Rolandseck, thinks of him as returning safely to his country, after having been given up for dead, and—finding his betrothed bride an inmate of the convent of Nonnenswerth—building for himself a tower on the height,
from which he might look down upon the home in which she dwelt, though he might never see her face.

Charlemagne never returned to Spain after the defeat of Roncesvalles. The kingdom of Aquitaine was nominally given to his infant son Louis, and one of the bravest and wisest of his nobles, count William "au court nez," duke of Toulouse, was made its governor. Many were the lesser conflicts which Charlemagne was compelled to carry on with the independent races who bordered his empire. The Bavarians, under their duke Tassilo, were overthrown in 788, and Bavaria at once became part of the Frank empire. The Avars, the descendants of the Huns, were conquered a few years afterwards, and the Avar chief and his principal followers were baptised at Aix-la-Chapelle, where Charlemagne held his court. Charlemagne's dominions indeed, when he had completed his conquests, comprehended at least half of Europe. Even the remoter states which claimed to be independent feared his authority and prized his friendship. The Saxons of Britain, the Greeks of Constantinople, the caliphs of Bagdad, alike owned his power. It is no marvel, then, that the idea of a higher title should have presented itself to his mind. He had the power of the Emperors of the West; why might he not have their name? It needed but the support of the Pope to make such a title valid in the eyes of all Christendom, and Leo III., who was then at the head of the church, was no less deeply indebted to Charlemagne than his predecessor had been to Pepin when he consecrated him king of the Franks.

In November of the year 800 Charlemagne proceeded to Rome. On Christmas day he attended the service at St. Peter's. As he knelt before the high altar, apparently absorbed in prayer, Leo placed upon his head the imperial crown and saluted him by the title of Augustus. At the same moment the cathedral rang with the acclamations of the multitude: "Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, crowned by God—the great, pious, and pacific emperor of the Romans!"

Eginhard, the secretary of Charlemagne, states that Charlemagne was unprepared for this act of the Pope, but it is difficult to believe the statement. Certainly Charlemagne accepted the title conferred on him, and in order to render it more secure negotiated for a marriage with the Greek empress Irene, who, having caused her son to be assassinated, was then reigning at Constantinople. The marriage never took place, for Irene was deposed and died in exile; but the fact that it was proposed shows how far the ambition of Charlemagne overcame all personal feeling.1

1 The title of emperor, derived from imperator, meaning a Roman general-in-chief, did not, in its first use, imply the sovereignty of various territories,
Fourteen years of comparative tranquillity followed Charlemagne's assumption of the title of Emperor of the West. They were years of great importance to the various races over whom he ruled; for the one object of his life was to provide for the well-being of his people. He was an absolute monarch, and all laws were proposed by him; but they were discussed in the great council of the nation, held twice in the year, and promulgated in the joint names of the sovereign and the people under the name of Capitularies. Sixty-five of these Capitularies remain to us. They are not so much a code of laws as a mass of records upon subjects of all kinds—political, ecclesiastical, moral, and even domestic. The power of carrying out the laws was given to the counts and their deputies, who dispensed justice in the several districts; but Charlemagne kept watch over all himself by means of an order of superior judges, called missi dominici, or royal envoys, whose duty it was to travel through the country four times every year and report to the emperor whatever was amiss. In ecclesiastical and religious matters also Charlemagne would fain have been the supreme lord. The great controversy in the church at that period regarded image-worship. The Eastern Church, influenced probably by the feeling of the Mahometans against images, forbade the introduction of them into religious services, and the Greek emperor Leo is known as the Iconoclast, or breaker of images. The Pope is said to have been of the same mind, but Charlemagne differed from him. Some famous books, called the Caroline books, were written, if not by the emperor yet in his name, upholding the use of images; and thenceforth they were allowed in Roman Catholic churches. So also the Greeks refused to admit the words 'and the Son' into the Nicene Creed. They were not in the original Creed, and they were objected to as additions. The Pope might have been induced to agree with the Eastern Church, but Charlemagne took the other side. The Pope gave way, and the words were inserted in the Creed, and have ever since been a great cause of division between the different branches of the Catholic Church.

Even the public religious services were not left without the superintendence and personal interference of the emperor. It was but of various peoples. The Frankish chief was not king of France, but king of the Franks, wherever the Franks might be, whether in Germany, or France, or Aquitaine. The idea of territory belonging to the sovereign sprang up afterwards, when the feudal system was introduced, and the leader of a victorious tribe gave away his own share of the conquered territory to his nobles, on condition of their doing him homage and giving him military service. This distinction between territory and people has been recognised of late years by European sovereigns who have assumed a throne after a revolution; thus we speak of the emperor of the French, the king of the Belgians, meaning the ruler of the people, not the owner of the country.
to please him that the Gregorian chants, now in common use through a great part of Christendom, were introduced into all the churches of the west. But Charlemagne's chief fame, apart from his wars, rests upon the encouragement which he gave to learning and art. Sculpture, painting, and architecture were just beginning to excite interest. Charlemagne erected public buildings and ornamented his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle with the precious marble of Ravenna and the spoils of other conquered cities of Italy, together with the gifts of various princes, including a clock worked by water, sent by the caliph Haroun al Raschid. He lived, indeed, in what was for those days gorgeous splendour, but there was no indolent ease connected with it. He collected around him learned and scientific men from all nations, and set an example of unwearied industry to his people. His great teacher was Alcuin, a deacon of York cathedral, who was persuaded by the emperor to take up his residence at his court. For fourteen years Alcuin taught publicly and laboured privately, restoring ancient manuscripts, preparing a corrected edition of the Old and New Testaments, and directing the monks who worked under him to multiply copies, so that all the principal churches and abbeys in the kingdom were furnished with the sacred books. His royal pupil gave himself diligently to study, and made great progress in astronomy, arithmetic, grammar, psalmody, and, in fact, all the subjects really necessary to form the basis of a good education. By nature Charlemagne was endowed with an easy and graceful utterance, so that he could discourse with fluency and clearness upon all subjects. German was the language which he almost always spoke, for he had far more sympathy with the Teutonic race than with the Romanised Gauls, and his dress was always that of a German. The one thing he could never do was writing. He had begun it too late, and though he carried tablets about with him, so that he might practise the formation of letters at every spare moment, he never succeeded in doing more than signing his name. Probably he was in this respect surpassed by the young princes whom he collected at his court, and who were all willing to be the pupils of the far-famed Alcuin in the 'school of the palace' at Aix-la-Chapelle. Here, amongst other noted personages, came the young Egbert, king of Wessex, destined afterwards to be the Brectwald, or sovereign lord, of Britain, and the founder of the present kingdom of England. Whilst the young men pursued their studies under the direction of their tutor, the grave counsellors of Charlemagne, with the emperor himself, formed a kind of literary society or academy, in which the emperor presided under the name of David, whilst the other members were called Homer, Horace, &c.

That half-barbarous palace at Aix-la-Chapelle must have been strangely interesting. The restorer of the Western Empire, the
proctor of the Pope, had also a full knowledge of the small affairs of his household. His tall figure, round head, thick neck, and long nose might be seen watching, at apertures made in the galleries of the palace, the persons who came in and out of the imperial dwelling. For his domestic arrangements were by no means as satisfactory as his public ones. He had in succession no less than nine wives; one of them, Fastrada, governed him completely, and to her influence his few acts of cruelty may probably be attributed. Women, indeed, appear always to have had great power over him. He had many favourites, and his court was far from presenting an aspect of respectability. It is said that, besides his six sons, he had eight beautiful and graceful daughters, who he never could bear should marry, but who, it was his pleasure, should ride behind him when he travelled or went to war.

His three legitimate sons, Charles, Pepin, and Louis, were, according to their father’s intention, to share his dominions between them after his death; but Pepin and Charles died before him, and Charlemagne then declared his youngest son, Louis of Aquitaine, his associate in the government and his sole heir. There was great necessity for thus determining the future of his great empire. The various conquered races had been kept together by the emperor’s powerful hand, but they had no principle of union amongst themselves. Charlemagne had endeavoured to civilise them, but civilisation is the work of centuries, and he had laboured but a few years. His people were still barbarians.

The emperor was too clear-sighted to be blind to the condition of his subjects. When, in the month of September 813, he presented his son Louis to the bishops, counts, and lords of the Franks as their king and emperor, he addressed most touching words to the prince on his duties towards the church, his subjects, and his neighbours; and then desiring to testify to the assembly that the power of Louis was derived from God alone, he caused a crown of gold, similar to his own, to be placed upon the altar, and commanded his son to take it himself and place it on his own head.

This was but one year before the emperor’s death. He had done all that in him lay to secure peace and good government to his people, but a danger, which he was perfectly able to foresee, but wholly unable to prevent, threatened them.

The Scandinavians of the north—so distant that they had hitherto been scarcely thought of—were beginning to make inroads upon the empire.

Charlemagne could not conceal from himself what this portended. He was one day dining with his nobles in a maritime city of southern Gaul, when a fleet of strange vessels—pirates—made their way even into the port. Some present declared them to be Jewish
merchant vessels, others African ships, others British; but Charlemagne recognised them at once. "They are cruel enemies," he said; and rising from the table he went to the window, which looked towards the east, and his eyes filled with tears as he gazed long and sadly upon the Scandinavian vessels. The pirates were pursued and disappeared, and Charlemagne, turning to his nobles, said, "Know you, my friends, wherefore I weep bitterly? Certainly I fear not those miserable pirates, but I have deep sorrow in my heart when I think that now, even during my lifetime, they have been able almost to land upon our shores; and I am oppressed by a terrible anxiety when I look forward to the evil which they will inflict upon my people in coming years!"

That time, when the empire should be left defenceless, was near at hand. Charlemagne had reached his seventy-second year, and death could not be far off. The emperor set himself diligently to prepare for it. He divided his time between prayer, the distribution of alms, and scriptural studies. He was correcting the Latin version of the Gospels, and comparing it with the Syriac and the original Greek, up to the moment when he was attacked by the fever which terminated in death. This was in the middle of the month of January A.D. 814. He lingered for several days; then, feeling his end approaching, he received the sacraments of the church from the hands of his almoner, and stretching out his limbs for the last long sleep closed his eyes, and murmuring, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit," expired. He was interred in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, the capital of his empire.

CHAPTER VI.
LOUIS LE DÉBONNAIRE (THE GOOD-NATURED).
A.D. 814—840.

It has been said that the sins and follies of generations, when they have reached their height, are always expiated by some one individual in himself worthy of being reverenced as a saint; and certainly the misfortunes of Louis le Débonnaire, the son and successor of Charlemagne, are an exemplification of the assertion. Their origin may be traced in bygone events, in no way attributable to him, but producing results with which the meek saintliness of his disposition rendered him unequal to cope.

Louis had been brought up in Aquitaine by priests, who made him far more really religious than themselves; and when he found himself sovereign lord of a great empire his one wish was to reform
his teachers. He would have the bishops give up their arms, their horses, their spurs, and relinquish the tyrannical powers which they had been accustomed to exercise. He sent commissioners to enquire into the state of the monasteries, caused the neglected discipline to be re-established, and banished two intriguing monks who had obtained great influence over Charlemagne. The manners of his court also were reformed, and the princesses, his sisters, whose conduct had been disreputable, were removed from the palace and immured in separate convents. Towards his subjects he was just and generous. He lived, in fact, in the midst of them as a father amongst his children. Dukes, counts, and governors might bear rule over the affairs of their districts generally, but the poor were to be safe from their oppression. Saxons and Aquitanians, the conquered races, were dearer to him than any others. In his youth he always wore the dress of an Aquitanian. This was a special order of Charlemagne's, who on one occasion particularly ordered his son to appear before him at Paderborn, accompanied by a body of youths of his own age, all dressed alike in the Gascon or Aquitanian costume—the round tunic, with long sleeves hanging down to the knees, spurs laced over their boots, and javelins in their hands.

The one fatal mistake of the new emperor was that of carrying benevolence beyond the bounds of prudence.

An empire so vast, containing such various and uncivilised races, required a sovereign who could make himself feared as well as loved. But at the outset of his reign Louis le Débonnaire showed that he could yield more easily than he could exact. In Charlemagne's lifetime the Pope had felt himself obliged to obtain the emperor's sanction to his election, but Stephen IV., when elected Pope in 816, made no application to Louis for consent; and the omission passed without remonstrance. The Pope, on his side, was by no means so forgetful. The coronation of the new emperor was a solemn act which he deemed that no one but himself could perform, and he accordingly journeyed to France, met Louis at Rheims, and in a most imposing ceremonial placed the crown upon his head. From that time the world was to understand that the dignity of emperor was dependent for its validity upon the Roman pontiff.

The following year Louis took his first politically important step, which proved to be unfortunate and ill-judged. Charlemagne had intended to divide the empire. It was the idea of the age. Louis prepared to follow out his wish. He convoked an assembly at Aix-la-Chapelle, and after appointing his eldest son, Lothaire, the sharer of his throne for the present time, proceeded to apportion his territories when he himself should be no more. Lothaire was then to have France and Italy; Pepin, the second son, was to have Aquitaine; and Louis, the youngest, Germany.
But the emperor, when he prospectively gave away Italy, forgot that there was another claimant for it. His elder brother, Pepin, had, during his lifetime, been named by Charlemagne king of Italy. Pepin was dead, but his illegitimate son, Bernard, considered the inheritance to be his; and not only so, but, as it would appear, regarded himself also as the heir of the empire, being descended from Charlemagne's eldest son. Bernard had no doubt a right on his side, so far as Italy was concerned, for Charlemagne himself had confirmed him on the throne of Italy. He assembled the Lombard lords, his vassals, and advanced towards the passes of the Alps; but when the army of Louis drew near to meet them, many of the faithless nobles of Italy forsook their king, and Bernard, in despair, accepted a safe-conduct from the emperor. Trusting to the prof ered mediation of the empress Ermengarde, he passed over to his uncle's camp. Here also treachery met him. Ermengarde desired the crown of Italy for her own son. She had no intention of saving Bernard. At Chalons-sur-Saône he was brought before an assembly of the Franks, publicly accused, and condemned to death. The gentle Louis could not bring himself to consent to the execution. The sentence was changed to perpetual imprisonment. Ermengarde insisted that loss of sight should be added, and the horrible sentence was so cruelly executed that Bernard died after three days. Louis, filled with remorse for the crime to which he had consented, brooded over it until it seemed that it could only be expiated by abdication and retirement to a monastery. Whilst Ermengarde lived such a step was impossible; but in 819 she died, and he then felt free to carry out the project. His courtiers and ministers were alarmed. The emperor's abdication would be their downfall. They spoke to him of a second marriage, and Louis, easily persuaded, listened to the suggestion. Judith, the brilliant, accomplished daughter of Guelph, count of Bavaria, became his wife, and from that moment his evil genius. Her talents and decision of character gave her an unbounded influence over him, whilst her example was destructive to the purity of his court. Her favourite, and the supporter of her schemes, was an Aquitanian noble, Bernard, the son of that duke William 'au court nez' who had formerly been the emperor's tutor. Brought up together, Bernard of Aquitaine and Louis had long been intimate friends, and now the government was carried on only by Bernard's advice. Louis was still miserable. The death of his unhappy nephew could not be forgotten, and with the remembrance came self-reproach for other deeds, also connected with the reformation of the church, which, though at the time he considered them justifiable, now seemed to be crimes calling for the vengeance of Heaven.

Public penance for his sins seemed his only hope, and at Attigny-
At the beginning of his reign the emperor portions of his large dominions to his three sons—Italy, prospective title of emperor, to Lothaire, the eldest; Louis; Aquitaine to Pepin. But there was now a infant, Charles, the child of Judith. His mother be satisfied without a kingdom for him also, and he re-title of king of Allemannia. His territory, including Bur- ace, and part of Switzerland, was to be taken out of the of Lothaire, from whom an oath of protection was exacted. he had been won over to this arrangement by the flatteries but he soon repented of it. Unitting himself with Louis, who also saw reason to fear for their inheritance, he couraged the disaffected spirit of the nobles, and at length, ing of 830, a frightful rebellion broke out—a rebellion of subjects against their sovereign, but of sons against their unhappy emperor surrendered to his sons at Compiègne. Aquitaine was banished, the empress was compelled to cil in a convent at Poitiers, the boy king Charles was to strict confinement; and although the emperor was retain his title, the real power of government passed into of Lothaire.

is far easier to upset a government than to establish its ruins. The very next year the two younger princes to restore the emperor, and by their efforts Louis was his throne, when he freely pardoned Lothaire, and gave in his kingdom of Italy. The empress was released from; and Bernard of Aquitaine suddenly appeared before the council at Thionville, challenged anyone who should dare he accusations which had been brought against him... and.
Pope Gregory IV. was on their side. He was devoted to Lothaire, and complained that the emperor had not kept certain agreements made at his coronation. In Alsace—that common battlefield of centuries—between Colmar and Bâle, the two armies met. The Pope was present in Lothaire’s camp. He wished to avoid bloodshed. Negotiations began, but were not immediately successful. Suddenly, in the course of one night, all the principal barons of the emperor’s party silently quitted his camp, and the next morning appeared with their troops on the side of the enemy. The example was followed by others, and in a few days the only persons who adhered to Louis were the empress Judith and her son Charles, and a few bishops and counts and inferior vassals. The spot where this shameful desertion took place received and long retained the name of Lügenfeld, or the Field of Falsehood.

Louis submitted and sought his son’s camp. Lothaire received him coldly, but promised him personal protection. It would be sufficient for his purpose if the emperor could be degraded by a punishment so humiliating that he could never rise from it again. At Lothaire’s instigation the bishops of the land called a solemn assembly at Soissons in the church of St. Medard, November 11, 838. They presented to the unhappy emperor a list of the crimes of which he was to own himself guilty.

Louis contested nothing. Three times he owned that he was guilty, and with tears entreated to be permitted to do public penance. Then, taking off his military belt, the dress of a penitent was put upon him, and in this attire he suffered himself to be carried by his son a prisoner to Aix-la-Chapelle, his capital—the city in which he had once stood by Charlemagne’s side and taken for himself from the altar the imperial crown. An infinite pity was awakened throughout the empire. The people recounted in horror the humiliations to which their sovereign had been subjected. His story was to them that of a Scripture hero; if he had sinned he had been led astray by his wife, as Adam was tempted by Eve, whilst in his sufferings and his patience he resembled the sorely-tried Job, or even One yet higher—the Saviour in the midst of His enemies.

The aged emperor found himself exalted even by the very depth of his humiliation. The voice of the people condemned Lothaire, and the nobles forsook him. He fled to Italy, and the emperor was replaced on his throne. But there was no peace. Judith was still the queen of his counsels, and to please her and provide a kingdom for her son Charles was still the one object of his heart.

Lothaire, a second time pardoned, had been permitted to retain his kingdom of Italy, on condition of never again repassing its boundaries without the consent of his father. His territory was secured to him, but the rest of the empire remained to be divided,
for the settlement made at the beginning of the reign had been upset by the wars which had followed. Judith urged that the division should no longer be delayed. The emperor yielded, and the empire, with the exception of Italy, was almost equally distributed between his second son, Louis the German, his third son, Pepin of Aquitaine, and the young Charles. This of course could not be done without considerably diminishing the inheritance which Louis the German and Pepin had originally looked upon as their own. A few years later Charles received the promise of a still larger territory, and when Pepin died, which he did suddenly in 838, the claims of his son were entirely set aside and Aquitaine was declared to belong to Charles.

Judith now made friends with Lothaire, and, supported by him, compelled the weak emperor to assent to another most flagrant act of injustice. Louis the German was to content himself with his small kingdom of Bavaria, and the remainder of the immense empire was to be absolutely divided between Lothaire and Charles. Lothaire chose the east, Charles the west. Louis the German then raised the standard of revolt, and invaded the Rhenish provinces. The emperor, sinking under illness and age, led his troops against his son and compelled him to retire. But the effort proved too much for his strength. Miserable and heart-sick, he repaired to a little island on the Rhine, near Mayence, there to await death. For some time he lingered, his thoughts turning now to the heaven of peace for which he had so long sighed and so earnestly though imperfectly sought to prepare himself, and now to the wretched past—his own weakness and the rebellion of his children.

"I pardon Louis," he said; "but let him well consider with himself. He has despised the laws of God and brought his father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave."

Louis le Débonnaire died on the 20th of June, 840, in the sixty-third year of his age.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM LOUIS LE DÉBONNAIRE TO THE DEATH OF CHARLES LE GROS.

A.D. 840–888.

The unity of the empire was at an end when Louis le Débonnaire died. Lothaire indeed had the title of emperor, but he was immediately opposed by his brothers Louis the German and Charles. A great battle was fought at Fontenay, June 25, 841. Lothaire was totally
defeated and fled to Aix-la-Chapelle, and Louis and Charles, for the moment feeling themselves bound together by a common interest, agreed to meet at Strasburg, there to form a permanent alliance.

On the day appointed the princes met, prepared each to take a solemn oath of alliance. Louis, as the elder, spoke first in the Romance language, a mixture of Latin and Gallic, the foundation of modern French. It was the native tongue of his brother's Neustrian and Aquitanian troops, and he desired to be understood by them. 'For the love of God and the good of all Christian people, and for our common safety, I swear that henceforth, and whilst God shall give me might and understanding, I will support my brother Charles in all things, even as I am bound to do, so long as he shall deal in like manner with me. And never will I make any peace with Lothaire which shall be to the detriment of my brother.'

Charles took the same oath in the Tudesque dialect, the native tongue of the Austrasians and the foundation of modern German.

The bishops present then declared that by the just judgment of God Lothaire was deposed.

Yet it was not to be open war with Lothaire. The counsel of the bishops was for peace, and the two brothers, sending messengers to Lothaire, required of him to state what under the circumstances would be his demands.

All that he asked was granted. Four days were spent at Verdun in dividing the empire, and then it was finally settled that Lothaire, retaining his title of emperor, should content himself with the kingdom of Italy and that portion of modern France which lies between the Rhine, the Meuse, the Saône, and the Rhone. The northern part of this territory received from Lothaire the name of Lotharingia, or Lorraine. It has been disputed ground for centuries. Certainly it never originally belonged to France, but as certainly it cannot be said to have been an integral portion of Germany, which, when it was recognised as the inheritance of Louis the German, consisted only of Charlemagne's territories on the right bank of the Rhine, with the cities of Mayence, Worms, and Spiers on the left bank.

France may be said to have formed the kingdom allotted to Charles; yet many years elapsed before its different portions and provinces were consolidated under one government. The exact portion over which Charles claimed dominion lay to the west of the Meuse, the Saône, and the Rhone. It is from this treaty of Verdun, A.D. 843, that historians date what may properly be called the kingdom of France.

The empress Judith lived to see her son established on his throne. She died in 843, and was buried at Tours.

Charles le Chauve (the Bald), the first king of France, as dis-
tistinguished from Clovis, the first king of the Franks, was the devoted servant of the church; and the actual ruler of the country during his reign was Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims. Hincmar was a man of a singularly courageous and lofty mind, and at the head of the clergy of France he defended the claims of Charles against those of Louis the German, when Louis, forgetting the alliance to which he had sworn, would fain have made himself master of Aquitaine. Such support was greatly needed, for troubles both of church and state marked the whole of Charles's reign. In the church the doctrine of transubstantiation was put forward openly by Paschacius Radbert, a French abbé, and that of predestination by Gotteschalk, a German monk. The divines of the Irish church, who were then considered the most learned and orthodox in Europe, combated both these doctrines, and Hincmar, who was especially opposed to Gotteschalk, appealed for the confirmation of the teaching of the church to an Irishman, John Scottus, surnamed Erigena, then in high favour at the court of Charles the Bald. Charles, like his mother, Judith, was devoted to literature. He treated Erigena as a familiar friend, and confided to him the school of the palace, where the deepest metaphysical questions were discussed. Erigena wrote a treatise denouncing the opinions of Gotteschalk and asserting man's free will. But whilst opposing one error Erigena fell into another, for his teaching exalted reason at the expense of faith. He and his followers were condemned by the church of Rome, but their principles still made progress, and were destined in after years to work out great results.

But the king and the bishops of France could not long afford to occupy themselves with the discussion of theological questionings. The Northmen, whom the far-seeing Charlemagne so dreaded, though defeated for the moment, had returned again and again. The younger sons of the Scandinavian kings were their leaders. They looked upon the sea as their inheritance, and called themselves sea-kings. By yearly invasions of foreign countries they obtained lands which they called their own, and sought their wives from amongst the people whose country they had ravaged. Charlemagne had stationed vessels at the entrance of the rivers to resist the invaders. His weak descendants asked the aid of the pirates to assist them in their civil dissensions; and when once in any degree established in the country, every bandit or fugitive serf who chose to join them was welcomed as an addition to their power. On the coast and by the rivers there was daily dread. As soon as the barks of the pirates, which they called dragons or serpents, were seen, as soon their ivory horns were heard resounding along the shores, every man fled, none daring to look back. To the town, to the neighbouring monastery, driving their herds before them, the
peasants hurried, hiding themselves under the altars, and trusting that reverence for the relics of the saints would check the course of the barbarians. But the Scandinavian pirates had no appreciation of relics. Rather the more sacred was the sanctuary, the more resolute, it would seem, were they in violating it. In 845, under the leadership of Regnord Lodbrog, they appeared before the walls of Paris, rifled the rich abbey of St. Geneviève and St. Germain des Prés, and only retired on the payment by Charles le Chauve of 7,000 pounds of silver. In 857 they were again in Paris, massacring the inhabitants till the islets of the Seine were whitened with the bones of the victims. The alarm awakened by these atrocities became at length so universal that men dared neither sow nor reap; forests spread themselves over the land between the Seine and the Loire. A troop of wolves traversed Aquitaine, no one being able to stop them, and wild beasts threatened to take possession of France.

And whilst these barbarians desolated the north the Saracens infested the south, with the same object—pillage.

The chief stations of the Northmen were at the mouths of the Scheldt, the Seine, and the Loire; those of the Saracens in Provence and at St. Maurice in the Vézère. Only one person of that time appears to have been able in any way to make head against the Northmen; this was Robert the Strong, called the Maccabeus of his time. He was a noble of Saxon descent, the governor of the provinces between the Seine and the Loire. But even he could not prevent a disgraceful treaty made in 866, by which Charles was bound to pay 4,000 pounds of silver to restore or ransom all French prisoners who had made their escape, and to give a compensation for every Northman who had been killed by a Frank. The valiant count Robert was killed the following year in a fight with the Northmen, led by their famous chief Hastings. His death was a heavy blow to the power of the Carolingian monarchy.

Terrible were the Northmen and the Saracens, but the unfortunate Charles had yet a more deadly enemy within his own territories. Unable to guard his people himself, he was obliged to trust for their defence to his nobles. Every baron in the centre of his own domain was an absolute lord, and the small landholders naturally applied to him for protection. They commended themselves, according to the phrase then in use, by promising, in return for security, either military service or the payment of a sum of money. The baron in his own territory declared war or peace, imposed taxes, made laws, even coined money; and when at length Charles le Chauve consented to a decree of the national council by which a noble was permitted to transmit to his son
not only his possessions, but his offices and dignities, several of
the great barons became in actual fact, though not in name, inde-
pendent kings.

Yet whilst Charles le Chauve was thus losing his original
dominions by the invasions of the Northmen and the Saracens, and
his authority by the encroachments of his barons, he was, on the
other hand, gaining new territories by the death of his brother and
nephews.

Lothaire, who had retained the title of emperor, died in 855,
leaving three sons. They inherited his dominions, but died before
their uncle Charles and left no direct heirs.

According to the principles of hereditary succession, Lothaire's
dominions ought then to have passed to Louis the German; but
Charles not only laid claim to a portion, but insisted upon having
the title of emperor. A council assembled at Pavia adjudged the
imperial crown to both princes. Charles, however, determined to
be sole emperor. He crossed the Alps, gained over the Pope, John
VIII, to his side, and was by him crowned on Christmas Day 875.

A renewal of war between the brothers seemed inevitable; but
Louis the German, the wisest and best of Charlemagne's grand-
sons, died shortly after at Frankfort. Like his brother Lothaire,
he had three sons to inherit his dominions, but they would have
had little chance of escaping the grasping ambition of their uncle
Charles if he had not been suddenly stopped by the hand of
death. He was indeed actually crossing the Alps to seize their
territories when he was attacked by his last illness. In a misera-
ble cabin upon the pass of Mont Cenis the proud and restless king
lay on his death-bed, attended by a Jewish physician, Zedekias,
in whom he placed great confidence. But treachery is said to have
been at work. Zedekias administered a potion which proved poison-
ous, and on the 6th of October, 877, at the age of fifty-four, Charles
le Chauve died.

This period of history is rendered extremely perplexing by the
confusion of names and titles. Charlemagne and his son Louis le
Débonnaire, it should be remembered, were the only monarchs
whose authority was even nominally recognised by the whole of the
Frank empire. Lothaire called himself emperor, but he was in
reality only king of Italy. His brothers were independent mon-
archs, at war with him. When Lothaire died his eldest son, Louis,
took the title, and is sometimes mentioned in history as the emperor
Louis II, but he was only king over a portion of his father's territ-
ories, which were shared between him and his brothers. The title of
emperor was therefore but an empty honour.

Charles le Chauve left only one son, commonly known as Louis le
Bégue (the Stammerer). He was a weak and sickly prince, who
reigned only a year and a half, dying in 879. Then followed the joint reign of his two sons, Louis and Carloman; Louis reigning in the north of France, Carloman in Aquitaine and Burgundy. We hear no more of the title of emperor, but Louis is known as Louis III., and must therefore have been reckoned as the successor of his cousin Louis II., the son of Lothaire. The two young kings lived in amity, and their joint reign was only disturbed by the revolt of duke Boson, the brother-in-law of Charles le Chauve, who, being supported by the bishops and people of the country, made himself the independent sovereign of Burgundy and Provence. The capital of the new kingdom was Arles. It maintained its independence for 150 years. Louis III. showed some vigour in his government, for, although not twenty years of age, he defeated the Northmen near Abbeville, and made a treaty with their leader, Hastings. Sudden death, however, overtook him in August 882, and two years afterwards, in December, A.D. 884, Carloman also died from a wound which he received when hunting the wild boar. The authority of these short-lived descendants of the great Charlemagne must have sunk very low, for a writer of the annals of the times says of Louis III., ‘He built a wooden castle, but it was of more use to the pagans as a fortification than to the Christians as a defence; for King Louis could find no one to whose care he could entrust it.’

The victory gained by Louis over the Northmen was indeed of some importance, and a song commemorating it, composed in the German language, still exists; but the barbarians were not permanently weakened. Gottfried, their chief, had married Gizla, a princess of the house of Charlemagne, and had received the lordship of Friesland. He needed further a territory on the Rhine. ‘Friesland,’ he said, ‘produced no wine; he must have Coblenz and Andernach.’ The sovereign of whom he made this demand was Charles le Gros (the Fat), the successor of Louis III. and Carloman. Charles le Gros owed his dignity to his age. The direct heir to the throne after the death of the joint kings was a child of five years old, named also Charles, a son of Louis le Bègue by his second wife, Adelaide; but the nobles set his claim aside and chose for their sovereign the youngest son of Louis the German.

Unhappily Charles le Gros was wholly unworthy of his position. His enormous size rendered him inactive; he had neither talent nor goodness to make up for it. He was, in fact, weak, cruel, treacherous, and cowardly. He had the title of emperor, and nearly the whole of Charlemagne’s dominions were inherited by him; and yet in his reign the Northmen became so powerful that, under the command of their famous leader Rollo, A.D. 885, they besieged Paris. The capital was defended by Eudes, count of Paris, who, entrenched with 30,000 men in the island of the Seine which forms the centre of the city,
Siege of Paris—Deposition of Charles Le Gros—Eudes. 53

held out for eighteen months. The king was absent in Germany, and took little heed to prayers for assistance; and when, after a long delay, he arrived, he stationed himself with his troops on the heights of Montmartre. It is said that a monk tried to rouse his courage by telling him stories of the older days—how Pepin le Bref had cut off a lion’s head with one blow; how Charlemagne, when in Saxony, killed everyone who was higher than his own sword; how Louis le Débonnaire had astonished the Northmen by breaking the swords which they held in their hands; and how a soldier of Charlemagne’s army carried seven, eight, and even nine of the barbarians spitted on his lance like little birds. But Charles le Gros unfortunately was not encouraged by these voracious histories; and Eudes and his soldiers heard at length, to their unspeakable indignation, that their sovereign had entered into a disgraceful compromise, and agreed, if the Northmen, or Normans, would give up the siege of Paris, to pay 800 pounds of silver, and to allow them to retire unmolested into Burgundy.

There was but one voice of contempt throughout the country when this treaty was made known. A council of the empire, assembled at Tribur, near Mayence, deposed the weak and incapable emperor, whose mind as well as his body was diseased. The monastery of Reichenau, on the Lake of Constance, was his place of refuge, and there in 888 he died.

CHAPTER VIII.

From the Death of Charles Le Gros to the Accession of Hugh Capet.

A.D. 888-987.

The last semblance of Charlemagne’s empire was now at an end. Duchies, counties, lordships, were formed out of the wreck. We hear of Provence, Burgundy, Gascony, Poitiers, Toulouse, Hainault, Flanders, Vermandois, the dominions of great leaders, who were for the time independent sovereigns. Yet a thread of loyalty and legitimacy may be traced even in that most troubled time.

After the deposition of Charles le Gros the crown of France was offered to the gallant Eudes, count of Paris; but his reign, lasting ten years, was a continual struggle against faction, and during all this time a powerful party still adhered to the Carolingian family, and were anxious to place upon the throne the young Charles, the son of Louis le Bègue, who had been rejected in his
infancy, but was now advancing to manhood. The prince was, however, only fourteen when the first open attempt in his favour was made. During the absence of Eudes on a military expedition he was conveyed to Rheims, where he was crowned king of France, the 28th of January, 893. Eudes hastened to reassert his authority, and a period of strife followed. But Eudes was generous, and the contest ended by the division of the kingdom, the whole succession being guaranteed to Charles after the death of Eudes. The young prince had not long to wait for the promised inheritance. Eudes died in 898, with his last breath enjoining the barons to render to Charles all due allegiance.

Charles III, or Charles le Simple, reigned twenty-five years; but they are years of which very little is known. Only one event—in important for England as for France—marks it: the cession of Normandy to the Northmen.

On the banks of the Seine the invaders had by this time formed colonies. Bayeux, Evreux, and Chartres were in their hands, and now, in 911, they were powerful enough to oppose the royal army, commanded by Richard, duke of Burgundy, and Robert, duke of France, the brother of Eudes. Defeat, accompanied by terrible slaughter, was the fate of the Normans, and Rollo, their leader, vowed a war of extermination in revenge. Then duke Robert tendered his advice to the king. ‘Let the archbishop of Rouen be sent as an envoy to Rollo, with the offer of a marriage with the princess Gisèle and the hereditary lordship of the lands between Brittany and the Epte, on condition that he would become a Christian and consent to live in friendship with France.’ The Norman chief deemed the offer insufficient. ‘The territory proffered was,’ he said, ‘exhausted. He and his followers could not obtain subsistence from it.’ Brittany was then suggested. Charles had no right to give it; it was a distinct state under its own province; but Rollo knew nothing of this, or if he did know it deemed it of no consequence. The arrangement was finally concluded, and the French king met Rollo at a small village near Gisors, A.D. 911.

The oath of fealty was there demanded, and the Norman chief took it, but he refused to complete the ceremony by kneeling and kissing the king’s foot, and ordered one of his soldiers to perform the duty for him. The man, perhaps intentionally, perhaps from awkwardness, lifted the foot so roughly that Charles fell backwards. A burst of laughter from the Normans followed, but the indignity passed unnoticed by the Franks. They were in no condition to quarrel with their new allies. Rollo was now baptised by the name of Robert, after his godfather, the duke of France. Most of his followers also embraced Christianity. Shortly afterwards he married the French princess, and from this time he appears as a wise
ruler, governing his dominions so ably that Normandy soon became a prosperous and important duchy.

On the other hand, the incapacity of Charles le Simple was quickly apparent. For ten years he was entirely guided by the counsels of a man of low birth named Haganon, whose pride and dishonesty at length so irritated the nobles that duke Robert of France took upon himself to insist upon his being dismissed. The king refused, and the nobles rose in rebellion.

The events which followed can scarcely be understood without some knowledge of the history of that portion of Charlemagne's empire which had been inherited by his grandson Louis the German, and which was now recognised as the kingdom of Germany, distinct from France.

It will be remembered that Charles le Gros was for a short time emperor in fact as well as in title, since he ruled over France, Germany, and Lorraine; but when, after his disgraceful treaty with the Northmen, he was deposed and the empire was broken up, the Germans elected as their sovereign Arnulf, an illegitimate grandson of Louis the German. Arnulf was crowned by the Pope, and this gave him a claim to the title of emperor. When he died, in 899, he left his dominions to his little son Louis, a child of six years old, who grew up to be a youth, and was actually acknowledged as the sovereign; but his reign was but a miserable struggle, and in 911 he died of a broken heart. His people immediately elected Conrad, count, or duke, of Franconia, to be their monarch. From this period for many centuries the emperors of Germany were not hereditary but elected monarchs.

But although Conrad of Franconia was emperor in name and influence, he did not possess all the territories which belonged to Charlemagne's family. Lorraine, the personal inheritance of young Louis, fell to the share of his cousin Charles le Simple, king of France, and it was there that Charles sought refuge when his folly had caused a rebellion. His tastes and sympathies had indeed always been German, and this, no doubt, tended to alienate his people. It was the old feud between Austrasia and Neustria, between the Tentons and the Romanised Gauls. Charlemagne's family could scarcely fail to be Germans, and the French, who desired a wholly independent existence as a nation, must have regarded them as obstacles to the object which they had at heart.

The great struggle between the two races came to its climax at the dethronement of Charles le Simple. Duke Robert of France, who headed the French nobles in their rebellion, was proclaimed king, and crowned at Rheims on the 29th of June, 922, and civil war then became general. Haganon, the friend and minister of Charles, summoned the Normans to his assistance, and in a great battle at
Scissons Robert, duke of France, was slain; but the victory remained with his party, which was led by Robert's son, Hugh le Blanc (the White), and Herbert, count of Vermandois.

Once more Charles fled to Lorraine; and the French nobles agreed that the crown should be conferred on Robert's son-in-law, Rodolph, duke of Burgundy, who had greatly contributed to the victory. Rodolph was accordingly crowned at Scissons. No objection appears to have been made to the arrangement on the part of Hugh the White, but the count of Vermandois was so offended at being passed over that he sent a message to Charles, assuring him of his loyalty. The king trusted himself to his deceitful vassal, and was then seized and kept as a prisoner. For seven years the unhappy Charles was transferred from one dungeon to another at the caprice of his cruel jailer. Whenever the count of Vermandois wished to extort any favour from Rodolph he threatened to replace Charles on his throne. When no favour was needed the miserable king was kept in his cell. The count was not entirely insensible to the cruelty of this conduct. The old chroniclers say that he at length visited the captive monarch and entreated his pardon, and permitted him to reside in one of the royal palaces, but he never restored him to liberty, and Charles le Simple, worn out by illness and misery, died in the castle of Peronne in 929.

The heir of the Carolingian family was now a child of three years old, the son of Charles le Simple, but he was not in France. His mother, who was the sister of Æthelstan, king of the Anglo-Saxons, had carried him with her to England. The little boy, known by the name of Louis d'Outremer, on account of this early exile, was brought up at the court of his uncle, whilst Rodolph reigned supreme in France. The count of Vermandois, indeed, still continued to oppose him, but now that Charles le Simple was dead the great secret of his power was gone, and he was at length obliged to leave France and seek for the protection of Henry the Fowler, king of Germany. A regular treaty of peace was then concluded between the disputants, and the following year, 936, Rodolph died, leaving no children.

Hugh the White, count of Paris, might at once have placed the crown on his own head. But after concerting measures with Herbert of Vermandois and William Longue-Epée (Longsword), duke of Normandy, he sent an embassy to England for the legitimate heir, the exiled son of Charles le Simple, and asked for his reward only the duchy of Burgundy.

Louis IV. was crowned at Rheims, A.D. 936, the same year that Otho the Great became king of Germany. Hugh le Blanc retained his former title, and was still count of Paris. In name the king was superior to the vassal, but Louis was absolute lord of only a
small portion of his nominal kingdom. The county of Laon belonged
to him as his personal inheritance, but nothing more. The noble
who had made him a king was far greater than himself, and Louis
felt this bitterly. Hugh would fain have governed him, but Louis
was high-spirited and asserted his independence, and Hugh resented
it. Lukewarmness followed, then open enmity. For a short period
the outbreak of this feeling was delayed. A horde of wild Hun-
garians crossed and recrossed the kingdom like a devastating torrent,
and all other objects were put aside in the effort to drive them
back. But when this was done the old feud broke out again. Louis
might perhaps have been able to maintain his cause if his enemies
had been found only in his own country; but, besides Hugh and
the barons leagued with him, the king had a foe in Otho of Ger-
many, the most influential monarch of the time. True he had
married Otho’s sister, Gerberga, a princess of rare merit, and whose
great wish was to promote peace between her husband and her
brother; but for a time these personal ties were overlooked. The
count of Paris, William, duke of Normandy, the count of Ver-
mansois, and others of the rebellious lords formally proposed to
transfer their allegiance to Otho, and the German king became
their leader, and invading France, caused himself to be proclaimed
king at Attigny. Louis bravely defended his rights, and when
Pope Stephen VIII. interposed his mediation the French princes
were induced to return to their duty. But peace in France was of
short duration. Disputes arose not only between the nobles, but
the bishops; disputes important in themselves, and also marking
the condition of society at this time. The French bishops in
the tenth century resided in the great cathedral cities, which were,
in fact, their own domain, subject to them almost in the same degree
as the domains of the great barons. When, therefore, as happened
in the reign of Louis IV., two candidates appeared for the arch-
bishopric of Rheims, one supported by Hugh le Blanc and the
other by the king, a regular war was the consequence. The king’s
archbishop was for a time expelled from Rheims, and the city threw
off the royal authority altogether; and although this state of things
did not permanently continue, yet the quarrel was kept up during
the whole of the reign of Louis IV.

About this time William Longue-Epée, duke of Normandy, was
assassinated, and the Normans acknowledged as his successor his
little son Richard (afterwards named Sans Peur), then only ten
years of age. Louis proposed to take charge of the boy, and the
offer was accepted. But the treacherous king, in concert with Hugh
le Blanc, plotted to seize Normandy, divide it between them, and
keep the young duke a prisoner. A faithful servant discovered the
plan, and concealing the child in a load of hay, he carried him away
to the castle of Coucy amongst his own people. The French king made no further effort to retake the little duke, and indeed openly renounced any such intention, but Hugh le Blanc was indignant, and soon openly showed his enmity.

The Norman city of Bayeux was under the government of a Danish prince, named Harold, but he had been expelled from his territory by his son, and now he sought a conference with king Louis at the Ford of Herluin. Louis repaired to the appointed spot with a small retinue. On a sudden signal a troop of Harold's followers attacked this escort and put them to flight. Louis, mounted on a swift horse, fled across the fields to Rouen, where, instead of a refuge, he found a prison, for the inhabitants were the accomplices of Harold's perfidy. Hugh le Blanc then appeared upon the scene with offers of assistance, but they were of a suspicious character. He proposed that the two sons of Louis should be given up to the Normans as hostages for their father. Gerberga, the queen, refused to deliver up more than one. Hugh prevailed on the Normans to agree, and the young prince was placed in their hands, whilst Louis was delivered up to the count of Paris. Then Hugh threw off the mask and declared the king his prisoner. In vain did the Saxon king Edmund, the brother of Æthelstan, intercede for him. Hugh kept his unhappy sovereign a captive, loaded him with reproaches, and taking advantage of his utter helplessness, refused to set him free unless he would consent to give up Laon, the most valuable town in his hereditary dominions.

At this price Louis d'Outremer was at length set at liberty. At Compiegne his wife awaited him with many of the bishops and some of his most faithful friends. In their presence he could not restrain his bitter indignation against his enemy. 'Hugh! Hugh!' he exclaimed, 'what possessions hast thou robbed me of! What evils hast thou inflicted upon me! Thou hast seized the town of Rheims; thou hast compelled me unawares to give up Laon. In these two towns could I find safety. They were my only ramparts. My father, a captive like myself, was delivered from his misery by death; but I, alas! reduced to the same extremity—a king only in name—long to die, and yet am compelled to live!'

Help, however, was not entirely withheld from the unfortunate king. His cause was taken up by his brother-in-law, Otho the Great, by whose aid Rheims was retaken. A council of bishops was then summoned to Ingelheim, at the command of Otho, to consider the accusations brought by Louis d'Outremer against his great vassal, the count of Paris.

The king of France appeared before this foreign assembly to plead his own cause. Seated by the side of Otho, he listened whilst the papal legate announced the object of the synod. Then he rose
and spoke as follows:—'There is no one here present who is ignorant that the messengers of count Hugh and of the other barons of France came to seek me in the country beyond the sea, inviting me to return to the kingdom which was my paternal inheritance. I was consecrated and crowned by the wishes, and with the acclamations, of all the great leaders and the whole army of France. But shortly after count Hugh by treachery seized, deposed, and imprisoned me for a whole year, and not till I had agreed to deliver up Laon, the only town of my hereditary possessions which remained in the hands of my own people, was I able to obtain my freedom. If anyone here present can say that these evils have come upon me by my own fault, I am ready to defend myself from accusation either by the judgment of the king and synod now present or by single combat.'

No one of the friends of the count of Paris was prepared to answer an appeal of this kind made to a foreign tribunal. The council was removed to Trèves, and there the legate pronounced sentence of excommunication against the great baron. This proved effective, and Hugh was induced once more to tender allegiance to the king. Peace was for the time restored, but the wild Hungarians once more made their appearance in France, ravaging the country around Laon and Rheims. The king hastened to repulse them, and as he was traversing the road between the two cities a wolf crossed his path; he rushed forward after it, but his horse fell, and he received a fatal injury. In the month of September 954 Louis d'Outremer died. He was but thirty-three years of age; he had talent and courage, and, except in his treatment of Richard of Normandy, he exhibited many noble qualities, but the untoward circumstances of his position were too strong for him. Power and influence were passing into other hands, and his struggles to retain his crown served only to show that the spirit of the great Charlemagne was not entirely lost in his descendants.

The line of the Carolingian kings was now fast hastening to its end. Lothaire, the son of Louis d'Outremer, though only a boy of fourteen, was acknowledged as his father's successor, A.D. 954. Hugh le Blanc made no effort to seize the throne; he died two years afterwards. So it might have seemed that Lothaire would have been allowed to enjoy his inheritance in peace; but the spirit of count Hugh had descended to his son, afterwards known as Hugh Capet, and the old enmity was destined again to break forth, though not to the same extent. There was peace at first. If Lothaire was but fourteen, Hugh Capet was but ten years of age, and the two boys were brought up with common interests and relationships, for they were cousins. Redwiga, the mother of Hugh Capet, and Gerberga, the mother of Lothaire, were both sisters of King Othe of
Germany, and both desired to place their children under his powerful protection; but personal alliances have never been able long to withstand the force of political antagonism. Whilst Otho the Great lived there would seem to have been no contests between Germany and France, but when he died, and was succeeded by his son, known as Otho II., the strong tie was broken, and Lorraine, the borderland between the two countries, became again their apple of discord; it was considered a province of the empire, but Charles, the brother of Lothaire, had inherited some portion of it in right of his mother. Otho of Germany proposed that these lands should be held as a fief from him; Lothaire insisted on being himself recognised as the suzerain. War was the result. Lothaire secretly collected his troops and hastened to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he nearly surprised Otho himself, occupied the town and the palace, overthrew the royal ensigns, carried away the imperial banners, and, in mockery of the precipitate flight of the Germans from the town, turned to the south-east the bronze eagle which had been placed by Charlemagne on the top of his palace, with its outspread wings towards the west. Then he retired, having satisfied his indignation, but obtained no real advantage. And now it was Otho's turn to show his wrath by making reprisals. As Lothaire had advanced to Aix-la-Chapelle, so he advanced to Paris; Germans, Lorrainers, Flemings, and Saxons in his train, an army of sixty thousand in number. On the heights of Montmartre they encamped, and from thence the emperor of Germany sent a messenger to Hugh Capet, who was prepared to defend the capital. Hugh was a friend to the church, and the message he received was dictated in scorn of his devotion to her. 'Let count Hugh know,' was the import, 'that his ears shall be saluted with a louder Alleluia than he has ever yet heard;' and when the notice had been given the priests accompanying the German army broke forth intoning the Te Deum, whilst the united voices of the vast array of soldiers gave the responses. The thundering sound startled the astonished Parisians, but their alarm was needless. Otho II., contented with his bravado, remained but three days before the city and then retired. His retreat was disastrous. Lothaire attacked and defeated him near Soissons, and all his baggage and stores fell into the hands of the French.

Peace followed, and Lothaire, against the wishes of his people, and contrary to the wishes of Hugh Capet, gave up Lorraine to Germany. Once afterwards, after the death of Otho II., he attempted to retake the province, but failed; yet the attempt pleased his subjects and gained him a little popularity. His power, however, was decreasing and his authority passing into the hands of Hugh Capet. 'Lothaire,' wrote Gerbert, one of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of the tenth century, 'is king only in name. Hugh does not, indeed, bear the title, but he is so in act and deed.'
DEATH OF LOTHAIRE—LOUIS V.—DOMINION OF HUGH CAPET.

Louis V.—Hugh Capet.

Lothaire died at Rheims, the 2nd of March, 986, at the age of forty-four. His heir, Louis V., was a youth fully conscious of his own weakness and the power of the mighty Hugh Capet. His public address to the great barons showed the position which they would henceforth hold towards one another.

"When my father was dying," said the young king, advancing towards count Hugh, "he recommended me to govern the kingdom with your aid. He assured me that with this assistance I should possess riches, armies, and the strong places of the kingdom; let it please you, then, to give me the benefit of your counsels. In you I place my hope; to you I devote my will and my future." From henceforth count Hugh was of course the king's master.

This singular relation between a sovereign and his vassal was but of short duration. After a year of discord Louis V. died suddenly and mysteriously, it is supposed of poison administered to him by his wife. He was the last of the direct descendants of Charles-magne. His uncle Charles, duke of Lower Lorraine, might indeed fairly have laid claim to the throne; but Charles was a man so entirely without talent or influence that there were few to support his pretensions. Under these circumstances Adalberon, the archbishop of Rheims, convoked a national assembly at Senlis for the purpose of considering the election of a sovereign. The spirit in which he addressed the people expressed their wishes as well as his own.

"If," he said, "you wish to ensure the misery of the kingdom, you will make Charles your king. If, on the contrary, you desire that the country should be happy and prosperous, you will crown Hugh, the illustrious duke." And Hugh accordingly was crowned by Adalberon, at Noyon, on the 1st of June, 987.

CHAPTER IX.

HUGH CAPET.

A.D. 987-995.

At the accession of Hugh Capet the duchy of France, which composed the royal inheritance, consisted only of a portion of the territory between the Somme and the Loire. It was bounded on the north by the domains of the counts of Flanders and Vermandois; on the west by Brittany and the duchy of Normandy, to which Brittany was feudally subject; on the east by the territory of the count of Champagne; and on the south by the duchy of Aquitaine.
These four states, together with the duchy of Burgundy and the county of Toulouse, formed the great fiefs of the crown of France. Their lords were, in most respects, able to act as independent sovereigns. They were termed peers of France, and as such, according to the feudal law, could only be judged by their fellow nobles, the king presiding over the courts. This system of the feudal law became regularly established in France about the time of Hugh Capet, though its form may be traced long before in the ancient histories of the German tribes, and especially in the distinction conferred upon the young warriors who attached themselves to the person of their chief, and reckoned it disgraceful to survive a conflict in which he was killed. Presents of horses and weapons of war were a sufficient acknowledgment of this devotion then, but when the Franks were settled in Gaul land became the most coveted reward, and was bestowed under certain conditions. Portions of the conquered territory became the property of the victorious chiefs absolutely. These were called *alodial* lands, and, according to the language of the most ancient charters, were held only of God and the sword. Alodial proprietors amongst the Franks bore no part in the public burdens beyond that of sharing in the defence of the country and in warlike expeditions. This liability to military service seems to have been the origin of the claim afterwards made by the feudal lord to dispose of his vassal’s daughter and heiress in marriage, which doubtless arose from the necessity of providing some one who could fulfil the military service in the place of the woman.

The alodial holdings diminished as time went on, for many of the lesser independent proprietors, finding themselves surrounded by a rude population, were glad to seek protection from their superiors in power, and exchange their alodial for feudal tenures. This exchange was effected by the freeholder appearing before the noble with a clod of turf or the branch of a tree in his hand and definitely giving up his freehold, which was immediately restored to him to enjoy and dispose of as before, upon the condition of certain services being paid in return for the protection of the great lord.

Alodial property was also frequently alienated by the practice of making donations to churches and religious houses; but the ecclesiastical owners of the land were not exempt from military service, and bishops and abbots were bound to appear themselves in arms at the head of their retainers, until Charlemagne permitted them to send their vassals to the camp instead. But there was a second form of property dating from the settlement of the Franks in Gaul—that of the *beneficium*, or fief. This was land which had from the very beginning been granted upon special conditions to some favourite follower. If the conditions were not kept, the land might
FRANCE in the time of HUGH CAPET

London: Longmans & Co.
Besides alodial lands and fiefs there were also tributary lands, vested by persons who were not the owners, but who paid a fixed rent to the feudal proprietors. The poorer persons of this were accustomed to commend themselves to the protection of the powerful noble, and paid in return a stipulated service, or corvées, as it was called. These corvées were often very oppressive, and after the outbreak of the French revolution, a great hatred shown by the peasants to their lords. On all estates were besides serfs or slaves, who were the absolute property of the master.

The feudal system was an admirable institution for the protection of individuals against barbarous violence, but converted each fief what might almost be termed an independent state. On the accession of Hugh Capet there were no less than 150 lords, or seigneurs, who possessed the right to coin money, make private war, impose taxes, and who decided cases of life and death. Many them possessed territories fully as large as those of the king. The history of France for several centuries is in consequence little more than a history of the struggle between the king and the great lords, the gradual subjugation of the latter, and the ultimate concentration of all power in the hands of the monarch.

The accession of Hugh Capet is especially noteworthy because placed a dynasty upon the throne which was essentially French as opposed to the German Carolingians, and the great lords desired their king one of their own order and race. The duchy of France was also the most central and important fief in the kingdom, and for these reasons Hugh Capet was deemed the fittest person to be king. The nobles by no means regarded him as a sovereign to whom
and had recourse to treachery. By the aid of the unprincipled Adalberon, bishop of Laon, he contrived to introduce a body of French troops into Rheims while Charles and his officers were engaged in the solemn services of Holy Week, A.D. 991. The unfortunate prince of Lorraine and his young wife, Agnes of Vermandois, were seized, and sent as prisoners to Orleans, and there, after a few months' imprisonment, Charles died. His eldest son became duke of Lower Lorraine and died without issue, and the two younger sons took refuge in Germany, where their descendants became landgraves of Thuringia.

Hugh was now relieved of his greatest danger, but difficulties still remained. The barons of the south refused to recognize his title. 'Who made thee count?' asked Hugh of the powerful count of Perigord, who had overthrown Touraine. 'Who made thee king?' was the haughty reply. The best support for Hugh Capet lay in the clergy, and apparently with this view he showed such marked favour to the church that it obtained for him the title of its defender; and so marked was his outward respect for religion that during the whole of his life he refused to wear his crown, and appeared before his people not in the robes of a king, but in the ecclesiastical dress which belonged to him as lay abbot of St. Martin's of Tours.

The nine years of the reign of Hugh Capet were without any very marked events, and on the 24th of October, A.D. 996, he died at Paris in the fifty-seventh year of his age. His last injunctions to his son Robert, whom he had prudently caused to be crowned before his own death, were to protect the church, and on no account to alienate the endowments belonging to abbeys and convents, lest he should incur the wrath of their founder, St. Benedict.

The custom in France of making gifts of land—known as apanages—to the younger sons of the king dates from the accession of the Capetian family. These estates at last became provinces, and for a long time the custom of apanages greatly interfered with the territorial unity of the kingdom.

CHAPTER X.

ROBERT.

A.D. 996–1031.

It was a universal belief of the age in which the Capetian dynasty was established on the throne of France that the world would come to an end in the year 1000. Christianity, which inculcates the doc-
trine that man is a stranger and a pilgrim in a world doomed to destruction, laid the foundation of the idea, and the state of society furthered it. Life, in the middle ages, was chaos and contest; men who ventured to think and reason longed for order and repose; few had any expectation of finding them save in death.

The end of this weary world was, in fact, alike their hope and their dread. The empire of Rome had crumbled to dust, so had that of Charlemagne. Christianity, though it lessened the evils of life, and gave power for their endurance, still made no promise of terminating them. Misery succeeded misery, ruin was heaped on ruin. Some interposition of God would surely come! And it was waited for. The captive in his dungeon, the serf working at the plough under the shadow of his oppressor's castle, the monk in the solitude of the cloister striving against the temptations of his own heart and the illusions of the spirits of evil whom his fancy conjured up to terrify him. all alike craved relief, all alike felt that it was better to fall into the Hands of God and know their fate for ever, than to struggle for an existence without charm and without hope under the oppressive rule of fierce and heartless men.

This awful expectation of the speedy coming of the Last Day was deepened by the calamities which preceded or quickly followed the dawn of the year 1000. A terrible plague desolated Aquitaine. The flesh of the unhappy victims who were stricken by it fell off in flakes as though burnt; and in this state of living decay they thronged the roads and the sacred shrines, and crowding around the churches intensified the evil by the pollution of the air. The southern bishops ordered the relics of the saints to be brought forth from the churches. Then the crowd increased; the pressure redoubled, and the miserable sufferers died even whilst actually touching the relics which it was supposed would be their cure.

In the general terror the rich, careless of the possessions for which in too many cases they had risked their souls, sought only to atone for their misdeeds by gifts and restitutions. Lands, houses, serfs, were offered to the church. The legal deeds by which these donations were secured show the prevalent belief: 'The night of the world draws near'—such is the language used—'each day heaps ruin upon ruin. I (count or baron) give to such a church, for the welfare of my soul.'—and then follows the description of the gifts. Or again, 'Seeing that slavery is contrary to Christian liberty, I set free such an one, my serf—he, his children, and their descendants.'

But in many cases gifts and restitution did not satisfy the repellant soldiers. They desired to relinquish the sword and shelter themselves from the coming evils under the habit of the monk. Princes and nobles had often but one wish—to enter a monastery.
Robert.

William I., duke of Normandy, would have given up everything and retired to the abbey of Jumièges if the abbot would have permitted it; Hugh I., duke of Burgundy, was only prevented from becoming a monk by the interposition of the Pope and the emperor; Henry II. of Germany actually renounced his empire, made the vow of obedience to the abbot of St. Vannes, and only resumed his royal duties when compelled by the abbot's orders. His name has been handed down to us as St. Henry.

Another sovereign equally a saint, but not canonised, was Robert, surnamed the Pious, the son and successor of Hugh Capet, king of France. He was in his twenty-fourth year when, by the death of his father, he became sole king. Gentle, benevolent, simple, refined in his tastes, and eminently devotional in spirit, Robert would seem to have been peculiarly fitted for the cloister; but Providence had marked him out for a throne, and his father, in order to prepare him for it, placed him under the care of Gerbert, archbishop of Rheims, the most learned and scientific man of his time, who had studied algebra at Cordova amongst the Spanish Moors, had learnt how to construct a clock, and had dived so deeply into the mysteries of physical knowledge that his wondering contemporaries regarded him as a magician. The young king grew up well versed in several branches of secular learning, besides being skilled in music. He composed hymns for church services and superintended the building of cathedrals; but something more was required at that stormy period of the world's history, and Robert's reign was destined to be a sorrowful struggle between his principles and tastes and the necessities of his position.

The most important event of his life before he became sole king had been his marriage. His wife, Bertha, the widow of Eudes, count of Blois, and the daughter of Conrad, duke of Burgundy, was young and beautiful, and the object of his tenderest affection. But the marriage had also been one of policy, for Bertha had a claim to the duchy of Burgundy, which, when she married Robert, might be transmitted to France. The alliance proved most disastrous. The emperor of Germany, Otho III., desired to annex Burgundy to the empire, and he persuaded the Pope, Gregory V., to pronounce Robert's marriage invalid, on the plea that, according to the canonical law, he and Bertha were too nearly related. They were cousins in the fourth degree, and had stood sponsors for the same godchild, the latter being considered a spiritual relationship which rendered marriage inadmissible. In 998, two years after Robert's accession, the Pope issued his decree:—

"King Robert, who has married his relation Bertha, in defiance of the laws of the church, will renounce her, and do penance for seven years, according to canonical usage. If he refuse to obey,
let him be anathema; and let the same sentence be applied to Bertha.'

Devoted to the church though king Robert undoubtedly was, yet the excommunication roused him to rebellion. He refused to separate from his beloved Bertha. Even the near approach of the dreaded year of doom seems to have had but little effect upon him. Perhaps he felt that the justice of God would then revoke the harsh decree of man. The Pope, indignant at his disobedience, placed the kingdom under an interdict. The public services of the church were forbidden; no sacrament might be administered to the living, no words of blessing might hallow the graves of the dead. The church bells were silenced; the pictures were taken down from the walls of the sacred buildings; the statues were removed from their pedestals and laid upon beds of ashes and thorns. The misery which the people endured from the interdict at length subduèd the king's spirit. Bertha was put away, but his love remained unaltered, and the anguish of separation was felt during the remainder of his life.

And now the dreaded year was past. The eleventh century had dawned, and the judgment of God was still deferred. The universal penitence seemed, indeed, to have been accepted, for blessings were again vouchsafed. The harvest of 1004 was one of remarkable abundance. In token of thankfulness a general effort was made, not only in France, but throughout Christendom, to embellish and restore the cathedrals, and some of the most beautiful architectural monuments of Christian art, such as the magnificent abbeys of Cluny and Vezelay, date from this period of renewed life and hope.

The unhappy king Robert alone appeared marked out for increasing trial. A second marriage was required of him, that the throne might descend to his children. Constance, daughter of the count of Toulouse, was fitted by her birth to become the queen of France; but her imperious, even cruel disposition suited ill with the king's gentleness. Robert married her, but his after life was miserable. Constance, brought up in the luxurious south, attracted to her court a crowd of strangers whose luxury and extravagance, especially in dress, had a pernicious effect upon the hitherto simple manners of the French court. 'They are the vainest, most frivolous of men,' says a monkish historian of the period. 'Their mode of living, their appearance, their armour, the harness of their horses, are all equally whimsical. Short hair, shaved chins, ridiculous boots turned up at the toes, and general peculiarity of dress mark the want of order and right principle in their minds.' Literature, indeed, and civilisation were introduced by the Aquitanians, as well as absurd fashions; for the position of their country had brought them into close intercourse with the Saracens, who had conquered the
Robert's Musical Taste—His Superstitious Deceptions.

Robert.

greater part of Spain, and who were at that time the most enlightened people of Europe. But the habits of the south were certainly not in accordance with the severity of the monastic discipline, and must have been especially offensive to king Robert. Music was his one permitted pleasure, but it was consecrated solely to religion. His passion for it led him to take a personal share in the public services, and often in the church of St. Denis, at matins, mass, and vespers, he might be seen, crowned and dressed in his royal robes, directing the choir, and singing with the monks. One day returning after his earnest and penitential prayers, he found that his vain wife had caused his lance to be ornamented with silver. Robert examined it, and then went out into the streets, and meeting a ragged beggar asked him to fetch some instrument by which the silver ornaments attached to the lance could be taken off. The man went away, and Robert occupied the time of his absence with prayer. When the instrument was brought the king shut himself up in a room with the beggar, cut off the silver ornaments, and placing them in the man's pouch, recommended him, as was his wont in all cases when he made any special gift, to take great care that the queen did not know it. To save himself from his wife's indignation he had recourse to a falsehood, which gives a curious illustration of his ideas of morality. He told Constance that he did not know how it happened that the lance was despoiled of its ornaments. What amount of credit Constance gave to this assurance cannot be known, but certainly king Robert's little acts of what we should call deception, though caused by a pious scruple, would be a scandal in the present day.

It was customary at that period to swear by some sacred relic, which was considered to make the oath binding. Robert caused a crystal shrine to be made, apparently for the purpose of containing a relic, but in which he took care there should be nothing of the kind. He then made his nobles swear upon this shrine, and even occasionally took an oath himself upon it, and believed that in the absence of the relic there would be less sin in breaking it.

The king's want of wisdom was unfortunately as remarkable as his charity. He was especially tender-hearted towards criminals. On one occasion he saw a priest secretly steal a candlestick from a church. Queen Constance declared that the other priests who ought to have guarded the church should lose their eyes if the candlestick was not restored. As soon as the king heard this, he sent for the thief and said, 'Friend, hasten away, lest my queen, Constance, should discover and devour thee. Thou hast now the means of reaching thy native place, and may God be with thee.' The thief departed, and as soon as the king believed him to be safe, he turned
PERSECUTION OF HERETICS AND JEWS—DEATH OF ROBERT.

Henry I.

merrily to his attendants and asked, 'Why trouble yourselves so much about a candlestick? God has given it to one of His poor.'

Yet Robert was capable of severity, but it was only towards heretics. Two priests, canons of the church of the Holy Cross at Orleans, and one of them the confessor of queen Constance, were discovered to be the leaders of a sect who denied the inspiration of the Old Testament and the doctrine of the Trinity, condemned the ordinance of marriage, and threw discredit upon obedience to the moral law. Every effort was made to induce the priests to recant, but when they obstinately refused they were delivered over to the frightful punishment reserved for such offences, and condemned, with eleven others, to be burnt at the stake. The king believed that he was performing an act of piety in being present at the awful spectacle; and as the unhappy men were led to execution, Constance, utterly regardless of humanity, struck her confessor so violently with a small staff tipped with iron that one of his eyes was dashed out. The brutality and bigotry of the age not only excused the act, but even approved it.

The heresy was for the time suppressed, but only to reappear in a more advanced form at a later date.

The Jews also were grievously oppressed at this period, and were outraged and pillaged with impunity, the people thus revenging upon them the miseries inflicted by the cruel nobles. The king saw suffering all around him, but he could only partially relieve it. His barons were too strong for him, and any power which he possessed was, in his declining years, compelled to be exerted against his own children. The insolent and factious conduct of Constance fostered a rebellious spirit in her sons. They seized the royal castles and appropriated to themselves the revenues of the royal domains; the king had no resource but to take up arms against them, and after a lengthened campaign in Burgundy the rebellion was subdued. But Robert was himself overcome by an effort so contrary to his gentle nature. He fell ill at the castle of Melun, and died on the 20th of July, 1031, at the age of sixty. His reign had lasted thirty-five years.

CHAPTER XI.

HENRY I. AND PHILIP I.

A.D. 1031-1108.

The funeral of king Robert had no sooner taken place at St. Denis than Constance began to conspire with some of the chief barons to obtain the crown for her favourite son, Robert, to the exclusion
of his elder brother, Henry. The indolent character of Henry appeared likely to further her designs; but this very weakness compelled him to seek the aid of the greatest of his vassals, Robert, duke of Normandy, the younger brother of Richard Sans Peur. Rumour said that Robert had gained his sovereignty by murdering his brother, and certain it is that, after a great banquet given by Robert at Falaise, at which Richard had been sumptuously entertained, the guests were suddenly taken ill and died in a few hours with evident symptoms of poison. As Robert immediately afterwards took possession of the duchy, and imprisoned his brother's orphan child in a convent, it was natural to conclude that he had been a partaker in the crime. But he was likely to prove a bold and prudent ruler in perilous times, and the Normans were soon reconciled to his government. Historians have named him Robert the Magnificent, and when his helpless suzerain, Henry, appealed to him for his support, he proved himself in some respects worthy of his title. The barons who upheld Constance were defeated in three pitched battles, and the reckless daring of Robert inspired such dread that he became popularly known by the name of Robert 'le Diable.' One by one the rebel nobles abandoned the cause of the queen mother, and Constance at length sought reconciliation with Henry. The indolent king showed the best points of his character on this occasion. The duchy of Burgundy was given to his brother, and certain favours which his mother demanded were granted; but Constance could ill bear the humiliation of defeat, and shortly after died at Melun, July 1032.

Henry was now called upon to pay the price for the assistance which had placed him peaceably upon the throne. The duke of Normandy required of him to cede the territory called the Vexin, a district comprised between the two rivers the Oise and the Epte. The loss of this territory must have cost him a pang of great Unessness when he thought of the future, for it brought the Norman frontier within twenty miles of the capital of France.

War was now at an end, but a new trial fell upon France. For three successive years the harvests failed, and a famine almost unparalleled in history visited the country. The rich fed on scanty fare and lost strength, the poor ate the roots found in the forests, whilst many in their despair appeased their hunger even by human flesh. The dead lay unburied in the fields, and the hungry wolves devoured the corpses and then turned to attack the living, until at length the most merciful amongst the strong dug ditches for graves, and when the hand of death was upon the sufferers the son dragged thither his father, the brother his brother, the mother her child, and, to save them from a more horrible fate, buried them with themselves in a living tomb.
Misery so appalling at length subdued, in some degree, the hearts of all. When the sword of God was so visibly seen, the sword of man was almost of necessity sheathed. The clergy called together synods, in which decrees were passed, inculcating mutual forbearance and providing for the protection of life and property. In the year 1035 the Peace of God was proclaimed and hailed with thankfulness by every class. But when plenty and prosperity returned, oppression and outrage again prevailed; and in 1041 it was necessary to institute 'the Truce of God,' which provided that hostilities, public and private, should be suspended during the seasons of Advent and Lent, as well as during that portion of the week (from Wednesday evening till the following Monday morning) which, being marked by the memory of the Redeemer’s suffering, death, and resurrection, was considered the most holy.

It was at the time of the famine that duke Robert of Normandy, his heart probably softened by the awful visitation of God, resolved to undertake a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and do penance for his sins at his Saviour’s tomb. Assembling his nobles, he announced his intention, and was met by an earnest entreaty that the country might not be left without a head. Robert had no lawful heir, but he presented to them his illegitimate son William, a child of seven years of age. To this boy, afterwards famous as William, the Conqueror of England, the Norman barons took the oath of allegiance, and Robert then set out on his pilgrimage on foot. He reached Jerusalem safely, and with every outward mark of true repentance discharged the vow he had taken; but on his homeward journey he was seized with a dangerous illness, and, having with difficulty reached Nicea, in Bithynia, he died in the same year in which the Peace of God was proclaimed. When the news of the death of duke Robert reached Normandy the proud barons refused to acknowledge his son as their lord, and a civil war broke out. Young William sought and obtained aid from Henry I. of France, but as years went by and the contest continued the weak king changed sides, and actually attacked the son of his former friend. The genius and courage of the duke were, however, far superior to the king’s, and Henry was soon made to feel his own inferiority.

His domestic affairs had, up to this time, proved as unsuccessful as his public ones; he had been twice married, but he had no children. This disappointment he attributed to having married within the prohibited degrees. His third choice should, he determined, be free from any such stain, and he demanded the hand of Anne, the daughter of the grand duke of Muscovy, a country scarcely recognised as belonging to Europe, and the inhabitants of which had only recently been converted to Christianity. The marriage was celebrated in 1051. By this wife Henry had two sons;
the elder received the name of Philip, from a tradition that his mother, Anne, was descended from the famous Philip of Macedon.

In 1058, seven years after his third marriage, Henry was so entirely defeated in battle by William of Normandy that he was glad to agree to peace, and after that he never again interfered in the affairs of Normandy. But he only lived two years longer, dying in 1060, in the twenty-ninth year of his reign.

The son born to Henry I. of France so late in life was but eight years of age at his father’s death. Foreseeing the probability of a long minority, Henry was anxious to appoint a guardian for his child who might also be a good regent of the kingdom. His choice fell upon Baldwin, count of Flanders, who was his brother-in-law. For seven years Baldwin governed France well, but at the end of that time he died, and the young king Philip I. was left at the age of fifteen to his own guidance. This was fatal to his character; a tendency to self-indulgence of every kind was his temptation, and neither his good education nor his natural intelligence enabled him to withstand the ample opportunities which presented themselves for yielding to it.

Yet stirring events met him at the very beginning of his career. William, duke of Normandy, claimed the crown of England, and was meditating the invasion of the country. By the feudal laws he was bound to ask the support of his suzerain, and accordingly he appeared before his young lord at St. Germain-en-Laye, and, declaring his intentions, asked Philip’s concurrence, promising at the same time that if he were successful he would hold his kingdom, like his duchy, as a fief of France. Philip, being advised by his barons, declined having anything to do with the proposed expedition, and William of Normandy undertook it on his own responsibility.

In a very short time came startling news. William had landed in England, the battle of Hastings had been fought, 1066, and the duke of Normandy, who on his accession had been rejected by his own barons, was the acknowledged king of England. Philip’s jealousy was excited. The Normans were making themselves a name in Europe which threatened to eclipse that of the French. Only a few years previously the sons of Sir Tancred de Hanteville, a Norman knight, had taken possession of the southern part of Italy, and whilst one brother had become count of Apulia, another had conquered Sicily. The fame of these brilliant exploits had resounded through Europe, and now the general estimation of Norman valor was increased by the prowess of the bold duke who had staked his reputation on his claim to the crown of England, and had won the day. But years went by before Philip could openly avow his enmity, then, in 1075, he harassed William by supporting the cause of one of the king of England’s revolted vassals, Alan, duke of
Brittany, and still more grievously injured him by encouraging his son Robert Courthouc in open rebellion. Robert had expected to be made by his father governor of Normandy, and when he found himself disappointed he rose in arms, and, aided by Philip, maintained for several years a civil war in the duchy. Greatly irritated by this conduct, William demanded the restoration of the district of the Vexin, which had been unjustly taken from him many years before when he was still a boy, and Philip, selfish and coarse, not only refused to listen to the demand, but made a rude jest upon the king of England's personal appearance. William, who was then in Normandy, instantly invaded the Vexin, and after taking the town of Mantes burnt it to the ground. The ruins of the unfortunate city were still smoking when William rode over them. His horse stepped upon some hot ashes; he was thrown forward, and received an injury so serious that six weeks afterwards, on the 10th of September, 1087, he died.

Philip was now relieved from the dread of his chief enemy, but by his profligacy he had aroused another, in one sense no less formidable.

Pope Gregory VII.—often known by the name of Hildebrand, which he bore before he came to the papal throne—was a man of stern virtue, great talent, and indomitable will. The one object of his life was to purify the church and to assert her dominion over the princes of the earth, for thus alone did he hope to restore a degraded world. He asserted the right of the Pope to depose kings and to be the ultimate judge in national quarrels, and he forbade the exercise of the right of investiture, by which a king conferred on a bishop the temporal possessions belonging to his see by delivering to him a pastoral staff or ring. Over the clergy Gregory exercised a stern discipline, and carrying out a principle which had long been making its way in the church, he forbade them to marry, and commanded those who were married to put away their wives, whilst princes, who were leading unholy lives, received public rebuke for their offences, and were punished by the sentence of excommunication.

Gregory would have met with much greater difficulty in carrying out his extravagant views of the papal authority if he had not himself set a stern example of self-discipline. But the most profligate princes of his day acknowledged the influence of his character, even though they defied his power. Henry IV., emperor of Germany, carried on a life-long struggle against his pretensions, but was again and again obliged to yield. And this warning no doubt had its effect upon Philip, and led him to profess submission to the Holy See, though he made no real change in his own mode of life. Gregory had indeed great cause to
rebuke one who was so utterly defiant of the laws of God and man. Philip, impoverished by his luxurious self-indulgence, offered bishoprics and other church preferments to the highest bidder, and spent the proceeds of the sale in riot and profligacy. Gregory threatened excommunication, an interdict, even deposition, and Philip promised amendment; but when the Pope turned his attention to the German emperor the French king resumed his former career. Gregory was unable again to interfere, for he was too much occupied with his own affairs in Italy. Events were turning against him. The emperor, who had before been compelled ignominiously to submit to him, had invaded Italy. Rome was in his power and Gregory was obliged to flee. Worn with age and trial, the Pope's proud spirit was unable to withstand this accumulation of misfortune. Illness attacked him, and with the words on his lips, 'I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore I die in exile,' he expired.

Freed by death from the man who would have been most likely to put obstacles in his path, Philip became bolder in his vices. He had married Bertha, daughter of the count of Flanders, and she had borne him several children; but growing weary of her, he treated her with the greatest neglect, and at length imprisoned her in the castle of Montreuil. In 1092 he was visiting Fulk, count of Anjou, at Tours, when he was introduced to the count's wife, Bertrade de Montfort, who was considered the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. The countess of Anjou had no affection for her husband, and when the king professed his admiration, she was easily induced to listen to the dictates of ambition. On one condition she would forswear Fulk and follow Philip to Orleans. She must be publicly accepted as the king's wife, and the so-called marriage must have the sanction of the church. The king, though with great difficulty, prevailed on his bishops to perform the stipulated ceremony, and the Pope, Urban II., the successor of Gregory, lost no time in taking measures for the punishment of this outrageous offence. A papal legate was sent to France, and at a national council assembled at Autun Philip and Bertrade were excommunicated, and Philip was forbidden to appear in public as a king unless he would consent to separate from the countess of Anjou. The king, alarmed, laid aside his crown and sceptre, and implored forgiveness, but still he refused to give up Bertrade.

Pope Urban II., though not equal to Gregory, was still a man of energy and principle, who would never have submitted to this continued disregard of the authority of the church if his mind had not been absorbed by a momentous undertaking which at this period began to occupy the attention of Europe. Some years before Jerusalem, which had long been in the power of the Mahometan tribe of Saracens, had been conquered from them by the barbarian
Turks, Mahometans also, but more fierce and reckless. Christian pilgrims were now insulted; the helpless inhabitants of the city were treated with savage cruelty, and their cry of distress reached Europe. Who would help them? Gregory VII. had longed to do so, but the struggle between Germany and Italy prevented him. The unhappy Christians of the east were left to their fate, till, in the year 1094, Peter, called the Hermit, a poor monk of the diocese of Amiens, having made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, returned to Europe with his heart so stirred and his mind so excited by the miseries he had witnessed, that he considered himself the instrument chosen by Heaven to redress such grievous wrong. Hastening to Rome, he told the tale of horror to Urban II., who dismissed him with a charge to proclaim throughout Europe a war for the deliverance of Jerusalem from the hands of the infidel.

France more than any other country responded to the appeal. The wild attirde, the enthusiastic eloquence, of the Hermit, aided by his self-denying charity and fervent pitiy, made a powerful impression on the excitable multitude. Rich and poor alike prepared to enlist under the sacred banner, and when in the following year, 1095, Urban called a council, to be held at Clermont, in Auvergne, so that the sanction of the church might be publicly given to the undertaking, the concourse was so great that it was necessary to hold the meetings in the market-place, and at last even in the open fields beyond the city. On the tenth day of the session, Peter, bearing his hermit's staff and wearing his coarse woollen cloak, stood by Urban's throne, which was placed in the great square of the city, and addressed the multitude. He told the story of the desolation and torture which he had himself witnessed, and when he had ended the Pope, in burning words, called upon his hearers to make the glorious choice of self-sacrifice in this world for the crown of glory in the world to come. Then burst forth the cry of the multitude: 'It is the will of God! It is the will of God!' and kneeling before Urban thousands bound the cross of red on their right shoulders and swore to avenge the cause of the Redeemer by taking part in the holy war thenceforward to be styled the Crusade.

The principal leaders of the expedition were French, but the French monarch himself was neither willing nor able to accompany it. At the same council of Clermont which Pope Urban assembled for the purpose of calling upon the princes of Christendom to take up arms for Christ, Philip was a second time anathematised, and all places at which he and Bertrade might sojourn were again declared to be under an interdict. The result was as before; Philip submitted in words and made no alteration in deed. Bertrade was crowned, and the title of queen was given her,
76 WALTER THE PENNILESS—JERUSALEM TAKEN—GODFREY DE BOUILLON.

*Philip I.*

although the four children whom she bore to Philip were never acknowledged as legitimate, whilst the unhappy Bertha, Philip's lawful wife, remained shut up in her prison at Montereuil, till at length she died of a broken heart.

In the meantime the preparations for the crusade proceeded with vigour. Godfrey de Bouillon, duke of Lower Lorraine, was entrusted with the chief command; and many of the princes and nobles of Europe—amongst them Hugh, count of Vermandois, brother of Philip of France, and Robert Courthoe, eldest son of William the Conqueror—consented to act under him.

But before the disciplined soldiers were in readiness to march, a body of no less than 100,000 humbler pilgrims, accompanied by the Hermit and a priest named Gotteschalk, and under the guidance of a Burgundian knight, called Walter the Penniless, were on their way to the Holy Land, crossing Hungary and Bulgaria to Constantinople, and from thence entering Asia Minor. The expedition was as fatal in its end as it was wild and imprudent in its beginning. The pilgrims were attacked near Nicæa by the Turkish sultan, and only 3,000 out of the great multitude remained to tell the tale of their defeat.

The regular army of crusaders advanced upon the whole more successfully, and reached Jerusalem on the 7th of June, 1099; but only 60,000 were then in a condition to fight. The rest of the immense force, numbering, it is said, 100,000 horsemen and 600,000 foot soldiers, had fallen victims to famine, pestilence, and the sword. 40,000 Turks defended the holy city. The siege lasted rather more than a month, and on the 15th of July the Banner of the Cross was planted on the battlements of Jerusalem. A fierce carnage of the Turks followed. When the fury of the crusaders was satisfied Godfrey and his attendant nobles repaired to the church of the Holy Sepulchre to pour forth their adorations and thanksgiving.

The acts appear to us painfully inconsistent, but they can be accounted for by the spirit of the age and the teaching which had led the crusaders to believe that the slaughter of the infidel was, under all circumstances, a deed acceptable in the sight of God.

The Latin kingdom of Jerusalem was now established. Its first monarch was Godfrey de Bouillon, who was chosen by the unanimous voice of the crusading princes. But Godfrey refused to wear a crown of gold where, as he himself said, 'his Redeemer had worn a crown of thorns,' and the only title which he assumed was that of 'advocate and baron of the Holy Sepulchre.' Even this he enjoyed but one year. He died in July 1100, and his brother Baldwin then became the second king of Jerusalem.

Whilst the fame of the French warriors was thus spreading throughout the east, their king remained sunk in self-indulgent indolence. But the slumbering conscience at length awoke. Philip was
DEATH OF PHILIP I.—CHILDHOOD OF LOUIS VI.—HIS DOMINIONS.

Louis VI.

afflicted by a grievous disease, in which he recognised the judgment of God for his sins. The sentence of excommunication weighed heavily upon him, and the terrors of future judgment haunted him. He applied to the Pope for absolution, and was permitted to do public penance for his offences, and the sentence was then removed. Bertrade was treated with much less severity. She was indeed no longer considered the actual wife of Philip, but she retained her outward position as queen consort to the end of her days. In 1108 Philip, feeling his end approaching, assumed the habit of a Benedictine monk, and shortly after he died at Melun on the 29th of July, having reigned more than forty-seven years. At his own request he was not buried at St. Denis, as he deemed himself unworthy to rest beside his predecessors.

CHAPTER XII.

LOUIS VI., LE GROS (THE FAT).

A.D. 1108–1137.

Louis VI., the son of Philip and Bertha, is generally known by the epithet le Gros, from his great size; but on his accession to the throne he was called l’Éveillé, or the Awakened. And certainly his reign, from its very commencement, must have been a great awakening for France when contrasted with the slumbering inactivity of his father. He had been associated in the government with Philip ever since the year 1100, and had thus early acquired a full knowledge of the needs of his people. His health could never have been good, for in his childhood he had been poisoned, and although his life was saved he never fully recovered; and to this the singular paleness of his face, and probably the size of his person, must have been attributable. His bodily infirmities, however, were of comparatively little moment to his subjects, for he was a man of clear intellect, decided will, and high moral purpose; and his friend and prime minister, Suger, abbot of St. Denis, was well fitted to carry out his views for the enlargement of the kingdom and the good government of the people. At the death of Philip the immediate dominions of the king of France consisted only of the five cities of Paris, Melun, Etampes, Orleans, and Sens, with the districts or counties attached to them; and even these cities were really separated from one another. Fierce barons had built towers overlooking the highways, and from them descended to attack unwary travellers, carrying them to the dungeons of their castles and demanding enormous ransoms for them. The king himself could not travel from Paris to Orleans without a strong force to protect him, for the lord of Montlhéry had
built his castle on the way and exacted a toll from all passers-by. From Paris to St. Denis the road was safe, but beyond this stretched the gloomy forest of Montmorency, which none might venture to traverse save with his lance prepared for attack. The country was in fact given up to brigandage; it was the natural result of Philip's long reign of indolence.

The first efforts of Louis were for the protection of the church. Abbeys, monasteries, and convents, the only asylums of order and peace, were not free from the attacks of the robber nobles. Louis armed his troops for their defence, and the bishops and abbots, on their part, armed their serfs to assist the royal forces, whilst a number of peasants flocked to the king's standard, led by their parish priests. By this united aid the great roads from Tours and Orleans to Paris, and from Paris to Rheims, were rendered safe, while the count of Blois gave his help to the king in protecting the country lying between the Loire, the Seine, and the Marne—a small circle of territory enclosed between the great provinces of Anjou, Normandy, and Flanders.

But the crusade was the greatest assistance to Louis, for it carried off the fierce barons. Even the terrible lord of Montlhéry assumed the red cross, but he went no farther than Antioch. When the Christians were besieged there he deserted his companions in arms, let himself down from the walls by means of a rope, and returned home, honoured with the surname of Rope-dancer. The expedition appears to have had a salutary effect upon him. He gave his daughter in marriage to one of the king's sons, and with her he gave also his castle, which was, in fact, yielding to the king the highway between Paris and Orleans. The count of Blois, whose exploits rivalled those of the lord of Montlhéry, was amongst the nobles who joined the crusade. The count of Poitiers, desirous of being an accomplished knight, followed his example. The great feudal chiefs, in fact, spent the chief part of their lives in the crusading highways between France and Jerusalem. The king alone remained faithful to the soil of France; and every day, as his barons departed on their expeditions, he grew more and more powerful. He began also to be recognised in Europe as an authority. His fierce barons might defy him in his own country, but he received a letter from the emperor Henry IV. of Germany, addressed to him as king of the Celts, and complaining to him of the violence of the Pope. His title of king, indeed, so imposed upon the world at a distance that the count of Barcelona wrote to him from Spain entreaty his aid against the Moors.

No one distrusted the king of France. His only real danger arose from the neighbourhood of the Normans. They had taken Gisors, in the Vexin, and extended their authority almost to Paris. The small kingdom of France would have been able to make but
little head against them but for the support given to Louis by the jealous counts of Flanders and Anjou. The count of Anjou asked for and obtained the title of seneschal of France, which gave him the right of putting the dishes on the king's table. The feudal system made such offices, when exercised towards the sovereign, honourable, and the principle has descended to our own days, as we see in the offices of groom of the stole, lord or lady of the bedchamber, &c. The count of Anjou considered his acceptance as seneschal of France to be equivalent to a league with the king against his neighbours the aggressive Normans.

To increase the natural enmity between the Normans and French Louis was about this time called upon to take up arms against the king of England and duke of Normandy in a cause which had much to justify the act. Robert Courthoure, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, after fighting bravely in the Holy Land, had returned only to carry on a war with his brother Henry, king of England. Being taken prisoner at the battle of Tenchebrai in 1106, he had been imprisoned in Cardiff Castle, where he died. His young son, William Cliton, fled to France and threw himself on the protection of Louis le Gros. A long and indecisive war followed. The battle of Brenneville, in 1119, in which the two kings met in person, was the most important of the conflicts; yet so different were the contests of the middle ages from those of the present day that, if we are to believe the old chroniclers, there were only three men killed. The Normans claimed the victory, but it had no results, and the struggle continued at intervals till William Cliton was killed in battle in 1128. And during all this time Louis was steadily strengthening the power of the sovereign, the church, and the people, so as to make head against the barons. It is the most remarkable feature of the reign of Louis le Gros this union of king and commonality, and from it arose a great change in the constitution of the country, which is known in France as the 'affranchissement des communes,' (the freedom of the commons). When the middle and lower classes were united for mutual preservation they became powerful, and the great towns were able to demand certain privileges which secured the personal freedom of the inhabitants and gave them a voice in the management of public affairs.

In the south such self-governing or municipal cities had been common ever since the time of the Romans, who first established them. Now they became more general, and the greater part of these boroughs paid a yearly contribution to the royal treasury, and provided soldiers to aid the king in his wars.

Amaury de Montfort, an ancestor of the famous Simon de Montfort, who some years after headed the barons of England in demanding their privileges from Henry III., was, we are told, the first per-
son who advised Louis VI., after his defeat at Brenneville, to oppose the forces of the communes, marching under the banners of their respective parishes, to those of the Normans. And very proud were the brave citizens when they saw the stately knights on their proud war-horses flee before the standard of the commune. Then it was that they said to themselves with the poet of the twelfth century, Robert Wace—

Nus sumes homines cum il sunt,
Tux membro avum cum il unt
Et altresi grans cors avum,
Et altretant sofrir poun.

We are men as they are,
The same limbs have we that they have;
As large a heart have we,
And suffer as much can we.

It is singular that Louis would not allow the two great towns of Paris and Orleans to be communes; yet Paris especially required protection, for it was subject to three separate masters: the king, as count of Paris, was lord of the western part of the city; the archbishop governed the eastern part; and the prévôt, who was a kind of sheriff, had a certain power over the whole. The people were thus subject to great oppression, especially whenever the king came to Paris. His sergeants had then a right to ransack private houses and take whatever they liked for the use of the royal family. Paris was at this time the worst built and dirtiest city in France. The original town, built on the little island in the Seine, still remained enclosed by walls, but the opposite shores of the river were studded with buildings, many of which were religious houses shut in by strong walls.

But Louis, though he esteemed the citizens of the commune, was inclined to rest more fully for support upon the church. His outward conduct showed his respect for it. He was himself, as count of the Vexin, a vassal of the great abbey of St. Denis, and he did not disdain to bear on horseback the famous oriflamme,¹ the standard of the abbey, which was recognised as the national banner. The bishops, on their part, feared to fall under the power of the imperious Norman kings, and the Pope so entirely trusted Louis that he was allowed to exercise the right of investiture, for asserting which other sovereigns had been excommunicated.

Louis had been on the whole successful in his public affairs, but grievous domestic trial was in store for him. His eldest son, Philip, a boy of sixteen, and, according to the old chroniclers, a rosy-cheeked,

¹ So called because the staff was of gold and the lower part of the banner cut so as to represent flames.
Louis VI.

pleasant youth of great promise, whom he had intended to share his throne, was riding in the narrow, crowded streets of Paris, when a ‘diabolical pig,’ as we are told, ran between the legs of his horse, and Philip was thrown heavily on the ground, and so much injured that before night he expired. Louis was inconsolable; the abbot Suger, his great friend, feared even for his life. But public interest roused him. The Pope, Innocent II., was in France soliciting the support of Louis against the anti-Pope, Anacletus III. A council was to be held at Rheims in the middle of October 1131, and thither Suger and the king’s friends persuaded Louis to go and preside at the consecration of his second son, Louis, generally known as ‘le Jeune,’ (the Young), in the place of his brother Philip. In the presence of the Pope, prelates, and nobles Louis made a prayer for his dead son, and the Pope then addressed to him words of comfort. ‘Your child,’ he said, ‘full of innocence, has departed; but God, who has taken to Himself one of your sons, has left you others to reign after you. Lay aside, therefore, this grief. To us, strangers driven from our sees, you have given consolation. May God repay you for it in that City of which glorious things are spoken;—in which life knows no death, eternity no failing, and joy no end.’

Then the Pope rose and absolved the soul of the dead prince, and the king, much soothed, prepared for the morrow’s festival, when his second boy, being brought to the altar and consecrated with the oil with which St. Remigius had anointed Clovis on his conversion, was made a sharer of his power.

Two years after this great family affliction the chief enemy of Louis, Henry I., died, December 1135, and a civil war immediately broke out in England between Stephen, the nephew of Henry, and Maud, Henry’s daughter. Maud had been twice married. Her first husband was the emperor Henry V.; her second, Geoffrey Plantagenet, count of Anjou. One of the principal allies of Geoffrey was William, duke of Aquitaine, a prince notorious for his vices, but whose conscience was, after many years of crime, so far awakened that he resolved to undertake as a penance a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain.

In the uncertainty of his return he declared his daughter Eleanor his sole heiress, and placed her under the guardianship of Louis VI., with the understanding that Eleanor should marry the king’s son, Louis le Jeune. The character of the young princess and the education received in her native land promised ill for domestic happiness. Aquitaine and Provence were as noted for luxury as for cultivation of mind and outward refinement. Poetry seemed the natural language of the people, and the romance of love their one interest. Every lady eminent for rank or beauty had a special poet to sing her praises in the Provençal tongue, the
Langue d’Oc, which was now commonly accepted as the language of the troubadours, or southern poets; and Eleanor of Aquitaine had thus been accustomed from her infancy to the most extravagant admiration. The change from the sunny climate, the gaiety, luxury, and freedom of southern manners to the severe propriety of the north, where the grave and good abbot Suger, the tutor of young Louis, held sway over the public mind, was little likely to be attractive to her. But the alliance was politically advisable. Soon after it had been proposed Eleanor became duchess of Aquitaine in her own right, her father having died at Compostella, in the month of April 1137, and in August of the same year the marriage was solemnised at Bordeaux, where prince Louis, accompanied by a brilliant suite, met Eleanor and her court. Immediately after the ceremony the prince and his bride prepared to return to Paris, but before they had reached Poitiers they were met by the tidings of the death of the king, who had been attacked by a sudden illness, and expired on the 1st of August, the very day before his son’s marriage.

The outburst of regret which from all parts of France followed this sorrowful news sufficiently proved the affection with which Louis VI. was regarded. He had found the kingdom weak; he left it strong. He had found it insignificant in size, and he left it enlarged in a great degree to its ancient and natural extent. He had restored peace and security, and, following the suggestions of Suger, had established a system which secured justice throughout the kingdom. The missi dominici, or judicial circuits, first set on foot by Charlemagne, were now revived. Every year two noblemen travelled through France prepared to hear causes, to reform abuses, and all classes proved their sense of these benefits by their increasing loyalty.

And yet at the very time when reverence for the church and attachment to the sovereign were thus strengthening, another power, in a certain sense antagonistic to both, was making itself felt throughout Europe. Its history belongs rather to the time of Louis VII. than of Louis VI., but as Abelard, one of the chief leaders of the new movement, was first brought into notice in the reign of the latter, it may be desirable to give a short sketch of his principles and of his early career.

Long years before, even in the reign of Charlemagne, John Scotus, or Erigena, had ventured to put forth doctrines which tended to shake the faith of the unlearned in the teaching of the church. Similar opinions were said to have been held even by

1 The poets of the north were called trouvères, and their language was the French Walloon, or Langue d’Oïl, from which modern French is derived. They wrote prose romances as well as songs.
Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., the friend and tutor of king Robert of France. From time to time other bold thinkers appeared, who, though censured by the church authorities, could not be entirely silenced. The questions thus brought forward were of the most abstruse kind. Some touched upon the nature of the Holy Trinity, others upon the origin of ideas. The Nominalists, as the new thinkers were called, asserted that virtue, vice, beauty, purity, grace—in fact, all abstract ideas—were only names, that a virtuous man was a reality, but virtue in the abstract only a sound. The Realists, on the other hand, declared that we could have no abstract ideas of anything which did not actually exist; that perfect beauty, for instance, was something distinct from a beautiful face or a beautiful flower; and therefore, as we all understand what perfect beauty means, although we have never seen it, it must have an existence somewhere, or, in other words, that it is part of the Being of God. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of William Rufus, was one of the most distinguished Realists. His famous argument for the existence of the unseen God was, that if God did not exist man would not be able to conceive the idea of Him. The same principle was carried out in discussion upon other subjects, and thus controversies were awakened which involved truths of the very deepest importance. In France these metaphysical contests were eagerly carried on, and in Paris a public ecclesiastical school or university had lately been established, which was gradually becoming the centre of European learning. William of Champeaux was the most famous ecclesiastical professor of the Paris university. Amongst his professed scholars appeared Abelard, a Breton by birth, of a noble family, handsome, fascinating in manner, and with brilliant talents. He seated himself humbly amongst the pupils of the great Paris professor, confessed his difficulties, and begged for a solution of them. William of Champeaux was unable satisfactorily to answer, and Abelard departed, with the determination in like manner to discomfit some other teacher. So he went from place to place, carrying on a kind of metaphysical tournament, in which it was his great object to overthrow his adversary's arguments and reduce him to silence.

The prodigious success of Abelard was, doubtless, in a great measure due to his language. The church teaching was carried on in the rude Latin of the middle ages. Abelard spoke in a tongue which all could understand; he simplified everything which had hitherto appeared obscure; the mysteries of religion ceased to be mysteries when he discoursed of them; he treated the Christian faith with apparent respect, but in reality it melted away in his grasp. But his first attack was upon morality, though it was made so as scarcely to be perceptible; crime, he said, was not in the act,
but in the intention; thus there were no such things as sins of habit or ignorance. The fallacy of this assertion is evident when we consider that men sin not only when they deliberately break God’s laws, but also when they do not earnestly strive to keep them; but the teaching was naturally very attractive to human weakness. When once the fact of sin is denied or exterminated, the denial of the necessity for an atonement follows naturally. The teaching of Abelard tended to this, though he did not openly assert it; he professed, indeed, to defend Christianity, but his arguments in its support were feeble. The result of his teaching was soon practically shown. Being received into the house of the canon Fulbert as the instructor of his beautiful niece Heloïsa, he gained her affection, and led her into conduct which proved a disgrace to herself and a most bitter grief to her uncle. Yet when Abelard offered to marry her she refused, for marriage would have shut him out from all ecclesiastical offices, and Heloïsa looked forward to his being some day a prior, an abbot, a bishop, a cardinal, or even a pope. Fulbert, however, insisted, and a secret marriage took place at Paris. The cold-hearted Abelard nevertheless urged Heloïsa to deny it; and, obedient to his least wish, she took the veil in a nunnery, whilst he himself entered a monastery. By this time his fame had spread far and wide; an immense concourse of scholars flocked to him, and he became yet bolder in his speculations. His heresies were exciting the especial attention of the great authorities of the church towards the latter end of the reign of Louis VI., but the period was one which did not admit of any active interference on the part of the Pope. The condition of Italy was most unsatisfactory; there were not only two rival Popes—Innocent II., acknowledged by Germany, France, and England; and Anacletus III., the anti-Pope, upheld by several of the lesser states—but at the same time Arnold of Brescia, a disciple of Abelard, yet a man of strict morals, was stirring up the people of Rome to establish a republic in opposition to the papal government. Innocent II. had been obliged to leave Italy and seek in France the support of Louis VI., and was for several years an exile; and the only man besides who could be expected to oppose Abelard was so much occupied with the affairs of the papacy that he was unable to attend to the important metaphysical questions which at any other time would have excited the deepest interest.

This man was Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, a Burgundian, and, like Abelard, a man of noble birth, marvellous energy, and great talents, which were devoted solely to the cause of religion. Many might be found to differ from Bernard in doctrine, but no one could deny the holiness of his character. Beginning life as a simple monk of the Benedictine monastery of Citeaux, which he quitted when he
founded Clairvaux, he rose to be the arbiter of the destinies of Europe. Kings, popes, nobles, and clergy consented to be guided by his advice. When the question as to the rival popes was to be decided, and Louis VI. had declared for Innocent II., whilst Henry II. of England hesitated, it was Bernard who, by a few words addressed to Henry, brought him at once to give his support to Innocent. He ruled, yet in a certain sense it was against his will, for his heart was elsewhere; human passions and excitement were lost in the one absorbing feeling of the love of God. Enthusiastically affectionate in his friendships, they were cherished only so far as they coincided with the higher love which sanctified them, and when he spoke to his fellow men of the subjects connected with their eternal interests, they regarded the slight, fair-haired monk, who addressed them in such words of heart-stirring and touching eloquence, as a spirit rather than a living man of flesh and blood. To such a man the character and principles of Abelard were especially antagonistic; his own faith was so fervent and real that he could little understand the difficulties of sceptical minds, whilst his severe self-discipline raised him above the temptations which had cast so great a blot on the character of Abelard. But the time was not yet come when Bernard could openly controvert the opinions of the great heretic. When Louis VI. died he was in Italy, upholding Innocent II. against Anacletus, and the history of his contest with Abelard must be reserved for the reign of Louis VII.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOUIS VII., LE JEUNE.

A.D. 1137-1180.

Louis VII. was only eighteen years of age when he became the sole ruler of France. Well disposed, with benevolent feelings, sincere piety, and a fair amount of talent, the young king was nevertheless unfitted to cope with the difficulties of his position. His one great advantage had been the education given him by Suger, a man whom even St. Bernard looked upon with admiration. When the abbot of Clairvaux visited the prime minister at St. Denis, and saw the noble building which Suger had constructed, reserving only a cell for himself, he exclaimed with a deep sigh, 'This man condemns us all; he builds not for himself, as we build for ourselves, but solely for God.' In fact, during the whole time that Suger governed France, he lived in this one room, fifteen feet long and ten feet wide; there he devoted his few hours of leisure to devotion and study, and when night
Quarrel Between Innocent II. and Louis.

Louis VII.
came he slept upon a bed of straw, which during the day was hidden by a decent carpet, and covered himself with a rough woolen counterpane. Under such a tutor Louis le Jeune had been carefully educated in the abbey of St. Denis in principles of self-denial and lowliness; but it would seem as though his early marriage with the rich heiress of Aquitaine had been too much for his weak character. At the very outset of his reign he would fain have made war on the count of Toulouse, on the pretext that Eleanor had some title to the count's dominions, but his barons refused to accompany him, and he was obliged to relinquish the idea. His next undertaking brought disastrous results. He ventured to withstand the Pope, Innocent II., who, without any reference to the king of France, had given the archbishopric of Bourges, the capital of Aquitaine, to a person connected with the papal court. St. Bernard protested against the act, but Louis did more; he gave orders for a fresh election. The Pope in return excommunicated him, and laid an interdict upon every place where he might sojourn; but the young king, in no way alarmed, seemed determined to drive matters still further to extremity.

It happened that about this time a quarrel had broken out between Louis and Thibald, the powerful count of Champagne. It was on a question of an entirely domestic nature. Count Thibald's niece had married Ralph, count of Vermandois, but Ralph, having fallen deeply in love with Petronilla, the sister of queen Eleanor, divorced his first wife and married Petronilla. The count of Champagne appealed to the Pope on behalf of his niece, and Ralph and Petronilla were excommunicated. Queen Eleanor urged Louis to take up Petronilla's quarrel and invade the territories of the count of Champagne, who was upheld by the Pope. The king entered Champagne, ravaged the country, and set fire to the town of Vitry. The flames spread to the principal church, where the greater part of the inhabitants—about thirteen hundred men, women, and children—had taken refuge. Their cries reached the ears of the king, but it was too late to save them and all within the church perished. This horrible event completely crushed the spirit of Louis; he was overwhelmed by the sense of the misery he had caused. He became at once submissive to the Pope, and sought for a reconciliation at any price. His conscience, awakened upon one point, reproached him upon others. He thought himself responsible for all the sacrileges committed in the three years for which the interdict had lasted, and the idea seriously suggested itself to his mind of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, as a penance for his sins, but the moment for such a reparation had not yet arrived.

Whilst these events were passing the contest between the great St. Bernard and Abelard had begun and been carried on with vigour.

A.D. 1139
It was towards the close of the year 1139, the second year of the
reign of Louis VII, that Bernard's special attention was directed to
the teaching of Abelard. He appealed to the Pope to repress the evil,
and Abelard, alarmed, sought the protection of the archbishop of Sens,
who was about to preside over a synod. At this synod Bernard met
him. Standing in a pulpit which was to be seen at Sens up to the
time of the French revolution, he read or caused to be read the pas-
sage in Abelard's writings which he had marked as worthy of con-
demnation. To his great surprise Abelard rose up, refused all ex-
planations, and said that he appealed for a hearing to the Pope. He
was allowed to depart, but his writings were publicly denounced by
Bernard, who, in a letter to Pope Innocent, fully discussed the errors
into which his opponent had fallen. It would seem that what Ber-
nard feared was more the principles of argument which Abelard had
introduced than the arguments themselves. Abelard certainly did
not go as far as those who followed him, but he was condemned to
silence, and his disciples were excommunicated. Abelard himself
never reached Rome; he was taken ill on the way, and sought shelter
in the abbey of Cluny, where the abbot, Peter the Venerable, pro-
ected him during the short remainder of his life, and even brought
about an outward reconciliation with Bernard. At this time he entered
into a correspondence with Heloisa, who was now abbess of the
convent of the Paraclete, but his heart appears to have been far more
selfish than hers; he gave her advice, but very little affection. In
the year 1142, two years after his condemnation at Sens, he died.

Louis VII. appears to have taken no very decided part in the
controversy between Bernard and Abelard, though he was present
at the council of Sens. Affairs immediately connected with
his position occupied him; and as time went on, and the uneasiness
of his conscience become more and more felt, whilst his thoughts
were concentrated on the idea of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land,
events occurred which changed his pressing wish into a practical
resolution of the greatest importance to himself and his people.
The period was one of disturbance both in Europe and Asia.
England was afflicted by a destructive war between Stephen and
Maude, the wife of Geoffrey of Anjou, the war being carried on in
Normandy as part of the English possessions, and in Anjou as the
territory of Geoffrey. Fulk V., the father of Geoffrey, was still
living, but he was in Palestine, where he had married the princess
Mellisende, the daughter of Baldwin, king of Jerusalem. He had no
wish to return to Europe, and his son therefore became the ruling
count. Geoffrey was younger than Maude, who despised and op-
posed him, and gave all her love and interest to Henry, afterwards
Henry II. of England, her son by her first husband. In Aquitaine
and the south of France there were likewise contending claims for
the succession to some of the great lordships which had no direct
heir male. Wars and commotions indeed surrounded Louis on every side, but none so roused his zeal and touched his heart as the cry from the Christians in the Holy Land.

For the first thirty years of the twelfth century the kingdom of Jerusalem, established by Godfrey de Bouillon, had successfully resisted its enemies, but after that time the emir of Mosul commenced an aggressive war against the Christians, and Edessa, the great Christian fortress and stronghold, fell into his hands. The news of the loss spread through the European settlements in Palestine, and at the very time when Louis VII was pondering in his mind the idea which was, he hoped, to bring peace to his burdened conscience, an eloquent appeal from Pope Eugenius III. exhorted him and his people to take up arms for the defence of the Holy Sepulchre and the support of the Frank dominion in Palestine. The papal authority in France had on this occasion been delegated to St. Bernard. He was worn by care and infirmity and years, but no one could so touch the heart and rouse the energy of a nation; and, following his advice, Louis called a great national council at Vezelay, in Burgundy. It was the feast of Easter 1146. On the slope of a hill overlooking the town the assembly was held. Louis, wearing his royal robes, was there, with the proud and beautiful Eleanor. His nobles and knights surrounded him, and below was the vast crowd of the common people. The gaze of all alike was fixed upon the pale, attenuated monk who tood by the king's side. In impassioned words Bernard of Clairvaux addressed the multitude. The very sound of his voice operated upon them as a spell, and as he spoke of the perils to which their brethren were exposed, and of the eternal disgrace which would rest on Christendom should the land of the Redeemer again fall into the possession of the infidel, a murmur arose like that which had in a bygone day followed the appeal of Urban II. It swelled, and deepened, and spread, till the cry of 'Crosses! Crosses!' was heard as from one voice; and Bernard, already prepared for the result of his address, scattered amongst the multitude the badges which he had brought with him, and which were eagerly seized as pledges of devotion to the sacred cause.

Louis knelt at Bernard's feet, and received the holy sign from his hand. Eleanor, always open to impressions from excitement, seized it for herself, and a large number of nobles and knights followed her example, whilst the crowd below were so eager to assume the Cross that Bernard and his assistant monks were obliged to tear their own garments to pieces to supply them.

A year went by before the expedition was fully in readiness. By that time the ranks of the crusaders had been strengthened by the support of Conrad, emperor of Germany, and several of the most distinguished princes of the empire. And at Easter 1147
Pope Eugenius visited Paris, and bestowed his apostolical benediction upon Louis in the abbey of St. Denis, giving him at the same time the pilgrim's staff and wallet.

Suger alone looked on coldly. He was to be left to govern the kingdom with the assistance of the count of Vermandois and the archbishop of Rheims. The distinction was no temptation, for Suger was without ambition, at least for this world. He would fain have retained Louis by pointing out his duties to his people, but the king was not only stimulated by the general impulse, but by his own secret remorse, and very soon after his interview with the Pope he departed for Metz, there to meet the crusading army of 100,000 barons and soldiers, besides a vast number of pilgrims. The Rhine was crossed at Worms, the Danube at Ratisbon, and the crusaders, traversing the wide plains of Hungary, entered the territories of the eastern emperor Manuel Comnenus. The Greek emperors had from the first been jealous of the crusading spirit. As the government of Constantinople had been a hindrance rather than a help to Godfrey de Bouillon, so now Manuel Comnenus, though he showed all outward marks of friendship, worked secretly to destroy the Frank army. The guides whom he professed to provide when the crusaders left Constantinople and entered Asia Minor were faithless. The portion of the army led by the emperor Conrad was unexpectedly assaulted by the Turks, and a terrible defeat followed. Louis hastened to Conrad's assistance, but the emperor, who had been wounded in the battle, was obliged to return to Constantinople to recruit his strength. Louis and the French troops pushed on, hoping to reach the seaport of Attalia, in Pamphylia. They succeeded after a journey fraught with difficulties, from which they were saved by the courage and wisdom of a knight, known to us only by the name of Gilbert, and who, when he arrived at Attalia, considered his task finished, and resumed his private station. A difference of opinion now arose between the king and his barons. There was yet a march of forty days before they could hope to reach Antioch, but the patience and zeal of the barons were exhausted. The king could not control them. They declared that they would go by sea. The Greeks furnished ships for all who could pay; the rest, chiefly pilgrims, were left behind under the care of two barons and a body of hired Greeks. Louis gave all he possessed at the moment for the support of those who were thus abandoned, and then embarked himself with Eleanor for Antioch, where they were received by count Raymond of Poitiers, prince of the little Christian principality of Antioch, and a near relation of the queen. No sooner was the king gone than the treacherous spirit of the Greeks showed itself. The unhappy pilgrims, who were nominally under the protection of the Greek emperor, were not only forbidden
to enter the city, but the Greeks informed their enemies of their condition, and immediately the Turks fell upon the pilgrims and massacred by far the greater number. So helpless were they that at last even their foes pitied them, and the Turks nursed the wounded and fed the sick and starving, whilst the Greeks seized the strong and kept them as slaves. Such were the tidings which reached Louis at Antioch, and very terribly must they have added to the domestic trial which had just now dawned upon him. The light-minded Eleanor showed such levity of conduct in her intercourse with Count Raymond that Louis hastily left Antioch, and, taking his wife with him, proceeded as a pilgrim to Jerusalem. The emperor Conrad, having recovered from his illness, had preceded him there, and having visited the holy places, had set out on a tour of inspection of the kingdom, visiting the seaports, and urging the various knights and pilgrims who had fulfilled the vows they had made, and were preparing to return to Europe, to remain and assist in some enterprise against the heathen. Louis had reached Tyre on his way to Jerusalem, when he received a message from Conrad, who was at Ptolemais, urging that they should meet halfway between the two cities and concert measures for the protection of the Holy Land. The result of the interview was an attack upon Damascus, one of the most important cities of the Saracen empire; but the Christians were unable to take it, and when Conrad and Louis sadly returned to Jerusalem, the former at once resolved to give up the crusade and go back to Europe. Louis lingered at Jerusalem during the winter, holding, however, but little communication with the nobles of the kingdom. He celebrated Easter in the holy city, and then, in consequence of an earnest remonstrance sent him by Suger, started for Europe. His homeward voyage was adventurous. The Greek emperor and Roger, count of Sicily, were at war, and the Greek fleet, cruising in the Mediterranean, captured the vessel in which Louis was, and were about to carry him a prisoner to Constantinople, when the Sicilian admiral and his fleet came in sight, and having attacked and defeated the Greeks, set the king of France free.

Sad and humiliating was the landing of Louis in his native country. Suger had indeed governed it wisely during his absence, and there was no lack of prosperity in the country; public order had been maintained, the royal domains improved, but the expectations of both the king and his subjects had been bitterly disappointed. Of the mighty host which rather more than two years before had set forth from Palestine only about 200 or 300 knights disembarked with their sovereign at Provence.

But a further trial, more especially touching himself, was in store for Louis. Eleanor's conduct in Palestine had given him cause for complaints of the most serious kind. In his confidential
communications with Suger he spoke of them openly, and with a grave displeasure which showed that the idea of separating from her was gaining ground in his mind. Suger entreated him, if possible, to overlook what had been amiss; but Eleanor was as anxious as her husband for the separation, and the disunion between the king and his wife was soon evident to the whole world. Eleanor taunted Louis with the ill success of the crusades. ‘He was,’ she said, ‘a monk rather than a monarch.’ As regarded the divorce, she demanded it on the plea that her husband and herself, according to the laws of the church, were too nearly related for marriage. The question was left open for some time, but there could be no doubt as to the final result. In the meantime Suger retired to his cell in St. Denis, honoured with the title of the Father of his Country. Greatly as he had regretted the king’s original determination to undertake the crusade, he still grievedly lamented its failure, and now his thoughts turned to the possibility of collecting money and troops for another effort in the east. His interest was shared by St. Bernard, on whom the news of the failure of the crusade had fallen like a thunderbolt, whilst the opprobrium cast upon himself for the part he had taken in furthering the expedition was loud and universal. Bernard accepted the trial, as he did every trial, in a spirit of humble resignation, yet it cast a cloud over his latter days. His health was visibly failing at the very time that he was giving the aid of his counsel to Suger, who was dreaming of a new crusade, and devoting all his own private funds to the object. But the abbot died a year before Bernard. He was taken ill in the midst of his preparations, and expired at St. Denis on the 13th of January, 1152, and in the following year, 1153, St. Bernard was also taken to his rest.

The king’s best friend was gone when Suger died. A council to consider the question of the divorce was summoned at Beaugency in March 1152, and only three months after the death of the wise minister Louis and Eleanor were pronounced no longer man and wife. Six weeks later it was announced to the world that the divorced queen had bestowed her hand and her large possessions upon young Henry Plantagenet, duke of Normandy, son of Geoffrey of Anjou, and acknowledged heir to the English throne. From this time Eleanor of Aquitaine passes out of the domain of French history. We hear of her, indeed, but it is in connection with events having a more special reference to England. She is known to us as the imperious queen, the unnatural mother, stirring up her children to rebellion against their father, and at length imprisoned by her husband, that she might no longer disturb the peace of the kingdom. Only one redeeming trait is given us in the efforts which she made to raise the ransom required to release
her son Richard I. from captivity. The marriage of Eleanor and Henry Plantagenet dismembered France of more than half her territories. When, two years after, Henry became king of England, it was evidently impossible that peace could be long maintained. The records of the next twenty years are little more than a history of disputes, in which Henry always had the advantage. Politic and clever, he condescended to gratify Louis by doing homage for the continental possessions, but he managed at the same time to establish his claim as suzerain of Brittany, and to obtain possession of the county of Nantes, and similar shrewdness was manifested in all his transactions. After the separation from Eleanor Louis married Constance of Castile, and when a daughter was born to them Henry proposed an alliance between the two families by the betrothal of his eldest son, Henry, then a child of four years, with the little princess Marguerite. Louis willingly agreed, but the proposal was evidently greatly to the advantage of the English monarch, who might thus—should Louis have no son—look forward to seeing his own son heir to both kingdoms. Constance of Castile, however, died in 1160, and Louis then married a third wife, Alice, sister to the count of Champagne, and on the 22nd of August, 1165, to the great joy of the king and his people, the queen gave birth to a son. The child was baptised by the name of Philip, and in the general rejoicing he was called Dieudonné, or the Gift of God, but he is more generally known as the renowned Philip Augustus.

England was at this period disturbed by the contest between Henry II. and the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, which had for its origin the respective rights of the church and the crown. When Becket fled to France Louis upheld him; a petty war between the two kings followed, always to the disadvantage of Louis. In 1169 peace was made. Louis and Henry met at Montmirail, and Becket offered to submit to his sovereign, but it was evidently no real submission. The archbishop returned to England. Henry openly expressed his distrust of him and his desire to be freed from his opposition. The few hasty words were interpreted to mean a wish for Becket’s death, and a body of knights followed the archbishop to Canterbury and barbarously murdered him before the altar in the cathedral. An interdict, of which Louis was the instigator, was the punishment of this offence. It was laid on all Henry’s continental possessions, and not till the English king had endured a degrading penance was he again received into communion with the church.

Between Louis VII. and Henry there was from that time a bitter hatred, showing itself, on the part of Louis, by conduct that no motives could justify. He supported Henry’s sons in a rebellion against their father, which was suggested by queen Eleanor. The
Louis VII.

struggle lasted for years, and then Louis was compelled to yield.

Once more peace was made, and this time it was not again broken, for the reign of Louis VII. was rapidly drawing to a close. In 1179 the king, desirous of associating with himself his son Philip, then fifteen years old, prepared to have him crowned at Rheims; but the day before the ceremony took place the young prince went on a hunting expedition, and being separated from his companions, lost his way in a forest and wandered about all night. Fatigue and exposure to cold brought on a dangerous illness, and the king, in his anxiety for his only son, resolved to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, who had lately been canonised. He was absent only five days, in that age a singularly short period for a journey to England and back. But his great uneasiness made him hasten more than was prudent. He returned to find his son recovering, but he himself was struck by palsy; and when the splendid coronation of Philip actually took place the king was too ill to be present. For many months Louis lingered, whilst the government naturally fell into the hands of the queen and her brothers; but Philip, boy though he was in age, knew himself to be a crowned king, and would admit of no control. So singularly undutiful indeed was he that the aged king of England, Henry II., who had suffered so much from the conduct of his own children, actually sought an interview with him to entreat him not to sully his name by disrespect to his mother’s wishes.

In the autumn of 1180 it became evident that the life of Louis VII. could not much longer be prolonged. Ordering his money, clothes, and jewels to be brought to him, he caused a certain number of the poor to be assembled, and with his own hands distributed his riches amongst them, and soon afterwards, on the 16th of September, he died, in the sixtieth year of his age and the forty-third of his reign.

The government of Louis had on the whole been beneficial to France. The number of communes was increased, and special privileges were conferred on the merchants of Paris. The condition of the lower classes was also improved by the institution of what were called ‘villes neuves,’ or new towns, in which the serfs who were set free by the small land proprietors might dwell, receiving each a small grant of land. The increasing influence of the middle and lower classes was felt at this time in other countries than France, and in Italy especially the struggle between the emperor Frederick Barbarossa and the cities of Lombardy, supported by the Pope, was the beginning of a war which, under the name of the war of the Ghibellines (the emperor’s party) and the Guelphs (the Pope’s party), desolated the land for years.
CHAPTER XIV.

PHILIP II., AUGUSTUS.

A.D. 1180-1223.

PHILIP AUGUSTUS—so called either because he was born in the month of August or because the epithet Augustus is synonymous with 'the Great' or 'the Imperial'—began his reign by an act opposed to his mother's wishes. He married Isabella of Hainault, niece of the count of Flanders. It was an act of selfish and ambitious policy, for the count of Flanders at once yielded Amiens to the king, and promised him Artois, Valois, and Vermandois; but it was also popular. Isabella was a direct descendant of Charlemagne, and much rejoicing accompanied her coronation, which took place at St. Denis.

The new king evidently had a very far-seeing eye as well as wonderful energy of character. The independence of the great vassals was the one almost insurmountable obstacle to his own supreme authority, and at the very outset of his reign he attacked the powerful duke of Burgundy, who had refused to make amends for acts of violence against the church. A force was sent into Burgundy; the duke's castle was assaulted and his eldest son taken prisoner; and a useful lesson was by this means given to any other noble who might be desirous of following such a rebellious example. The next exhibition of energy was far more open to censure, though it was in accordance with the principles of the age. Following the advice of a supposed saintly hermit of Paris, Philip resolved to repel the Jews from his dominions. The debt due to them he remitted, with the exception of the fifth part, which he took for himself, and three months only were allowed them before their departure. Their synagogues were then converted into Christian churches. No doubt Philip gave himself credit for the act, as also for the severe penalties which at the same time he denounced against heretics, blasphemers, gamesters, swearers, and buffoons; but his true character showed itself in the utterly selfish character of his foreign policy. Following his father's example, he supported the sons of Henry II. of England in their unnatural rebellion. Richard, the second son, was his cherished companion; when together, they ate from the same plate and slept in the same bed; and Richard was his father's sworn foe. Family disunion seemed to be the natural heritage of the house of Anjou. A priest once came with the cross in his hand supplicating Geoffrey, Henry's third son, to be reconciled to his father, and not to imitate Absalom. Geoffrey's reply was, 'It is the destiny of our
family to hate each other. We have received it as our inheritance, and there lives not one amongst us who will renounce it.'

The two favourite sons of the English king, Henry and Geoffrey, died a few years after Philip came to the throne. Richard, then acknowledged as heir, was impatient to reign. He made demands which his father could not gratify, and in revenge for the refusal took up arms against him. Philip's support was given on this occasion on the score of grievances peculiar to himself. His half-sister Marguerite, the daughter of Louis VII. and Constance of Castile, had married prince Henry of England. Her husband being dead, Philip demanded the restoration of her dower, and the king of England refused to give it up. So also Alice, Philip's youngest sister, had been betrothed to prince Richard, and had even been sent to England to be educated. But the king of England delayed the marriage, and even, it was said, desired to have the young princess for himself. These were sufficient causes for enmity. Yet, though war was begun, there were no regular battles. Henry's strength lay rather in conferences and discussions, and at length the two kings agreed to meet at a spot near Gisors, where a magnificent elm-tree had for centuries stood, marking the boundary between France and Normandy, but before the appointed day of meeting arrived tidings were received from the east which diverted the thoughts of the rival monarchs from their own petty quarrels to the condition of the Christians in the Holy Land.

Saladin, the sultan of Egypt, had undertaken the task of reconquering Palestine for the Mahometans. A great battle had been fought at Tiberias. The Christians had been defeated, and the victorious Saladin, passing onwards to Jerusalem, had assaulted and taken it. The intelligence was brought to Europe in the autumn of the year 1187. Men talked of it everywhere, but no plans had been formed till Henry of England and Philip of France, attended by prince Richard and a multitude of knights and nobles, met at the great elm of Gisors in the month of January 1188.

The discussion of private questions of dispute had scarcely begun when the aged archbishop of Tyre presented himself before the assembly, imploring the kings and princes present to forget all matters of personal quarrel and to join in defending the cause of the eastern Christians.

The appeal was one which could scarcely in those days be made in vain. Henry, Philip, Richard, and the chief of the attendant nobles assumed the Cross. The tax of a tenth on the property of all the crusaders was imposed, and two years were allowed for preparation. There was no real reconciliation, however, between France and England. Before the next year had passed the two kings were again at deadly enmity, and at length Philip, finding that Henry
could neither be intimidated nor flattered into agreement with his demands; cut down the elm of Gisors, vowing that no more meetings for peace should ever again be held under it.

The family sorrows of Henry II. were now brought to a climax. Richard openly renounced his homage, and in his father’s presence turned to Philip and declared himself his vassal. Open warfare followed, and the English king, with his failing strength, was soon reduced to the necessity of making a most humiliating peace with Philip, all the barons who had taken up arms in Richard’s favour being permitted to remain the prince’s vassals. He was still in Normandy when the ambassadors of Philip, who were to witness the confirmation of the treaty, visited him. They found him ill and in bed. Henry demanded a list of Richard’s supporters. The first name was that of the king’s youngest and favourite son, John; and the unhappy father, as he read it, fell back upon his pillow, and turning his face to the wall exclaimed, ‘Let all be as it may; henceforth I care not for myself nor for aught that this world can give.’

His heart was broken. He retired to the castle of Chinon, and there died, on the 6th of July, 1189.

Upon the death of Henry, Philip’s great friend Richard, as king of England, became his rival—a brilliant rival, with all the defects of a hero of the middle ages. Generous though selfish, Richard gave, sold, lost, frittered away his inheritance, to gratify his passion for war and obtain money for the crusades, the necessity for which was pressing. The Christians in the Holy Land had lost nearly all but the cities on the coast of Palestine. Tyre itself had fallen into the hands of the infidels. To excite sympathy the prince of Tyre, Conrad of Montferrat, who aspired to be king of Jerusalem, had caused to be borne throughout Europe a representation of the unfortunate city and of the Holy Sepulchre, with a Saracen cavalier trampling on the tomb of the Redeemer; and loud were the lamentations of the Christians of the west, as, gazing upon the picture and beating their breasts, they cried, ‘Woe! woe unto us! ’

The conduct of Saladin told also against the Christian cause. The fugitives from Jerusalem found no shelter with their brethren, whilst Saladin employed all the money he could spare in delivering them when they had fallen into the hands of his soldiers. But for the difference of religion public sympathy might now have been enlisted on the side of the Saracens, so high was the reputation of their leader’s honour, compassion, and generosity.

The French had led the first crusade, the Germans the second, the third was especially English. But Richard Cœur de Lion took with him only knights and soldiers; no useless followers were allowed. The king of France followed this example, and both having assembled their troops at Vezelai, marched in company to Lyons, where
they separated, Richard embarking at Marseilles, Philip Augustus at Genoa.

In the meantime Frederick Barbarossa, the aged emperor of Germany, had already set forth for the east by land with a formidable army. The difficulties which had overwhelmed Conrad and Louis VII, upon first entering Asia Minor had been surmounted by him, he seemed to be clearing the way for the French and English kings, when a fatal accident arrested the progress of the army. The emperor was crossing an insignificant river—the Calycadnus—when his horse was, as it is supposed, carried away by the current, and he was drowned. Their leader being dead, the troops dispersed, and thus the burden of the third crusade was left to be borne by France and England alone.

The two kings met at Sicily, and there a quarrel broke out. Tancred, king of Sicily, had usurped the crown, and caused Joanna, the widow of his predecessor, to be imprisoned. Joanna was Richard’s sister, and Richard desired to revenge this outrage. Tancred gained Philip to his side. A compromise was suggested. Tancred released Joanna, and offered to restore her dowry. The kings of Sicily and England then became friends. But Philip would not allow Richard to retain the whole of the sum he had thus obtained. He had a claim of his own to bring forward. Richard had been betrothed to the princess Alice. Disputes sufficient to make void the engagement had arisen, but Philip still insisted upon considering it as binding. Richard, on the other hand, had arranged a marriage with the beautiful Berengaria, daughter of the king of Navarre. The princess was even then expected to arrive in Sicily, accompanied by queen Eleanor, and the marriage was to take place speedily. The quarrel was at last adjusted by Richard’s payment of a large portion of the sum he had received from Tancred, and then, whilst the English king awaited his bride in Sicily, Philip set sail for the Holy Land. He landed at Acre, and found himself in the midst of a numerous Christian host, the very flower of Christendom; so formidable, indeed, was the army, even before the arrival of Richard and Philip, that one of the crusading knights had been heard to exclaim: ‘If God will but remain neutral, the victory is ours!’ Saladin, on his side, had sought the aid of all the Mussulman princes, for the struggle was felt to be not for the city of Acre, but between Europe and Asia for supremacy. All that was then known of military science was put in practice by the besiegers. Movable towers were brought against the walls, and a combustible material, called Greek fire, was thrown into the town. ‘The Christians,’ say the Arab historians, ‘brought with them the lava of Etne, and cast it upon their enemies, even as the lightnings of Heaven were lanced against the rebellious angels.’ Yet the crusading army really
did but little. It was weakened by national jealousies. The Genoese, Pisans, and Venetians were rivals in commerce; the knights of the two military orders—the Templars and Hospitallers—could scarcely restrain themselves from open conflict; there were two claimants for the throne of Jerusalem—Guy de Lusignan and Conrade de Montferrat—and, more fatal than all, Philip of France and Richard of England regarded each other with a distrust rendered all the more bitter from the circumstances of their early friendship.

Upon Richard’s arrival the two sovereigns were full of expressions of mutual courtesy; yet they were openly opposed upon a most important point—that of the rival claims to the kingdom of Jerusalem. Philip espoused the cause of Conrade de Montferrat; Richard supported Guy de Lusignan, but the settlement of the question was deferred till an assault had been made upon the city. Unhappily, Richard was suddenly seized with illness, and Philip attempted to storm the place without him. The attack was unsuccessful, and Philip was deeply mortified. Richard recovered, and was no sooner able to appear in the camp than his determined valour excited the admiration of the army and increased the jealousy of Philip. A second, though again an unsuccessful, attempt was made to carry the city by assault. At last it yielded, but chiefly from hunger, and on the 12th of July, 1191, the two kings received its submission.

Then came the important choice of a king of Jerusalem. Each claimant based his title upon the right of his wife. Guy de Lusignan had married Sybilla, the eldest daughter of the late king, Baldwin; Conrade de Montferrat was the husband of Isabel, the second daughter. Sybilla was dead, but Isabel was living. Richard resolutely upheld the claim of Guy, as the representative of Sybilla, and Philip was obliged to agree that Guy should hold the crown for his lifetime; afterwards it was to devolve upon Isabel and her heirs. Ultimately Richard consented to the election of Conrade, and Guy de Lusignan received the island of Cyprus as a compensation for the loss of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

And now it began to be whispered abroad that Philip Augustus had thoughts of withdrawing from the expedition. Richard, in alarm, proposed that they should both take an oath to prosecute the war for three years. Philip refused, and at once demanded permission of his ally to return home.

Richard remonstrated indignantly, but he could do no more. For his own safety he bound Philip by an oath to refrain from attacking the English possessions in France, and to protect them against all enemies; and Philip then sailed for Europe, amidst the contemptuous murmur and curses of the crusading hosts.

Honour for Richard, profit for himself—this was apparently
ALLIANCE OF PHILIP AND JOHN—INGEBURGA AND AGNES DE MERANIE. 99

Philip's view of the right division of their joint expedition. The king of England remained in the Holy Land as the champion of Christendom, making himself very famous and very poor; Philip, who had solemnly sworn not to injure him, returned to France, prepared to take the earliest opportunity of indulging his malignant rivalry.

That opportunity was not long in presenting itself. During Richard's absence prince John had seized the crown of England, and now received open support from Philip, who accepted his homage for Normandy, and even for England; and then, with John's concurrence, overran all Richard's French dominions. They thought themselves safe. Richard's return was more than improbable. He had indeed left Palestine, after failing to enter Jerusalem; but on his way back to England he had been seized by the duke of Austria, with whom he had had a personal quarrel at Acre. The duke had delivered him to his feudal lord, the emperor Henry VI., the son of Frederick Barbarossa, a man utterly without principle; and Richard was closely imprisoned, whilst Philip and John offered the avaricious emperor as large a sum to keep him as Richard himself would have given for his own ransom. Owing to the exertions of Eleanor of Aquitaine, and the remonstrances of the Pope and some of the German princes, Richard was, however, at length set at liberty in February 1194; and the emperor gave notice of the fact to Philip and John, ' bidding them look to themselves, for the devil was unchained.' It was sufficient for Richard to appear to reduce John to submission, and to oblige Philip to withdraw from his invasion of the English territories in France; but a series of petty wars and truces still continued.

In 1196, two years after Richard's release, Philip, who had lost his first wife, Isabella of Hainault, proposed to marry Ingeburga, the daughter of the king of Denmark. By this union he hoped to unite the Danes with himself in opposition to Richard; but Ingeburga, though described as virtuous and religious, was repulsive to Philip's taste. On the first day of their meeting he conceived a violent distaste to her, and assembling a council at Compiègne, he professed to have discovered that he was too nearly related to the Danish princess, and compelled the French bishops to pronounce the marriage null. When the humiliating tidings were brought to Ingeburga, who understood the language of her new country imperfectly, she could only exclaim, ' Wicked, wicked France! Rome! Rome!' She refused to return to Denmark, but was shut up in a convent, where her deep piety excited general sympathy. Philip, in the meantime, had claimed the hand of the lovely Agnes de Meranie, the daughter of a Tyrolean nobleman, calling himself marquis of Istrià.

The act was politically unwise as well as morally wrong.
Shortly before, Richard of England had been killed before the castle of Chalus, and John and his young nephew Arthur, duke of Brittany, were contending for the English crown, which Arthur claimed as the son of Geoffrey, John's elder brother. Arthur placed himself under Philip's protection, and Philip promised to support him, but he was in no condition to carry out his word. His shameless repudiation of the princess of Denmark had brought upon him the censure of the uncompromising Pope, Innocent III, and Philip was threatened with excommunication, and France with an interdict, unless Agnes de Meuranie were discarded. This was no time for Philip to engage in a war; his subjects might, and probably would, turn against him. For three years he continued obdurate. The papal legate then summoned a council at Dijon, and after discussion and protest, which occupied a week, on the seventh night, at midnight, the interdict was pronounced. Each priest present held a torch whilst the Misereere and the prayers for the dead were chanted. The crucifix was veiled with black cloths, the relics were replaced within the tombs, and then the torches were dashed to the ground, and the cardinal legate pronounced the territories of the king of France under a curse. All religious offices were from that moment to cease. An awful silence followed the announcement, broken only by the sobs of the aged, the women, and the children. The sin of the sovereign was visited upon his people. 'Oh, how horrible,' writes one who had witnessed the working of an interdict, 'to see the doors of the churches watched, and Christians driven away from them like dogs,... There was a deep sadness over the whole realm, while the organs and the voices of those who chanted God's praises were everywhere silent.'

The personal sentence of excommunication was deferred, but for eight months the interdict continued more or less in force throughout France. Then the people became mutinous, and Philip sent certain ecclesiastics and knights to Rome to declare that he would abide by the sentence of the Pope. 'What sentence?' sternly exclaimed Innocent—'that which has been already delivered, or that which is to be delivered? Let him receive his lawful wife; then will we raise the interdict.' The reply drove the king to fury. 'I will turn Mahometan!' he exclaimed. 'Happy Saladin! he has no Pope above him.' Agnes de Meuranie addressed a touching epistle to Innocent. 'She, a stranger, the daughter of a Christian prince, had been married, young and ignorant of the world, to the king, in the face of God and of the church; she cared not for the crown; it was on her husband that she had set her love. She entreated that she might not be severed from him.' The king, on his part, swore that he would rather lose half his dominions than part from Agnes.

And yet he was at length obliged to yield. To the king's castle
RESTORATION OF INGEBURGA—DEATH OF AGNES.

Philip II.

of St. Leger came the legate and bishops, and in their train Ingeburga. The meeting between Philip and Ingeburga was extremely painful. The struggle in Philip's mind was evident. 'The Pope does me violence,' he said. 'His holiness requires but justice,' answered Ingeburga. She was led forth dressed in royal robes, and presented to the council. A knight stepped forward and swore that the king would receive and honour her as the queen of France, and at that instant the clanging of bells proclaimed the raising of the interdict.

But the difficulty was not at an end. A council was to enquire into the plea which Philip had brought forward of too near relationship to Ingeburga. The king of Denmark was to appear himself in support of his daughter. The meeting was held at Soissons. Ten bishops and several abbots pleaded for Ingeburga. One unknown champion appeared in defence of the claims of Agnes de Meranie. Fourteen days the weary council had sat, when the king rode up to the place of assembly, and, after making an open declaration that he fully acknowledged Ingeburga as his lawful wife, mounted her behind him on his horse, and rode off through the wondering crowds without waiting to bid farewell to the perplexed legate and his council.

The cause of this strange act was unknown then, but it was afterwards surmised. Philip knew that Agnes de Meranie was dying. She had parted from him with the passionate sobs of a broken heart, and retired to a castle in Normandy. In her lonely refuge she gave birth to a son, whom she rightly named Tristan, the Sorrowful, and then her little remaining strength yielded beneath the load of her affliction, and she sank gradually to her grave. The news of her death, it would seem, awoke the superstitious dread of Philip, and the bitterness of affliction touched his selfish heart with remorse. He would fain propitiate the church, and procure the prayers which he believed would avail for the salvation of the object of his affection. Above all, he desired to obtain from the Pope the legitimisation of the children whom Agnes had borne him. Therefore he professed again to receive the Danish princess as his wife. He had been selfish to Agnes in his love, but he was cruel to Ingeburga in his aversion. The queen of France was carried from castle to castle, from cloister to cloister, a sovereign in name, a prisoner in reality, even deprived of the offices of religion, till, in her sorrowful longing for repose, she must have been tempted to breathe an envious sigh over the early death of her beautiful and unfortunate rival.

Whilst the interdict lasted Philip had avoided a quarrel with John, and had not only promised to forgo the cause of Arthur of Brittany, but had agreed to a marriage between his son Louis and
MURDER OF PRINCE ARTHUR—INVASION OF NORMANDY—SESSION.

Philip II.

John's niece Blanche, the infanta of Castile, which was solemnised at Vernon, in Normandy, on the 23rd of May, 1200. Yet his secret desire was to dispossess John of his continental dominions, and the occasion soon offered itself. John repudiated his wife, Hawise of Gloucester, and carried off Isabella of Angoulême, the affianced bride of Hugh de Lusignan, comte de la Marche. The count appealed for redress to Philip as his suzerain. John was cited to appear at Paris and answer to the accusation; and when he disregarded the summons, Philip invaded Normandy, and openly espoused the pretensions of young Arthur to the throne of England.

John's first attempt to repel this attack was successful. Arthur, with his sister Eleanor, commonly called the Damsel of Brittany, were made prisoners. The young prince was kept in the castle of Rouen, and soon the rumour spread that he had been murdered by his uncle's own hands. To Philip this tragedy was of the greatest importance. He again called upon John to appear before him, and on his disregard of the summons laid claim to Normandy, on the plea that John having perpetrated the murder within the seigniory of France, had thus forfeited the lands which he held by homage.

By the spring of 1205 not only Normandy, but Poitou and nearly the whole of Angoulême, had submitted to him. These losses weighed so heavily on the mind of Eleanor of Aquitaine that she died early in the same year at the abbey of Beaulieu, near Loches; but it was long before the reckless English king could be roused to a sense of his danger. When Philip's continued successes did at length open his eyes, he signified his willingness to appear in answer to the summons of the suzerain, if only he could have a safe-conduct. Philip replied that he might come safely, but his return must depend upon the sentence passed upon him. John declined the risk, and in his absence was tried, found guilty of murder, and condemned to death, and his fiefs were pronounced forfeited to the crown of France.

John appeared at first unmindful of his position. Envoys from Rouen came to inform him of the condition of his territories, and found him playing at chess, and before listening to them he insisted upon finishing his game. He slept every day till his dinner hour, and then dined sumptuously with his beautiful queen. At last, having resolved to strike a blow for his lost heritage, he entered Brittany and took some fortresses, but on the approach of Philip with a superior force he proposed a negotiation; and on the 26th of October, by the mediation of the Pope, a truce for two years was signed. John now gave up all claim to Normandy, Brittany, and Maine, and to that portion of Anjou and Touraine which lay north of the Loire. Poitiers also, with the surrounding district, was left in Philip's hands,
and thus in three years the territories of the French crown had been almost doubled in extent. The islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and others known as the Channel Islands, were retained by England.

The attention of Philip Augustus during this period had been mainly, if not entirely, directed to the increase of his own dominions, but events were happening around him to which it was impossible for him to be indifferent, as they were intimately connected with the history of France and the fortunes of some of her bravest nobles.

The first was the temporary overthrow of the Greek empire of Constantinople, and the establishment of a Latin empire in its stead. It was in the same year, 1202, in which John of England took his nephew Arthur prisoner, that Pope Innocent III. ordered Fulk of Neullly, a parish priest of distinguished zeal and eloquence, to preach a new crusade on the occasion of a splendid tournament held in Champagne. Fulk presented himself, and making a powerful address, persuaded a large number of nobles and knights to assume the cross. Thibalt of Champagne, Baldwin, count of Flanders, Simon de Montfort (famous afterwards in a more cruel war), were among the chief leaders, and with them went Geoffrey de Villehardouin, marshal of Champagne, who became the historian of the expedition. The crusaders, numbering thirty thousand knights and foot soldiers, proceeded to Venice. The doge agreed to give them his support on condition of their assisting him in recovering the revolted town of Zara, in Dalmatia. This delayed their departure for the east, and in the meantime Alexius Angelus, the son and heir of the Greek emperor, arrived at Venice, with the tidings that his father had been deposed by his own brother and cast into prison. He entreated the crusaders to aid him in restoring the emperor to his throne, and a large body of knights undertook the task. The Venetians, with the blind old doge Dandolo at their head, joined them, being delighted to gain a hold upon Constantinople, their rival on the sea. Alexius and his allies were successful; the emperor Isaac was replaced on his throne, and in the great church of St. Sophia his son was crowned as joint sovereign with him. The crusaders were rewarded by the submission of the Greek church to the authority of the Pope, and the gift of 200,000 marks of silver, besides the promise of other support.

But the vices of Isaac Angelus, and the weakness of his son, Alexius, soon caused general distrust. An insurrection broke out, headed by a courtier, commonly known by the epithet of Mourzoufle, from his black, shaggy, and closely joined eyebrows. Isaac and his son were thrown into prison and murdered; but the Franks, or Latins, as they are often called, who still lingered before Con-
stantinople, rose as one man against Mourtzoufle. The city was again besieged and taken, and the vacant throne was offered to the valiant old doge Dandolo. He refused it, and Baldwin, count of Flanders, a descendant of Charlemagne, was ultimately selected as emperor, the Venetians receiving as their share of the conquest three of the eight quarters into which the city of Constantinople was divided, besides several islands in the Levant. The establishment of this Latin empire at Constantinople was the termination of the expedition which had set forth as a crusade.

But there was another crusade, in which Philip Augustus was far more nearly interested—a crusade not against foreigners and aliens, but against fellow-countrymen and friends, a battle between the church and the heretics—and in the eyes of Innocent III. and his successors it was doubtless a war as holy as any undertaken by the crusaders for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre.

The spirit of religious controversy and rash speculations which had been upheld by Abelard and denounced by St. Bernard, had always been especially prevalent amongst the cultivated and critical people of Languedoc and the southern provinces of France. Sects had sprung up on all sides. They were known by various names—Catharini, Paterini, Poor Men of Lyons, Vandois, and Albigenses. The views of the greater number of these sects seem to have differed little from those of the Swiss and German reformers in the sixteenth century; but the doctrines of the Albigenses were undoubtedly wild and dangerous. They are said to have adopted the ancient Persian doctrine of two deities—one, the good Creator of things invisible; the other, the evil creator of things visible. They rejected the sacraments of the church, denounced marriage, and taught strange legendary fables as to the origin of man. Those most strict in their profession were called the Perfect. They dressed always in black, never married, never took an oath, and practised great abstinence, refusing to eat meat, eggs, or cheese. In the midst of the license and luxury of the south such professions of asceticism were regarded with great admiration. The Albigenses increased in number and influence, whilst the clergy, who were unhappily at that period as open to censure for their immoral lives as they were bigoted in their superstition, were daily losing their hold upon the people.

From the moment that Innocent III. was elected Pope in 1198, the persecution of the Albigenses, and indeed of heretics of every kind, might have been foreseen. Remarkable as he was for blamelessness of life, fervent piety, and keen intelligence, and unswerving in his devotion to the church of which he was the visible head, he could not be expected to permit any opposition to authority and long-established belief, especially when joined with the suspicion of immorality.
RAYMOND OF TOULOUSE—ST. DOMINIC—ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE. 105

Philip II.

The very same year in which Innocent became Pope he wrote a letter of mingled reproof and threats to the princes who were known to support the new opinions. But his warnings were disregarded. Raymond, count of Toulouse, more especially defied his power. Strange tales were told of this prince—his blasphemies and immoralities. Some, doubtless, were exaggerated, but for others there was evidently a foundation; and the Pope sent into Languedoc two Cistercian monks as his legates, with a commission to root out the heresy which, under the sanction of count Raymond, had taken such deep root in the country. Their efforts were supported by the celebrated Spanish priest Dominic de Guzman, generally known as St. Dominic, the founder of the Roman Catholic order of Dominicans.1 Count Raymond made promises of amendment, but he afterwards strove to elude them; and Pierre de Castelnau, one of the legates, dared to reproach him to his face with what he called his perfidy. The angry count, little accustomed to such words, gave vent to expressions such as Henry II. might have used in his wrath against Thomas à Becket. The result was very similar. One of his nobles followed Pierre de Castelnau to the river Rhone, and there murdered him.

This deed was the beginning of a frightful tragedy. Innocent proclaimed a crusade against the count of Toulouse, and eternal rewards were offered to those who would join it. The temptation was to many persons great. There was no sea to be crossed, no dangerous journeys to be undertaken; all that was needed was courage to plunder Languedoc. About Midsummer 1209 a large army was marshalled at Lyons. Philip of France was not there himself; the certainty that, if he involved himself in a new war, John of England and his nephew Otho, emperor of Germany, would attempt to take from him all that he had recently gained, probably kept him aloof; but French and Norman knights and barons assembled in numbers. The most illustrious amongst these nobles was Simon, comte de Montfort and earl of Leicester, an experienced soldier of the crusades. In his devotion to the Pope, Simon de Montfort was fanatical, in his determined opposition to the heretics mercilessly cruel, yet at times he exhibited a generosity and self-devotion towards the weak and helpless of his own party which proved that his character might have been worthy of the highest admiration, if the bigotry of the age had not warped his intellect and hardened his heart.

Accompanied by Amaury, abbot of Citeaux, the papal legate,

1 The sincerity, piety, and zeal of Dominic are unquestioned, but his name has always been associated with acts of great severity. The foundation of the terrible Court of the Inquisition for the trial of heretical offences has been attributed to him, but without sufficient evidence.
De Montfort marched with his forces into Languedoc. The war was not ostensibly undertaken against count Raymond; he had made a show of submission, he had even undergone a degrading penance, having been scourged by the priests in the church where Peter de Castelnau was buried, but it was the hard command of the Pope that he should now take up the cross against his own loyal subjects, and join in invading the territories of his nephew, the vicomte de Béziers.

On the 22nd of July the town of Beziers was stormed. The whole population was indiscriminately massacred. 'Kill all,' was the command of the abbot of Citeaux; 'the Lord will know His own.' Carcassonne, the capital of the vicomte de Béziers, was not assaulted. The vicomte was taken prisoner, and his dominions were given by the legate to Simon de Montfort. After a short imprisonment the vicomte died suddenly (it was thought that he was poisoned), and the remaining towns of Languedoc, with the exception of Toulouse, soon fell into the hands of the Pope.

Count Raymond had found it a hard task to satisfy his haughty persecutors; in fact, he had not satisfied them. His zeal against his subjects had been lukewarm, and once more he was excommunicated, and an interdict was laid upon Toulouse. The terms demanded for his forgiveness were so monstrous that they were rejected with disdain. Open war followed. King Pedro of Aragon assisted Raymond. Simon de Montfort took part with the Pope. On the 12th of September, 1213, a desperate battle was fought at Muret. The count of Toulouse was defeated; Pedro of Aragon, who shared in the engagement, fell pierced by a shower of arrows, and Simon de Montfort took possession for himself of the province against which the crusade had been directed.

In the year in which the battle of Muret was fought Philip Augustus was invited by Innocent to invade the English dominions of king John, against whom there were special causes of complaint. The Pope had nominated Stephen Langton to the archbishopric of Canterbury, and John had refused to receive him. Not only so, but John’s vices and cruelties made him universally detested. The Pope issued a sentence of deposition; the king of France was to execute it. Philip had assembled an immense army, when he heard that John had submitted. The papal legate forbade Philip to carry out the plan of invasion; and Philip, highly incensed, yet not thinking it wise to disobey, turned his arms against Ferrand, count of Flanders, who had refused to join in the contemplated English expedition. Flanders was ravaged cruelly, and the count was in great danger of losing his territories. In his need he sought and obtained help from Otho, emperor of Germany, and John of England. Philip, to avenge himself on Otho, at once took part with the rival claimant to the empire, Frederick II., but Frederick was unfortunately a child, and
no support could be expected from him except through the princes and nobles who might be inclined to espouse his cause. The plan of the campaign on the part of the allies was that John should attack Philip in the west, and thus endeavour to recover his lost provinces in France, whilst the Germans and Flemings should fall upon him in the north. The inhabitants of Poitou, already weary of the yoke of France, were quite prepared to range themselves on John’s side, but the ill fortune of the English king pursued him. After a few rapid, unimportant successes his troops met those of prince Louis, Philip’s eldest son, in the open field. A panic seized the English and they fled. John, defeated, ruined, and without resources, returned to England, there to meet his indignant barons, and at their demand be compelled to sign the great charter which was to guard his subjects then and for ever from tyranny and wrong.

The conflict in the north with Otho and his army of 150,000 men was far more important for Philip Augustus than that with John in the west. Philip himself met his enemy at the bridge of Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay. Here, on the 27th of August, 1214, was fought one of the most famous battles of the mediaeval times. The details have been handed down to us by William le Breton, the French king’s chaplain. He evidently flatters and exaggerates, wishing to make Philip a hero; but it is certain that the king was at one time in great danger of being overthrown by some foot soldiers, who caught hold of his armour with iron hooks and pulled him off his horse. He was saved by William des Barres, the brother of Simon de Montfort. After a desperate conflict of three hours victory remained with Philip. The emperor, who had his horse wounded under him, with difficulty escaped from the field, leaving behind him his imperial eagle and the car upon which the standard was borne. Five counts, with many knights, were made prisoners by Philip; for, although they all fought with the utmost valour, it was nearly impossible, when once overthrown, to rise again, on account of the weight of the armour. The counts of Flanders and Boulogne forfeited their sefs, and the former endured imprisonment for life. Sixteen of the free cities or boroughs of France sent bodies of men-at-arms to the battle, and these troops greatly contributed to Philip’s success. The victory of Bouvines was most important to Philip in its results. It proved to the great barons that the king did not rest only upon them for support, but upon the people generally, especially the wealthy citizens. All classes in the kingdom, indeed, had lent their aid, and all shared the glory. Philip, in his joy and gratitude for the victory, founded in commemoration of it the Abbaye de la Victoire, near Senlis, the remains of which are still to be seen.

By this time the prospect of another war had arisen. John
of England had signed the Magna Carta at Runnymede; the Pope had declared the charter illegal, and forbidden the barons to observe it. A civil war had broken out in consequence, and now John's barons offered the crown of England to prince Louis of France. Louis had married Blanche of Castile, a granddaughter of Henry II.; he had therefore the shadow of a claim to the throne. The cautious Philip would only say that he could not restrain his son from claiming his right, but he gave him no active support. Louis undertook the expedition on his own responsibility, and almost it seemed to have succeeded, when the sudden death of John, on the 19th of October, 1216, changed the whole aspect of affairs. The barons forsook the French prince and proffered their allegiance to Henry III., a young child ten years old, the lawful heir to the crown.

That year, 1216, was indeed a most important one, not for England only, but for all Europe. Two months only before John's death Innocent III. also expired, as great in the eyes of his contemporaries, and as famous for all future ages, as John was degraded and despised. And yet this triumphant end of life was sad. True, Otho had been crushed, and the young emperor Frederick II. elected in his stead; true, the kings of England had been humbled to the dust, and Philip Augustus compelled to submit to the authority of the church; true, also, the heresies of the Albigenses had been punished and almost uprooted: what, then, could be wanting to the satisfaction of him who could look upon himself as being thus the ruler of Christendom, both in its actions and its thoughts?

Only one thing—secret, invisible, yet infinite in its value, and for the loss of which nothing could make amends—the conviction that he had done rightly. Innocent may not, perhaps, have been shaken in his principles, he may not have arrived at the conclusion that persecution was wrong; but mingling with the shouts of victory there arose a cry, faint, gasping, yet terrible—the cry of the murdered and the heart-broken. Twenty thousand destroyed at Beziers by the command of the legate! Ten thousand executed at Toulouse! Villages in ashes! orphan children suffering for the doom pronounced on their parents! They who had done these things had been well rewarded; one was marquis of Provence, another archbishop of Narbonne, many were in the possession of bishoprics. But the church, what had she gained? Universal excommunication. And the Pope? A misgiving for his dying hour.

It was a misgiving in some measure awakened at least a year before that hour arrived—when young Raymond of Toulouse, the count of Foix, and other barons of the south came to him, threw themselves at his feet, and poured out their complaints before him. Innocent was then strangely moved. He would fain, it is said, have repaired their wrongs; but the men who had executed his orders, and
gone far beyond them, would not permit a restitution which would be their own ruin. Yet the partial sanction of the Pope gave courage to the despoiled nobles. The old count Raymond raised his standard in Provence, and in 1217, the year after Innocent's death, he re-entered his ancient capital of Toulouse amidst the acclamations of his people. The following year Simon de Montfort, having again besieged the town, was killed by a huge stone hurled from the ramparts. From that time the cause of the Albigensian crusaders declined. Pope Honorius III., the successor of Innocent, exhorted Philip Augustus to take up arms for the extirpation of the false doctrine, and prince Louis, who had shortly before returned defeated from the English expedition, was sent to the south to prosecute what was still looked upon as a sacred war. Yet the end of all these efforts was defeat. Count Raymond, indeed, died still excommunicated, and therefore denied the rites of burial; but his son succeeded to his dominions in 1222.

A.D. 1222

After the battle of Bouvines the life of Philip Augustus was unmarked by events of foreign importance, and the king was able to devote all the powers of his really superior mind to the better government and the internal arrangements of his dominions. Paris was greatly improved under his directions. The necessity was forced upon him, so says an old chronicler, by finding one day an intolerable stench proceeding from the mud thrown up by the horses which were passing through the city. This induced him to pave the streets, a task which none of his predecessors had ventured upon. This original pavement is still to be found in Paris, seven or eight feet below the present surface. Philip likewise enclosed with a strong wall the buildings and gardens that bordered the Seine, and began to build the palace of the Louvre outside the walls as a country residence. It was a gloomy building, and, according to the fashion of the times, it was intended also for a prison. He enclosed, besides, the park at Vincennes, and stocked it with deer sent him from England by Henry II.

Much of Philip's attention was bestowed upon the administration of justice and the encouragement of learning. He was himself a great reader of knightly romances, full of the legends of king Arthur and Charlemagne. Alexander the Great was also a favourite hero of those days; and the long metre which the French use generally in their graver poems, and which is called the Alexandrine, takes its name from a romance of the history of Alexander, written in this reign.

In the midst of these occupations and interests Philip was seized with a quartan fever, which held its ground and gradually undermined his constitution. Yet he lingered, and was even well enough to move from one place to another; but as he was travelling from Normandy to Paris the disease increased so suddenly that he was
PHILIP'S CHARACTER—ACCESSION OF LOUIS VIII.

Louis VIII.

obliged to stop at the town of Mantes, where he breathed his last on the 14th of July, 1223, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

Philip Augustus, in his private character, is entitled to very little respect. He was selfish, unscrupulous, ambitious, and treacherous; but as a ruler there can be no doubt that he was worthy of high admiration. He was prudent, firm, energetic, and wise beyond any of his predecessors, and it may indeed be doubted whether any sovereign of France since his day has, in these respects, surpassed him.

CHAPTER XV.
LOUIS VIII.

A.D. 1223–1226.

Louis VIII., on ascending the throne of France, brought with him one great personal recommendation. He was the representative of two lines—the Capetian and the Carolingian; for his mother, Isabella of Hainault, was a direct descendant of Charlemagne, and the name of the great emperor was still held in veneration in France. Great rejoicings marked his coronation, which took place at Rheims; and in Paris tables covered with provisions were laid in the streets for the poor, private houses and public buildings were gaily decorated, and minstrels paraded the city singing the praises of Louis the Lion, the new king. The epithet might almost appear to have been chosen ironically, for Louis was weak both in mind and body. Yet his first act was a bold one. He summoned Henry III. of England to attend his coronation as a vassal of France. The powerful English barons answered for their child-sovereign by demanding the restitution of Normandy. War was the natural consequence, and Louis carried on two campaigns against the English. Then a truce for three years was concluded, in order that the French monarch might aid in completing the extirpation of the Albigenses and the punishment of count Raymond VII., who was supposed to share his father's principles. Before engaging in this undertaking, however, Louis had another business to settle of a more private kind. The count of Flanders, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Bouvines, had married Jeanne de Courtenai, the daughter of Baldwin, the first Latin emperor of Constantinople. Baldwin had reigned but three years, when, in a war with the Bulgarians, he was taken prisoner; and Jeanne, being an extremely hard-hearted, selfish woman, would never exert herself sufficiently to procure the ransom demanded for her father. He therefore remained in captivity, and, as it was generally supposed, was ultimately murdered.
About a year after Louis VIII. came to the throne a man presented himself before Jeanne de Courtenai, declaring himself to be the emperor Baldwin, who had escaped from his Bulgarian prison. He was strikingly like the late emperor, making allowance for the changes which time and suffering would bring, and the people showed themselves ready to support his claim to Flanders. Jeanne applied for advice and protection to Louis VIII., who prevailed on the supposed emperor to meet him at Peronne, where he and the Pope's legate were prepared to enquire into the truth of his statement. Several questions were put to him tending to elicit the facts of his former life. All were answered clearly, with the exception of three:—

In what place he had done fealty to Philip Augustus?

Where and by whom he had been knighted?

And the place and day on which he had married his countess, Maria of Champagne?

Louis decided that he was an impostor, but allowed him to depart unmolested. Jeanne, however, soon contrived to get him into her hands, and after inflicting cruel tortures upon him had him put to death.

The Flemings were not satisfied with the examination, and looked upon Jeanne with abhorrence as her father's murderer, until at length she sent persons to Bulgaria to bring back proofs of the emperor's death. They returned declaring that they had found the grave, and that a miraculous light issued from it; and from that time the Flemings were satisfied.

Flanders, under the rule of the countess Jeanne, was entirely subject to French influence. So also was Languedoc, where the direct intervention of the king of France was ardently desired to put an end to the Albigensian war.

In accordance with the wish of the principal nobles and bishops Louis raised a considerable army and entered Languedoc. He was stopped at Avignon, a town which, in the division of Charlemagne's empire, had fallen to the lot of the emperor of Germany, but which was under the more immediate rule of the counts of Toulouse. The French king insisted upon passing through Avignon, and on receiving a refusal he besieged and took it, and treated the inhabitants with much severity. Fear spread through the province. Nîmes, Albi, and Carcassonne yielded without resistance, and it seemed as though in this single campaign the subjugation of the south would be accomplished. But the weather had become extremely hot, and a fever had broken out in the camp, which caused the loss of 20,000 men. The king himself fell ill, and it was thought necessary that he should return to Paris. He left his army under the command of the lord of Beaujeu, and set out on his journey; but on his arrival at the castle of Montpensier, in Auvergne, he found himself unable to proceed farther. It was soon evident that he was
dying. Assembling his nobles round his bed, he made them take the oath of allegiance to his young son Louis, a child of twelve years of age, and appointed his queen, Blanche of Castile, regent of the kingdom. Very shortly afterwards, on the 8th of November, 1226, Louis VIII expired, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. The rumour afterwards spread that he had been poisoned by Thibault, count of Champagne, whom he had offended at the siege of Avignon, and who was reported to have fallen in love with Blanche; but for this accusation there is no sufficient foundation.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOUIS IX.

A.D. 1226–1270.

'Sore need had Louis IX. of God's help in his youth,' says the sire de Joinville, the famous chronicler, 'for his mother, who came out of Spain, had neither relations nor friends in all the realm of France. And because the barons of France saw that the king was an infant, and the queen, his mother, a foreigner, they made the count of Boulogne, the king's uncle, their chief, and looked up to him as their lord.' The position was certainly difficult, but Blanche of Castile was fully equal to it. She possessed a clear intellect, dauntless courage, and remarkable strength of character, whilst at the same time she was fascinating in manner and thoroughly versed in all the arts of conciliation.

And she had brought up her child well. Louis, naturally devotional, had been imbued also with the strictest principles of morality, being told from his infancy that his mother would rather he were dead than that he should commit a deadly sin. He was by no means deficient in dignity and strength of character, though his necessary subjection to his mother during the early part of his reign, and the influence she exerted even as he grew up, might appear at times to savour of weakness. He can scarcely indeed be blamed for submitting to an interference which, though at times it may have been gallant to him in his private affairs, worked well for the public good.

The first act of Blanche on the accession of the young king was to secure his coronation at Rheims. When this was accomplished she was able to confront with authority the dissatisfied nobles. The personal dangers which she had to encounter may be gathered from the fact, which Louis himself told the sire de Joinville, that neither he nor his mother, who were at Montlhéry, dared to return to Paris.
until the citizens of Paris came, with arms in their hands, to fetch them. Nearly five years passed before the conflict was at an end and the young king seated firmly on his throne. The final treaty was signed in 1231, but before that time the dominions of Louis had been enlarged by the final submission of the heretical province of Languedoc to the crown of France. In a treaty dictated by the papal legate, signed at Paris in 1229, count Raymond VII renounced his claim to seven provinces, swore fealty to his liege lord, the king of France, and to the church, and submitted to a public penance. With naked shoulders and bare feet he was led up the church of Notre Dame, and scourged as he went by the legate, who finally pronounced these words: 'Count of Narbonne, by virtue of the powers entrusted to me by the Pope, I absolve thee from thy excommunication.' 'Amen,' answered the count, kneeling before the legate, and he rose from his knees no longer, sovereign of the south of France, but a vassal lord of a small territory.

The terrible court of the Inquisition eradicated all that remained of open heresy in the land, and perhaps the most grievous punishment which the unfortunate count of Toulouse had to endure was that of being obliged to assist in the cruel persecution of his own subjects.

The authority of the Pope sanctioned the despoiling of the heretic prince, and the new acquisitions were regarded by the French people as not only justifiable, but honourable. Yet his increased dominions could have given Louis little satisfaction, for the one earnest desire of his heart was not personal aggrandizement, but the furtherance of God's honour. He was now advancing towards manhood, and queen Blanche demanded for him in marriage the hand of Marguerite, daughter of Raymond Berenger IV., count of Provence. The little princess was at the time only thirteen years of age. The king was nineteen. The marriage took place at Sens on the 24th of May, 1234. It appears to have been a very happy one, although Blanche kept a jealous watch over the young husband and wife, interfering with them in a way which would have been intensely irritating to anyone less dutiful and reverential than Louis, and certainly must have greatly marred his domestic peace.

The years that immediately followed were marked by no outward events of importance, but in the summer of 1241 Louis was brought into collision with England, by the fact of bestowing upon his brother Alphonso the government of Poitou and Auvergne—provinces over which the English king still professed to have a claim. In doing this the king was carrying out the provisions of his father's will, and fulfilling a contract which had been made at the conclusion of the Albigensian war, when Jeanne, the young daughter of count Raymond, had been affianced to prince Alphonso
The marriage had been delayed till the present time. It took place the same year that Alphonso received the oath of homage from his vassals, and as it must have seemed somewhat of a compensation for the ills which the count of Toulouse had suffered, Louis no doubt, in his generosity, was well content that events should be so ordered as a special mark of honour to his brother. On this occasion he summoned the count to Saumur, on the confines of Poitiers, and there gave a sumptuous entertainment, thus quaintly and graphically described by Joinville. 'I was there myself, and I testify to you that the feast was the best managed one I have ever seen. In front of the king's table sat Monseigneur, the king of Navarre, in coat and mantle of samit, handsomely ornamented, with a girdle, a clasp, and a cup of gold, and I carved before him. In front of the king, his brother, the count of Artois, waited upon him, and the good count John of Soissons carved the meat. . . . The king was dressed in a coat of blue samit, and a surcoat and mantle of scarlet samit, lined with ermine, and upon the head a cotton cap, which became him badly, because he was then a young man. The banquet was held in the market-halls of Saumur, and the people said that the great king Henry II. of England had built them expressly for giving such great banquets. His market-halls are built in the style of the cloisters of the Cistercian monks. At the other end of the cloister, where the king was seated, were the kitchens, butteries, pantries, and offices, and from this cloister were brought the meat, wine, and bread which were served up before the king and queen. And in all the other aisles, and in the open space in the middle, there dined such a number of knights that I could not count them; and many persons said they had never seen so many surcoats and other vestments of cloth of gold at any banquet as there were there. It was reported that there were quite 3,000 knights present.'

But there was business in store for the king, very different from that of festivity. Immediately after the count had left Saumur a private letter was received by queen Blanche giving notice of a conspiracy amongst some of the most powerful lords of Poitou, which had for its object to throw off the allegiance to France. The pride of a woman was its source. Isabella of Angoulême, widow of John, and mother of Henry III. of England, had married Hugh de Lusignan, comte de la Marche. She had visited Poitiers when Louis and Blanche were there, and their reception had been, as she considered, wanting in respect to her former dignity. So at least wrote queen Blanche's private correspondent. Isabella had, it seems, bitterly reproached her husband when he returned to Angoulême. 'Did you not perceive,' she said, 'that when I visited the king and queen in their chamber, after waiting three days at Poitiers, the king was seated on one side of the bed, and

1 Cloth of silver or gold manufactured at Venice.
the queen with the countess of Chartres and her sister the abbess at the other, and they never summoned me to sit beside them? And neither on my entrance nor my departure did they so much as rise from their seats. I can scarcely speak of it, so overcome am I with grief and shame. I shall die of it. It is even worse than the loss of our lands, of which they have so disgracefully robbed us.'

'The count,' added the secret correspondent, 'is a good man, and seeing the countess in tears, said to her, deeply moved, "Madam, give your commands, and I will do all that I can; be sure of that." "If you do not," replied the countess, "you shall never enter my presence any more." Whereupon the count, with many oaths, swore that he would do anything his wife desired.' And so the conspiracy was formed, and the next year the war broke out.

The comte de la Marche thought he had powerful allies, but they failed him; and when his wife found that the king's forces were gaining ground, she gave two of her serfs a packet of poison, which they undertook to mix either with the food or wine of the king and his brother. The serfs reached the royal camp, but their errand was discovered; they were seized and hanged. It was now that the king of England, the young Henry III., thought fit himself to interfere on behalf of his step-father. He landed in France, but was totally unprepared for the reception that awaited him. Louis had by this time proved himself a gallant knight as well as a devoted Christian. His followers were numerous, his soldiers enthusiastically devoted to him; and when Henry III. reached Taillebourg, on the river Charente, and saw before him the banners of the brave barons of France, with the oriflamme floating in front of the town, and the tents so closely pitched that they looked like a great city, his heart failed him. 'Is this,' he said to the comte de la Marche, who stood beside him, 'what you promised me, my father? I thought my sole care was to provide money.' 'I never said that,' replied the count. 'Yea, truly,' interposed Richard, earl of Cornwall, the brother of the English king; 'I have in my possession a letter in your own hand upon this point.' Henry also reminded him of his messages and entreaties for help. 'I swear there never were any with my knowledge,' said the count. 'Blame your mother, who is my wife.' Henry did indeed blame his mother, and so did many besides. A truce was obtained for twenty-four hours, and the English removed from their perilous position. Two days afterwards they ventured to engage the French, and were defeated, and Henry III. took refuge in Bordeaux. A truce for five years was now concluded and signed at Maret, 1243. The French acquired possession of all the north of Aquitaine, and the count and his wife made a public submission, the count being obliged to ask for a grant of his estates from the mere will of his sovereign.
116 ILLNESS AND VOW—CONDITION OF PALESTINE—FIFTH CRUSADE.

Louis IX.

'After these things,' writes the sire de Joinville, 'it pleased God that great illness fell upon the king at Paris, by which he was brought to such extremity that one of the ladies who watched by his side wanted to draw the sheet over his face, saying that he was dead; but another lady who was on the other side of the bed would not suffer it, for the soul, she said, had not yet left the body. When he was listening to the dispute between these two ladies our Lord wrought upon him and quickly sent him health, for before that he was dumb and could not speak. He demanded that the Cross should be given him, and it was done. When the queen, his mother, heard that he had recovered his speech, she exhibited as much joy as could be; but when she was told by himself that he had taken the Cross, she displayed as much grief as if she had seen him dead.'

Such is the usually received origin of the determination of Louis IX. to undertake a crusade in the Holy Land, but there can be little doubt that the idea had been in his mind long before. A crusade was in those days the natural outlet of man's devotion, and never had it been more necessary than at this time for the security of the Christians in the east.

The Mongols, a Tartar race, were overrunning Asia, and driving before them the Mahometan population, who in their turn were taking possession of all that came in their path. In this way the Kharismians, on the shores of the Caspian Sea, urged on by the Mongols, invaded the Holy Land, and took and plundered Jerusalem, notwithstanding the joint efforts of Christians and Mussulmans. But again the Kharismians were expelled by the Saracens of Egypt, and now once more the Holy Land had fallen under the tyranny of the Egyptian sultan.

These were grievous tidings for Louis. In vain his mother and even the clergy strove to dissuade him from his resolution, reminding him of his weak health and the ill success which had attended all previous undertakings of the kind. He was inflexible. Summoning to his presence his mother and the bishop of Paris, he said to them, 'Since ye think that I was not of perfectly sane mind when I took the vow, here is my Cross; I give it back to you. But now,' he continued after a pause, 'you cannot deny that I am in full possession of my faculties; restore it again, for He who knoweth all things knows also that not one morsel of food shall enter my mouth until I have again been marked by this sign.'

'It is the Will of God,' exclaimed all present; 'let us submit ourselves to His Will,' and no further objection was raised.

Yet three years elapsed before the project could be put in execution. During that time Charles, count of Anjou, the youngest
brother of king Louis, married Beatrice, the youngest daughter of Raymond Berenger, count of Provence.

The count had no male heirs, but he had married his daughters well in the eyes of the world. The eldest was the wife of Louis, and queen of France; the second the wife of Henry III. and queen of England. The third had married a brother of Henry III.—Richard, earl of Cornwall, who had obtained the title of king of the Romans—and now the fourth was to become countess of Anjou. Beatrice felt her position to be inferior to that of her sisters, and the mortified pride which rankled in her heart was destined to work evil for generations to come.

On the 31st of January, 1246, the marriage of Charles of Anjou and Beatrice of Provence was solemnised. The bridegroom and his brothers, Robert, count of Artois, and Alphonso, count of Poitiers, were, like the king himself, sworn followers of the Cross; and immediately after the marriage festivities preparations were to be made for the distant and dangerous expedition. Yet not till the summer of 1248 was everything in readiness. Then Louis received the oriflamme at St. Denis, and bidding adieu to his mother, to whom he confided the government of his kingdom during his absence, he travelled to Aignes Mortes, a town which he had founded on the Mediterranean. With him went queen Marguerite and the countesses of Artois and Poitiers, and in their wake came the sire de Joinville with many gallant knights and friends.

It had been left to the master mariners to decide when the wind would be favourable for embarkation; and on Friday, the 28th of August, they were all agreed. 'Sire,' they said, addressing the king, 'call up your parsons and priests, for the weather is fair and fine.' The chaplains, monks, and bishops assembled on the decks of the vessels. 'Sing, good fathers, sing in the name of God,' called out the master mariners, and then burst forth the Veni Creator, which was taken up by vessel after vessel; and when the canticle was ended the sails were hoisted, the anchors were weighed, and the fleet steered for Cyprus, at that time ruled by Henri de Lusignan, the grandson of Guy de Lusignan, to whom the island had been adjudged by Richard I. The king of Cyprus was himself a crusader. The island was the general rendezvous for all the crusading princes. Louis remained there eight months, and having maturely considered his plans, decided upon attacking Egypt before proceeding to Palestine; for if the sultan could be conquered in his own land, Palestine would be secured to the Christians.

The French fleet appeared before the port of Damietta on the 4th of June, 1249. It numbered 1,600 vessels of all sizes, and on

\[\text{This title was usually given to the prince elected to succeed to the empire of Germany.}\]
board were 2,800 knights with foot soldiers, variously estimated at from forty to one hundred thousand. The landing was effected in spite of a brave opposition from the Saracens. The king in his eagerness actually jumped into the sea before the boat had reached the shore, and made his way through the water, though it was up to his shoulders. The result of this first attack terrified the Saracens; they abandoned Damietta, and the kings of France and Cyprus took possession of it. Unfortunately they lingered at Damietta until after the inundations of the Nile. It was impossible then to advance, and five months were spent in inactivity and dissensions. At length, on the 20th of November, the army set out for Cairo, which, in their ignorance of geography, they believed to be Babylon, and where they hoped to find vast treasures. The Mussulmans harassed them grievously on their march, more especially by throwing Greek fire amongst them. The effects of this were so terrible that every time the king heard that the camp was thus assailed he cast himself upon his couch in anguish of mind, and stretched out his hands towards the crucifix, saying, 'Dear Lord God, take care of my people; keep them for me.'

No regular battle, however, took place until the 8th of February, 1250, when the crusaders had reached a place called Mansourah, or the City of Victory. It was about twenty leagues from Damietta, and stood on the right bank of the Nile. The Christian army was on the opposite bank. Robert of Artois and the grand master of the Templars first reached the river. The grand master desired to wait for the king, or at any rate to have the honour of preceding the count, for to the Templars, he said, had been assigned the front rank on the march. Count Robert objected, and whilst the dispute was going on an old tutor of the prince, who was deaf and understood nothing that was being said, urged him onwards, shouting 'Forward! forward!' Robert turned to the grand master. 'If you are afraid,' he exclaimed, 'you can stay behind.' He galloped forward and the Templars followed. The Saracens in Mansourah, though at first terrified by the assault, soon rallied; the Christians were repulsed and Count Robert was killed. The king hastened to the support of his knights, but he could not by his personal valour retrieve the misfortunes of the day. The crusaders, indeed, held possession of the field of battle, but the enemy hovered about them, and three days after the battle again attacked the Christian camp. The Saracens were defeated, but the crusaders had now to contend with a more deadly foe. Disease of a most fatal kind broke out amongst them; the dying, the dead, and the starving enumbered the camp. When they were reduced to the greatest extremity the sultan opened negotiations for peace, but he demanded the king himself as a hostage, and the negotiations were broken off. 'We
would rather," said one of the knights, "have been all slain or taken prisoners than have endured the reproach of having left our king in pawn." The crusaders now decided on a retreat. It was a calamitous undertaking. The Saracens hung on their rear and mowed them down by hundreds; and on the second day the king, sinking under illness and exhaustion, was obliged to yield unconditionally and was carried back to Mansourah a prisoner. The greater part of his troops were massacred in cold blood, only the rich being admitted to ransom at an enormous price. For the king a million bezants (about 380,000l.) were demanded, with the restitution of Damietta. The money was sent from France, and in order to make up the sum the silver balustrades which surrounded the tomb of Richard Cœur de Lion at Rouen were taken and melted. A portion of the sum was ultimately remitted by the sultan in consideration of the noble character of Louis.

A truce for ten years was now concluded between the Christian powers and the Mussulman princes of Egypt and Syria, and the king was at liberty to return to France. But his heart was still bent on the Holy Land; though he might not conquer it he might visit it, and thus accomplish his vow. Previously, however, he rejoined his wife, queen Marguerite, who had been left at Damietta to secure the surrender of the city, and whilst there had given birth to a son, to whom she gave the name of Tristan, in memory of the great trials to which she was at the time exposed. The crusading army now separated; many of the knights returned at once to Europe, others accompanied the king to St. Jean d’Acre, from which place the counts of Anjou and Poitiers set sail for France, carrying with them a long letter from the king to the French people, giving a full account of all that had befallen him and his army in Egypt, and adding a pressing entreaty for reinforcements which might secure the safety of the Christian possessions in Palestine. Left to himself at Acre, Louis devoted his attention to the improvement of the condition of the Christian population. 1,200 persons were redeemed from slavery; the fortifications of Acre, Caesarea, Jaffa, and Sidon were repaired; and treaties for the advantage of the Christians were entered into with the various Mussulman chiefs and rulers. The piety and generosity of the king extorted the admiration even of his enemies. The sultan of Damascus offered to permit him to visit Jerusalem, but Louis declined. It was pointed out to him, says Joinville, that if he, who was the greatest of Christian kings, visited Jerusalem as a simple pilgrim, without delivering the city from the hands of the enemies of God, all other kings and pilgrims would be content to do the same, and would trouble themselves no further about its deliverance. This consideration was sufficient to deter the king from the realisation of his most earnest wish. He endeavoured, however, by nego-
tiation to regain the kingdom of Jerusalem. The Saracens of Damascus and Egypt appeared each in turn willing to yield Palestine on condition of assistance being rendered by Louis against their respective enemies; but at the very time when a treaty with the sultan of Egypt should have been carried out, all Mussulman differences were put aside, and both Egyptians and Syrians attacked the crusaders.

So went by four years of unavailing effort. It may seem strange that Louis should thus have thought himself called upon to remain absent from his country, but the claims of the Holy Land were then deemed imperative, and he must have been satisfied with the knowledge that his kingdom was governed wisely in his absence, for nothing had occurred to disturb the public peace except an insurrection of peasants, known as the Pastoureaux, who overran the provinces, making an outcry against the bishops and the church, but were speedily subdued.

Changes, however, were at hand. In the beginning of the year 1253—Louis being then at Sidon—news arrived which brought him the greatest sorrow of his life. His mother had died at Paris, on the 27th of November in the preceding year, at the age of sixty-five. The tidings were broken to him gently by his confessor and the archbishop of Tyre. They took him into a small private chapel, and all sat down near the altar. At their first words Louis uttered a great cry, burst into tears, and fell on his knees. For two days he saw no one. Then Joinville was admitted to his presence. ‘Ah, seneschal,’ exclaimed the king, as he stretched out his arms to his faithful friend, ‘I have lost my mother!’

It was indeed a heavy blow. Blanche was a woman of wonderful ability, and her love for her son was undoubted. Yet Louis had learnt to be so reserved with her upon the subject of his affection for his wife and family that for the five years during which Joinville was intimately associated with him he never but once heard the king speak of queen Marguerite or of his children.

Return was now imperative, and on the 7th of September, 1254, Louis IX. made his public entry into Paris, after an absence of six years. He had left the Holy Land in the spring, and after narrowly escaping shipwreck near the island of Cyprus he had landed at Hyères, journeyed slowly through France, and offered his thanksgivings to God at St. Denis, and now he received the congratulations of his people in his capital. But his countenance bore the traces of settled grief. He had failed in his great undertaking; he had lost his mother, who was his chief stay in life. The mirth of his people was oppressive to him, and he soon withdrew to Vincennes.

The conduct of Louis on resuming the government of his country may best be described in the words of his confessor, Geoffrey
of Beaulieu: 'When, happily, the king had returned to France, with what piety he conducted himself towards God, how compassionately towards the afflicted, with what humility in all that concerned himself, and how zealously he endeavoured, according to his strength, to grow in grace—these things can be attested by those who watched his life closely and knew how sensitive was his conscience.' This praise is fully confirmed by other testimony. Louis repressed the proud spirit of his vassals, but he respected their rights. He watched over the interests of all classes, travelling from place to place to make himself fully acquainted with the condition of the people; and Joinville tells us that many a time in summer, after mass, the king would go and sit down under an oak in the wood at Vincennes, whilst all who had any grievance were permitted to come before him, 'without hindrance from any usher or such folk, and make their complaints and settle their disputes.' His personal habits were extremely simple, but he kept up the dignity of his court, and even his deep religious feelings never interfered with his public duties; whilst his care for his children, their education and guidance, was such as might have befitted one who had no other task in life to fulfil.

The faults of Louis were those of the age. He sanctioned persecution, especially against the Jews; but persecution was then regarded as a duty. He did and said things which men have since learnt to call bigoted and superstitious, but he had been educated in the full belief that they were right. His reverence for the Pope's authority, great though it was, never warped his clear sense of the claims of his people, and his disinterestedness and sound judgment were so thoroughly recognised that he was admitted as an arbiter in the disputes of foreign nations. When Henry III. and his barons were at war, an appeal was made to the king of France to decide their differences, and this, no doubt, all the more readily because Louis had some time before clearly established the respective rights of the king of England and himself to the French provinces which had long been the source of contention. In 1259 he voluntarily restored the districts that Henry had ceded to him after the battle of Taillebourg, whilst Henry renounced all right to Normandy, Touraine, Anjou, Maine, and Poitou.

The members of the French council objected to the cession. If Louis gave up any provinces as a matter of right, he ought, they said, to give up all. If not, he should restore none.

'Sirs,' answered the king, 'the ancestors of the king of England very justly lost the possessions which I keep; and the land which I give up, I give not because he has a right to it, but to create love between his children and mine, who are cousins german. What I give to him, it appears to me, I use right well. He was not formerly my vassal. Now he comes to do me homage.'
Only in one instance does the foreign policy of Louis IX. seem open to censure. He did not oppose—though he scarcely sanctioned—the acceptance of the crown of Naples by his brother Charles of Anjou; but this event, which proved fatal to the peace of Europe for many generations, requires a more detailed notice.

Henry VI., emperor of Germany, who was crowned in 1191, married Constance, the heiress of Naples and Sicily. Constance had taken the veil: the marriage was therefore denounced by the Pope. But there were political reasons also for opposing it. The emperor of Germany was already too powerful in Italy, and as king of Naples the Pope would be entirely at his mercy. The Hohenstaufen family, to which Henry belonged, were therefore regarded by the Popes as enemies. Frederick II., the son of Henry VI., kept up a contest with the papal authority during the whole of his long reign. His son Conrad lived but a short time, and at his death left only one child, Conradine, a boy too young to assert his own rights. His hereditary kingdom, generally known as the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, was seized by his uncle Manfred, but the Pope. Urban VI., offered to bestow it upon Edmund Crouchback, the son of Henry III. of England. Edmund had neither money nor troops to support his claim, and in 1262 the crown of the Two Sicilies was tendered to Louis XI. for his son Robert. Louis, having regard to the rights of Conradine, refused it, but when the Pope turned to Charles of Anjou the king interposed no obstacle. Perhaps he scarcely dared to do so. Charles of Anjou, a proud, fierce, determined man, who, as he is described by the historian Villani, "smiled seldom, spoke and slept little, but did much," would have carried his point at all hazards. And he had an urgent instigator to his ambition ever at his side. Beatrice, his wife, disdained to sit on a footstool at the feet of her royal sisters of France, England, and Germany. She would have a throne like them—it mattered not at what price—and she gained it. Charles accepted the kingdom of the Two Sicilies as a fief of the Holy See, embarked with his army at Marseilles, and encountered and defeated Manfred at Benevento, in Italy, on the 27th of February, 1266. Manfred was killed in the battle, Charles took possession of his throne, and Beatrice of Provence became the queen of Naples and Sicily. The avariciousness and tyranny of the new king roused the spirit of his conquered subjects. The Pope himself repented that he had brought such a scourge upon the land. The supporters of the German emperor (Ghibellines, as they were called, in opposition to the Guelphs, the party of the Pope) implored the interference of the young Conradine, the lawful heir to the throne. His mother would fain have kept him with her, and for a time her influence prevailed; but at length Conradine could no longer withstand the appeals made to him. With his young friend Frederick of Austria (like him despoiled of his
heritage) he crossed the Alps with a numerous body of knights and followers, and marched southwards, passing by Rome. The Pope, who had excommunicated Conradine, ascended the walls and looked down upon the young princes as they rode by. ‘Behold the victims for the sacrifice’ was all he said.

It was too true a prophecy. At the battle of Tagliacozzo, fought in August 1268, Conradine was defeated and taken prisoner. For more than a year he and his friend were kept in prison. Then they were brought to trial on a charge of high treason. Charles of Anjou named for their judges persons whom he supposed devoted to himself. But such an accusation against a prince fighting for his rights was too monstrous even for the hirelings of a tyrant. The voice of one judge alone—Robert of Lavenza—condemned the last heir of the house of Hohenstaufen to be executed as a felon on a public scaffold.

Conradine heard his doom as he was playing at chess with Frederick of Austria, who was to share his fate. ‘Slave,’ he said to the messenger who read the sentence, ‘dost thou dare to condemn as a criminal the son and heir of kings? Yet,’ he added, ‘I am a mortal, and must die. But if there can be no pardon for me, spare at least my faithful companions; or, if they must die, strike me first, that I may not behold their death!’

This was the only part of the prayer which was granted. In the public square of Naples a scaffold was erected, and there, on the 26th of October, 1269, young Conradine and his dearly loved friend stood ready for their doom. Conradine knelt. With uplifted hands he commended his soul to God, and then, exclaiming, ‘O my mother, how deep will be thy sorrow at the news of this day!’ he threw his glove into the midst of the crowd below as an appeal against the injustice of his death, and yielded to the stroke of the executioner. A bitter cry escaped young Frederick of Austria as Conradine’s head fell. With four companions of noble birth he underwent a similar sentence, all alike finding no mercy even in the grave, since the relentless Charles refused to permit their bodies to be buried in consecrated ground. Conradine’s glove was picked up by a Suabian knight, who carried it to his cousin by marriage, Pedro of Aragon, the husband of Manfred’s daughter, and thus transferred his claim to him.

How far Louis IX. in any way sanctioned the conquest of Charles of Anjou it is difficult to determine. The Pope had made it a religious war, a crusade against the Hohenstaufen family, who were deemed not only the enemies of the church, but the secret upholders of Mahometanism. The Saracens had a firm footing in Sicily; it was deemed a duty to uproot them, and Louis might naturally have hesitated entirely to condemn an enterprise which was likely to produce a result so desired. For the subjugation of
the Mussulman, including as it did the restoration of Jerusalem to Christendom, was still the one longing of his heart.

The condition of the Christian population in the east had by this time altered much for the worse. The Mamelukes of Egypt, a body of ferocious and powerful Egyptian soldiers, had entered Palestine and seized all the towns which yet remained in the hands of the Christians. Many of the inhabitants were strangled because they would not deny their faith; others were burnt alive. In Antioch, which was taken on the 27th of May, 1268, 17,000 were massacred and 100,000 sold into captivity.

There was grief in Europe at this intelligence, but no enthusiasm. Louis alone felt the wound in his heart. He wrote to the Pope, Clement IV., that it was his intention to assume the Cross. Clement was a man of ability, but a politician rather than a priest. He foresaw that the crusade would produce no results, and he would fail have dissuaded the king from his purpose. But Louis, as he worshipped in the beautiful Sainte Chapelle, built to enshrine the crown of thorns which he had brought back as a holy relic from his first crusade, thought of the groans of the dying, the lamentations of the defeated, the cries of the widow and the fatherless; and the appeal was too strong to be resisted.

On the 25th of May, 1267, having assembled his barons in the great hall of the Louvre, he appeared in their presence holding in his hands the sacred relic. Assuming the Cross himself, he made his three sons take it likewise. The example was widely followed. The kings of Navarre, Castile, Aragon, and Portugal, the two sons of Henry III. of England, Charles of Anjou, the counts of Artois, Flanders, and Brittany, with a crowd of lesser nobles, enrolled themselves. Yet the undertaking was not generally popular. ‘I thought,’ says Joinville, ‘that all those who advised the king to undertake that voyage committed a great sin. He was able neither to ride in a carriage nor on horseback; nay, his debility was so great that he allowed me to carry him in my arms from the house of the count of Auxerre, where I took leave of him, to the Franciscans. And yet, feeble as he was, if he had remained in France he might have lived for many years and done much good.’

After a wearisome delay of two months near Aigues Mortes the army embarked in some Genoese vessels and sailed towards Tunis. The rumour had reached Louis that the king of Tunis desired to become a Christian, and so important did this conversion appear to him that, in a speech to the ambassadors from Africa, made before he sailed, he bade them tell their master that he would willingly be a prisoner in the Saracen dungeons all his life if by that sacrifice he could make Christians of him and his subjects. But a peaceable expedition to convert the king of Tunis did not suit either the army
of crusaders or the Genoese merchants. The crusaders delighted in war; the Genoese desired pillage. Disregarding the avowed wishes of Louis, the Genoese seized some vessels lying before Carthage, and thus began hostilities. The disembarkation was effected without difficulty, and the ancient fort of Carthage was taken by the Genoese a few days after the landing. The Saracens sought refuge in the vaults of the fort. Many were either strangled or suffocated by the fire and smoke of the conflict, and it was necessary to remove their bodies from the vaults before the king and his forces could lodge in the fort; they were left, however, unburied. Louis was compelled to wait at Carthage for Charles of Anjou, who had not yet arrived from Sicily. The greater portion of the army remained exposed to the African sun and in the midst of the putrefying corpses. There were no trees, no verdure, no green thing fit for food, and the water they drank was drawn from poisonous pools and cisterns filled with noxious insects.

In fifteen days the plague had broken out. The counts of Vendôme, la Marche, and Viane, the marshal of France, the sire de Montmorency, and four other great nobles were dead. The Pope's legate soon followed them. Their companions had not strength left to bury them, and the bodies were thrown into the neighbouring canals.

On the 3rd of August the king himself was attacked by the fever, and it was soon evident that the illness was likely to prove fatal. There was a lingering suspense for twenty days, during which his thoughts turned anxiously to his children. Jean Tristan, count of Nevers, and Isabella, wife of Thibault of Navarre, who had accompanied the expedition, were the most dearly loved. He enquired for Tristan, and was told that he was dead, and folding his hands the dying king sought comfort in prayer. He then sent for Philip, his eldest son, tenderly blessed him, gave him his dying counsel, and exhorted him to observe scrupulously the instructions which with his own hand he had written for him in his breviary. Afterwards turning to Isabella, who was in attendance at her father's dying bed, he gave into her hands a paper which he charged her to deliver to her sister Agnes, duchess of Burgundy. 'Most dear daughter,' he said, 'lay this to heart; many persons go to bed full of vain and sinful thoughts, and in the morning are found dead. The true way of loving God is to love Him with our whole heart; and He well deserves our love, for He first loved us.'

This was his last farewell to his own family. On the following day he made an effort to receive the envoys of Michael Palaeologus, the Greek emperor, who had landed near Carthage. Michael, who was the representative of the old Greek emperors, had lately succeeded in upsetting the Latin empire established by the Venetians.
and crusaders, and had seated himself on the throne of Constanti-
nople. The ambitious Charles of Anjou now threatened him with
war, and he sought for the intervention of Louis. The king gave
the promise required, and after this took no thought for worldly
affairs, except by prayers for his followers that God would save them
from their enemies and from the denial of His Holy Name, and lead
them back to their own land. On the night of the 24th of August
he started up several times and called out, 'Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
We will go to Jerusalem!' but he scarcely spoke more, though in full
possession of his faculties. By his own desire he was laid the next
day upon a coarse sack covered with ashes; the Cross was held
before him and extreme unction was administered; and about three
o'clock in the afternoon he expired peacefully, his last words being,
'I will enter into Thy house, O Lord; I will worship in Thy holy
tabernacle.'

Louis had lived fifty-six years and reigned forty-four. There
needs no comment on his character. Even Voltaire, the sceptic
and the scoffer, has said of him, 'It is not given to man to carry
virtue to a higher point.' He was canonised in 1297 by Pope
Boniface VIII.

The crusade virtually ended with the death of Louis. Charles
of Anjou, who landed at Carthage almost at the very moment of his
brother's death, and is said to have been greatly afflicted by it, did
indeed defeat the king of Tunis in two engagements, and compel him
to make a peace advantageous for the Christians; and prince Edward
of England sailed in the spring for Syria, in pursuance of a vow that
he would attack the Mamelukes in Palestine; but he effected no per-
manent conquest. A truce was then made with the Saracens for ten
years, and at the expiration of that time the crusading enthusiasm
had so died out that no further expeditions were undertaken.

The reign of Louis IX. was especially important for France with
regard to the revision of the laws. About this period a code of Roman
laws, known as the Pandects of Justinian, had been discovered, and
were generally acknowledged to be worthy of acceptance, but they
required to be translated and explained. Louis introduced these
laws into France, and established a court to administer them, consist-
ing of three nobles, three prelates, eighteen knights, and eighteen
lawyers. The lawyers soon took all the power into their own hands,
but the court was very useful in repressing the extortions of the nobles
and the custom of deciding disputes by combat. Louis also im-
proved the coinage of the country and gave it a fixed value. He
obliged the barons to provide for the security of travellers on the
high roads of their territories; he established a public library in
Paris, founded a hospital for three hundred blind persons, and
built the Sainte Chapelle, close to the Palais de Justice, at that time
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the royal residence. He also encouraged the learned Robert de Sorbon to set on foot the famous theological college called after the founder, the Sorbonne. The decisions of the members of the Sorbonne were afterwards so respected that the college was called the perpetual Gallican council.

CHAPTER XVII.

PHILIP III., LE HARDI (THE BOLD).

A.D. 1270—1285.

Why Philip III. should have been named the Bold it is difficult to determine. Probably the tradition is correct which says that the epithet was applied to him when a child, because, in his ignorance of danger, he laughed at his mother and her ladies for being afraid of the Saracens, and boasted that he did not fear them at all.

By the time he came to the throne, at the age of twenty-five, he must have learnt in Africa the real grounds of his mother's alarm. Leaving his uncle, Charles of Anjou, to carry on the crusade, he prepared to return to France, bearing with him the body of his father, to be interred at St. Denis. Before he reached Paris no less than four other members of the royal family had died, and their remains were borne in solemn procession with those of the late king. These were Isabella, queen of Navarre, and her husband, Thibalt; Alphonso, count of Poitou and Toulouse, and his wife, Jeanne of Toulouse; and—a death more immediately affecting the new king—Isabella of Aragon, his wife, who expired on the homeward journey after the birth of a still-born child.

The family losses brought a large increase of territory to the crown. The possessions which Alphonso of Poitou had acquired by his marriage with Jeanne of Toulouse were now united to the royal domain. A portion of this territory, however, called the Venaisin, consisting of Avignon and the districts round it, was, according to an agreement made at the time of the marriage, ceded to the Pope, and remained subject to the See of Rome till the French revolution. Valois and Alençon also reverted to Philip on the death of his younger brothers Tristan and Pierre.

The first four years of Philip III.'s reign appear to have been prosperous, but little is said of them by the chroniclers. Philip was good-natured, but weak, superstitious, and easily influenced; and from this latter circumstance arose the chief personal trials of his life.

In 1274 he married a second time. The new queen was Mary, sister of the duke of Brabant. She was young, fascinating in manner,
and very clever, and soon completely ruled her husband. Up to this time the favourite and prime minister of Philip had been Pierre de la Brosse, who is said to have been surgeon to Louis IX. The queen hated De la Brosse, and he, on his part, did not hesitate to whisper his complaints against her into the king's ear. Two years after the second marriage Philip's eldest son by his first wife died suddenly—Pierre de la Brosse said from poison; and he spread the report that the queen had instigated the crime in order to secure the succession to her own children. The rumour reached the king, who sought superstitiously to learn the truth from a reputed prophetess. The woman entirely cleared the queen, and Mary's relations vowed vengeance on De la Brosse for the accusation. A packet of letters was secretly conveyed by them to Philip. Their contents were never known, but De la Brosse must have been accused of some great offence, for he was privately tried, and, as the court was composed of his declared enemies, of course condemned. He was hung at Montfaucon on the 30th of June, 1278.

The feeble-minded Philip, thus a prey to suspicion and prejudice, could not be the real head of the royal family which he represented. Its actual chief was Charles of Anjou, the murderer of Conradine, and now the acknowledged king of Naples and Sicily. The ambition of Charles seemed likely to meet with no check, more especially after he had contrived to secure the election to the papal throne of a Frenchman, Martin IV., who became his complete slave; but his tyranny and cruelty had rendered him hateful to his people, and in the year 1282 the storm which had long been gathering burst forth, and Sicily was lost to him for ever.

John of Procida, a physician, who had been the friend and confidant of Conradine's grandfather, the emperor Frederick II., was the person mainly instrumental to this event. He was shrewd and selfish, a man of cool judgment but earnest purpose. After the death of Frederick II. he had entered the service of Manfred of Naples, and when Manfred was killed at Benevento, John of Procida sought the court of Pedro of Aragon, the husband of Manfred's daughter Constance. Here he found Roger Loris, a famous Sicilian admiral, with several other distinguished exiles. Pedro was urged by them to assert the claims of his wife against the usurper Charles; but the suggestion was listened to coldly, and John of Procida then sold all he possessed in Spain and disappeared. It is said that in the dress of a Franciscan friar he journeyed from place to place stirring up enmity against Charles of Anjou. The Franciscans were popular. They lived on little, had a great reputation for piety, and as preachers, messengers, even political envoys, made themselves generally useful. Procida appeared at length at Constantinople and gave the Greek emperor minute intelligence of the plans which
Charles of Anjou was forming for his overthrow. 'Troops were assembling at Durazzo. Galleys and transport vessels would follow. The Venetians were certain to lend then.' Michael Palaeologus asked in despair what was to be done. 'Give me money,' was the answer; 'I will find you a defender who has no money, but who has courage and arms.'

The Greek emperor agreed, and Procida returned to Aragon, and succeeded in kindling the ambition of king Pedro. The Pope, Martin IV., enquired of Pedro the object of his armaments. 'If intended to act against the infidels, they would,' he said, receive his blessing.' Pedro, in reply, implored the prayers of the Pope on his design, but added that 'if his right hand knew his secret he would cut it off, lest it should betray it to his left.

So the course of events flowed on with an undercurrent of conspiracy until March 1282. It was the 30th day of the month, and Easter Monday. In Sicily summer had already begun. The air was warm, the trees were covered with foliage, the ground was bright with flowers, and the inhabitants of Palermo, in their holiday costume, were pouring out of the town to attend the vesper service at the church on the summit of Monreale. Worship ended, merriment began—games and dances for the young, refreshments for their elders, who seated themselves at tables under the trees. French soldiers mingled with the people, pretending to keep the peace, but in reality behaving rudely. The young Sicilians indignantly bade them 'go their way.' 'These rebellious Sicilians must have arms,' exclaimed the Frenchmen, 'or they would not venture to speak to us so insolently,' and they began to search some of the peasants. At that moment a beautiful girl, the daughter of Robert Mstrangelo, drew near the church. She was walking with the young man to whom she was betrothed. A Frenchman named Drout went up to them, searched the young Sicilian, and roughly laid his hands on the girl. In her terror she fainted away. 'Death to the French!' was the indignant cry of the Sicilian. A youth stepped forward, stabbed Drout to the heart, and was himself cut down. Then rose the shriek 'Death to the French!' not from one, but from hundreds of voices. Not one Frenchman on the spot escaped alive. The crowd rushed back to the city. Every house was stormed; whoever did not, like the Italians, pronounce ce as che was marked as French and killed on the spot. Neither age, nor sex, nor infancy was spared. The insurrection spread throughout the island, marked by similar cruelties, and the massacre of the Sicilian vespers has gone down from generation to generation as a byword of horror for the maddened wrath of an injured people.

When the news of the insurrection reached Charles of Anjou at
Naples, he sat silent for a time, glaring fiercely around him, gnawing the top of his sceptre and bursting forth into terrific vows of vengeance. He then with his forces crossed over to Sicily.

Messina prepared for a desperate resistance to the enraged king. A wall was built in three days, and the first attacks of Charles were bravely repulsed. The words of an old song record the efforts of the female population. 'Alas for the women of Messina, mounting ladders, carrying stones! He who shall injure Messina, may God give him trouble and toil.' Now was the moment for the interference of Pedro of Aragon. A deputation from the parliament of Palermo offered him the throne of Sicily, and he accepted it. The relief of Messina was his first object. Accompanied by the Sicilian fleet, under Roger de Loria, he reached Trapani, where he landed, and men crowded to his banner. Ambassadors were sent to Charles, who postponed an audience for two days and then received them, seated on his bed covered with silk drapery. Throwing aside on his pillow the letter of the king of Aragon, he awaited the address of the envoys. It was simply a command that he should depart from his kingdom, and Charles again bit his sceptre in wrath. Yet one sentence in his proud reply indicated a sense of weakness. 'He might,' he said, 'retire for a short time to Calabria to refresh his weary troops, but it would only be to come back and wreak a fiercer vengeance.' In accordance with these words he recrossed the straits and returned to Naples during the night, leaving behind him his tents and provisions.

Only a very short time had elapsed after his departure when a fleet of ships, scattered apparently by a tempest, appeared at daybreak before the harbour of Messina. 'It is the fleet of king Charles,' exclaimed the citizens. 'They have conquered the galleys of Aragon, and now they will turn upon us.' The news was carried to Pedro of Aragon, who had taken up his abode in the city. Early though it was, yet, according to his custom, in winter as in summer, he was already dressed. He called for his horse and left the palace followed by about ten persons. The shores of the harbour were crowded with despairing men, women, and children. 'Fear nothing, good people,' exclaimed Pedro. 'They are our vessels; they have seized the fleet of king Charles.' 'God grant it may be so,' exclaimed the people, and Pedro rode on beyond the town repeating the same words. Yet a misgiving was in his mind, and he was heard to say, 'God, who has led me hither, will not abandon me, nor these unhappy people. Thanks and praise be rendered to Him.' An armed vessel bearing the ensign of Aragon was now seen approaching the shore. Pedro's nobles and knights gathered round him. A messenger landed from the vessel, and drawing near to Pedro said, 'My lord king, these are your galleys, which bring you those of your enemies.' The king dismounted
from his horse and knelt on the ground, the people following his example, and a thanksgiving was poured forth to God, who had given them this victory and saved them in the hour of their peril. "Such cries of joy were uttered," writes an old chronicler, "that you may believe my word when I say they were heard at Calabria."

Charles of Anjou had watched from the opposite coast the destruction of his fleet, and as he realised in this defeat the overthrow of his hopes for the conquest of Constantinople, he is said to have repeated the prayer which he uttered at the tidings of the Sicilian vespers. "O Lord God, if it be Thy will to give me evil fortune, grant that I may descend gently and slowly from my greatness." He now took the resolve of offering single combat himself to the king of Aragon—a hundred knights from each kingdom sharing the struggle. It was arranged that the two kings should meet and fight at Bordeaux, under the protection of Edward I. of England. As the appointed time drew near, Pedro of Aragon, well mounted, travelling by night, and guided by a trader in horses who knew all the passes of the Pyrenees, made his journey with some armed companions to Bordeaux. On the very day fixed for the combat he appeared before the gates of the city and summoned the English seneschal. Demanding to see the lists, he rode down them in slow state, then having obtained an attestation that he had appeared at the appointed time, he made a protest to the effect that the troops of France being so near Bordeaux, it was not safe for him to remain there longer, and turning his horse's head rode off on his way to Aragon.

Charles was furious. He was actually in Bordeaux at the time, and yet the challenge had been in vain. He denounced Pedro as a recreant and a dastardly craven, and prepared for vengeance; but on his return to Italy he was met by the disastrous tidings that on the preceding day Roger de Loria had again defeated his fleet, and that his son, Charles the Lame, prince of Salerno, was a prisoner. "Why did he not rather die?" was the reply of the proud king, and he consoled himself by hanging a hundred and fifty Neapolitans. But he had in reality been crushed by this new calamity. He would fain have made another attack upon Sicily, but he was unable to carry out his plans, and early in the month of January 1285 he died. Pope Martin IV. lived only three months longer.

Philip of France laid claim to Pedro's dominions for his second son, Charles of Valois, to whom they had been given by Pope Martin. He entered Aragon and besieged Gerona, but his soldiers suffered severely from the heat of the climate, and he was obliged to retreat with his whole army. They managed to pass the Pyrenees, but the king was attacked on the road by malignant fever, and soon after reaching Perpignan he also died, October 5th, 1285, at the age of forty.
Pedro fell a victim to the same disease on the 11th of November following. Thus one year saw the death of the four principal persons concerned in the invasion of Sicily.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PHILIP IV. LE BEL (THE FAIR).

A.D. 1285-1314.

Philip IV., the eldest son of Philip the Bold, found himself, on his accession to the throne, embarrassed by the war with Aragon. Alfonso, the successor of Pedro, had married the daughter of Edward I. of England. Edward endeavoured to make peace between his son-in-law and the king of France, but he only succeeded in obtaining the release of Charles the Lame, the son of Charles of Anjou, who had been taken prisoner in the last naval engagement, and who was recognised as Charles II. of Naples. The struggle between France and Aragon went on for several years, but in 1291 Charles of Valois resigned all claim to Aragon, and agreed to marry Marguerite, the daughter of Charles II. of Naples, receiving as her dowry the counties of Anjou and Maine. Alfonso of Aragon, on his part, promised that Sicily should be given up to Naples; but the Anjou family had made themselves so hated in the island that the inhabitants would not accept Charles, and in the end Sicily became an independent state under the government of a younger branch of the royal house of Aragon.

Peace for France might now have been expected, but Philip IV., eminently handsome, as may be known by his name Philippe le Bel (the Fair), was ambitious, selfish, and cruel, and the last monarch to secure peace. His evil tendencies were aggravated by those of his wife, Jeanne of Navarre, who was as vindictive and cruel as himself. The king's great object during the whole of his reign was to become the absolute master of his people for the furtherance of his own objects, and though he encouraged the middle classes, it was that they might assist him in opposing the nobility. Probably with this view his goldsmith, Ralph, was raised to the rank of a noble, and persons of low birth were allowed to purchase fiefs by which they attained the rank of baron. Philip's interference with all classes must indeed have been a source of constant annoyance. He made sumptuary laws regulating the number of dresses his subjects were to have, and the expense of each dress. He settled how many dishes might be had for dinner and supper—one dish of soup and two dishes of meat being allowed for dinner at half-past eleven, and for supper between four and five in the afternoon; and when the strict-
ness of the law was evaded by putting several kinds of meat into
one dish, he made a special law forbidding it. The customs of the
time as regarded meals were certainly singular, it being deemed a
mark of great rudeness if a gentleman did not eat off the plate of
the lady who sat next him at table.

The foreign ambition of the new king showed itself in his
conduct towards England and Flanders. Edward I. had been
his friend in the war with Aragon, but no sooner was he engaged
in a war with Scotland in 1292 than Philip, anxious to possess
himself of the duchy of Aquitaine, took advantage of a quarrel
between some English and Norman sailors in the port of Bay-
one to bring complaints against Edward, which finally resulted
in a war. A Norman sailor had been killed in a scuffle with
English sailors; in revenge the Normans seized the captain of
the English vessel, and hung him at the mast-head with a dog
tied to his feet. Upon this the English sailors took the case into
their own hands, destroyed the French fleet, and seized Rochelle.
Being summoned by the French to answer for such outrages, they
pledged that they were only answerable to their own sovereign.
Philip then interposed, and cited Edward, as duke of Aquitaine, to
appear before him. Edward sent his brother as his representative,
and Philip insisted that Guienne should be given up to him, as a
matter of form, till the differences should be more definitely settled.
Once in possession, he declared Edward contumacious because he had
not appeared in France himself, and pronounced that all his fiefs in
France were forfeited.

Naturally indignant at this gross deception, Edward prepared for
war, and soon found allies willing to support him—Adolf of Nassau,
king of the Romans, the dukes of Brittany and Brabant, and—the
most deadly of Philip's enemies—Guys de Dampierre, count of
Flanders. Guy was not popular amongst his own subjects, whom he
greatly oppressed. They were inclined to side with France. Guy
sought an alliance with England, and had some time previously pro-
tected to give his daughter Philippa in marriage to Edward's eldest
son. Philip, determined to prevent this marriage, invited the whole
family to Paris under the pretence that he wished to see and con-
gratulate Philippa, who was his goddaughter, and on their arrival
imprisoned the count and his daughter in the Louvre. Guy was
after a time set free, but the young Philippa was detained, and at
length died in France. This treachery had taken place about two
years before Philip and Edward openly quarrelled.

The war began in 1294 in Gascony, without any very decisive
advantage on either side. It was rather a war of money than of arms.
Edward purchased his allies, and so did Philip. The French king
expelled the Jews from his dominions and seized their goods, altered
the current coin of the kingdom, so as to make himself nominally richer, and at last instituted a tax called the 'maltôte,' which was levied originally on the merchants, but afterwards extended to all classes, including the clergy. It amounted to a fiftieth part of their whole income. The taxation of the clergy was at that time the source of constant dispute in Christendom between the civil and ecclesiastical powers. Pope Boniface VIII., a man of violent passions and determined will, now issued an edict, by which the clergy were forbidden to make any pecuniary contributions to the French king without the papal permission. Philip retaliated by prohibiting his subjects from sending out of the kingdom gold, silver, or treasure of any kind; and thus the Pope was deprived of the large annual income which he derived from the French clergy. Boniface explained and softened his edict, and long discussions followed. One unfortunate consequence of this quarrel was that it rendered the Pope an unacceptable mediator between France and England. He made efforts for peace, but they were at first rejected. When at length he was asked to arbitrate it was expressly in his private capacity, not as the head of the church. Boniface decided that each monarch should retain his possessions and restore the ships and merchandise which had been seized during the war. At the same time he proposed a double marriage. Edward of England was to take the princess Marguerite, Philip's eldest sister; and the young prince of Wales was to be affianced to Philip's little daughter Isabelle, then six years of age. The count of Flanders was left to his fate, not being included in the treaty. This peace was signed in June 1299. Edward was content with it, but Philip was extremely indignant at the words in which it was couched, and which assumed, contrary to the conditions made beforehand, that the decision of Boniface was given because he was Pope, and had a right to command.

Boniface was now almost at the height of his ambition. He might be said to be so entirely when, in the year 1300, he proclaimed a jubilee for Christendom, with remission of sins for all those who should repair to Rome and in the course of thirty days visit the churches of the holy apostles. At this announcement all Europe was in a frenzy of religious zeal. Throughout the year the crowds which thronged Rome were prodigious; neither houses nor churches were sufficient to receive them. They encamped in the streets and squares; they sought shelter under open roofs and tents, and at length under the open sky. The papal authorities had taken wise precautions against famine, and bread, meat, and wine were sold at moderate prices. The offerings made by the pilgrims to the Pope were enormous. It is reported by an eye-witness that his priests stood with rakes in their hands sweeping from the altars the uncounted gold and silver. In return
Philip IV.

for these gifts the Pope offered pardon and eternal happiness to the whole of Christendom, with the exception of his personal enemies, the Colonnas, a Roman family who had always opposed him; Frederick, king of Aragon; and the people of Sicily. Little could Boniface have thought, as he then saw the Christian world at his feet, that but a few years would pass before he should be crushed by the iron hand of Philip of France, degraded in the eyes of his own people, and die a miserable death of rage and hopeless longing for revenge.

In the year of the Jubilee Philip's attention was fully engrossed elsewhere. He was pursuing his projects against the unfortunate Guy of Flanders, who, by the late treaty, had been left entirely at his mercy. A French army poured into Flanders, and the count shut himself up in Ghent. His position was hopeless, and, acting according to the advice of Charles of Valois, who gave him the fullest assurances of Philip's clemency, he yielded himself prisoner. Two of his sons and his principal barons followed his example, and Philip, with his characteristic meanness, imprisoned them all in strong fortresses, and declared Flanders forfeited to the crown of France. Later in the year, attended by a brilliant court, he made a progress through the chief towns of the province. His wife Jeanne accompanied him, and the Flemings rejoiced in being rid of their unpopular lord, welcomed them with festivities in which the wealth of Flanders was lavishly displayed.

'Ve thought I was the only queen here, but I find myself surrounded by queens,' said the envious Jeanne of Navarre, as, on the occasion of an entertainment at Bruges, she stood in the midst of a radiant circle of female nobility. It was not, perhaps, a wise display, considering with whom the Flemings had to deal.

Philip had now fresh subjects to plunder, and the Flemings soon found that they had voluntarily placed themselves under an insupportable tyranny. They bore the burden without any open demonstrations of ill-will till the month of March 1302. Then, suddenly in the dead of night, the tocsin sounded forth in all quarters of the city of Bruges, and, under the guidance of the Syndic of the weavers, the exasperated people rose against the French who were living amongst them, and massacred no less than three thousand.

The ill-feeling between Philip and Pope Boniface had by this time broken out in an open rupture. About the time that the Flemings at Bruges rose in insurrection Philip was testified by his indignation against Boniface by throwing the Pope's legate, Bernard de Saisset, bishop of Pamiers, into prison, and causing to be publicly burnt at Paris a bull by which the Pope had summoned the bishops and superior clergy of France to meet him at Rome and deliberate on measures for the reform of the state. The assembly of the States-
General was then convened to deliberate on the course to be pursued in reference to this bull.

The States-General was composed of three bodies—the clergy, who took the precedence; the nobles; and the deputies of the commons, or 'tiens état.' It was entirely distinct from the parlements which had always existed in France. The States-General may be compared to the English parliament. The French parliaments were really courts which decided questions of law. There were parliaments for the provinces as well as in Paris. The parliament of Paris was, however, the most important body; the nobles belonged to it by right, but the business was chiefly transacted by lawyers or presidents, and was carried on in different chambers or courts. From the very earliest days it had been the custom for the king's decrees, which were accepted by the people as laws, to be registered by the parliament of Paris; and in course of time it was asserted that no decree possessed the force of law while it remained unregistered. This assertion, when once admitted, gave the parliament of Paris the power of stopping any obnoxious decree, a power which, in after years, it did not fail to exercise. The only mode by which the king could compel the parliament to obedience was by proceeding in person to the place where the meeting was held, and insisting on the registration of his decree, it being held that his interference suspended the functions of the inferior magistrates. On these occasions the king's seat was on a couch under a canopy, and thus arose the name given to this royal visit, as the sovereign was said to hold a 'Lit de justice' (bed of justice).

The States-General summoned by Philip met in April 1302; the fiery Robert of Artois then declared that the nobles of France would never endure the usurpation of the Pope. The defiance was repeated by the whole assembly, and a manifesto containing a stern remonstrance was drawn up and sent to Rome. But Philippe le Bel, whilst disputing with the Pope, was by no means forgetful of his insurgent subjects in Flanders. War was resolved upon, and Robert of Artois led the army into Flanders. The Flemings bravely awaited the approach of the enemy. On the 11th of July, 1302, 20,000 men placed themselves under the walls of Courtrai, protected in front by a canal which was concealed from the view of the advancing enemy. The French rushed on. The horsemen, charging at full gallop, plunged into the canal; the infantry behind fell into disorder, and the Flemings, crossing the canal, assailed them on both sides and gained a complete victory with a loss to the French of about 7,000 men. Robert of Artois was amongst the slain, with many other nobles and knights—so many, indeed, that a bushel of their gilt spurs was picked up on the field of battle.

The defeat of Courtrai had but little effect on the pride of Philip. He called for fresh levies from his subjects, compelled the nobles to
send their plate to be melted down for the public use, and paid them for it in debased coin, and then, having secured a truce for a year, turned his attention to Rome and Pope Boniface.

The Pope had excommunicated him. It was the natural punishment for the defiance of the States-General. Philip, in revenge, caused an act of indictment to be drawn up against Boniface, accusing him of scandalous crimes, and demanding that he should be judged by a council of the church, and the Pope defied the insult by a public notice that on the 8th of September following a bull would be published deposing Philip IV., king of France, from his throne. It would appear that Philip gave no actual order for the outrage which followed this announcement, but his wishes were well known, and William de Nogaret, a professor of civil law, but a man of fierce, daring character, and Sciarra Colonna, the younger son of the Roman family whom the Pope had cruelly persecuted, for their opposition to his schemes, made a secret and rapid journey into Italy.

The Pope had retired, as usual, during the heat of summer to Anagni, his native town. There summoning a consistory, he purged himself by oath of the charge of heresy, which was one of the accusations brought against him by the king of France, and then ordered that the bull of Philip’s excommunication should, on the 8th of September, be published in the cathedral of Anagni.

On the 7th of September the quiet streets of the little town were disturbed by the trampling of horses, and loud cries of ‘Death to Pope Boniface! Long live the king of France!’ Sciarra Colonna, at the head of 300 horsemen, was riding through the town, the banner of France displayed before him. The burghers assembled, but their captain was the deadly enemy of Boniface, and a mob under his guidance joined the body of Frenchmen. The houses of the cardinals then in Anagni, and of the Pope’s nephew, the marquis Gaetani, were entered and ransacked. The residence of the Pope was also attacked, but Boniface was able to make some resistance, and implored of the leaders a truce for eight hours. At the expiration of the time the conspirators sent to demand his abdication and the restoration of the Colonna family, adding that he must leave his body at the disposal of Sciarra.

The Pope groaned, but refused the terms, and again the assailants thundered at the gates of his palace, and set fire to the church in front of it. The marquis Gaetani, who was with him at the time, now abandoned him, and entered into a negotiation for his own safety, and Boniface was left alone. This climax of misfortune completely overcame him. He was eighty-six years of age, too old to contend with such enemies, and he burst into tears. But recovering himself, he put on the stole of St. Peter, took the keys of St. Peter in one hand and the Cross in the other, and seating himself on the papal throne, awaited the approach of his foes. Nogaret and
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Philip IV.

Sciarra, with their savage soldiery, forced an entrance. Nogaret threatened to drag him before the council of Lyons. Both required him to abdate. They set him on a vicious horse with his face to the tail, and so led him through the town to the place of his imprisonment. His palace was left to be plundered. The treasures accumulated in it were taken by Colonna's soldiery, and nothing was left but the bare walls.

For two days the unhappy Boniface was a prisoner. Then the people of Anagni rose against the soldiers and drove them from the town. The Pope was rescued and led out into the street. His spirit was utterly subdued, and he wept like a child. 'Good people,' he said, 'not a morsel of bread have I eaten since my capture. I am almost dead with hunger. If any kind woman will give me a piece of bread and a cup of wine—if she has no wine, a little water—I will absolve her, and anyone who will give me their alms, from all their sins.' The rabble burst into a cry—'Long life to the Pope!' and carrying him back to his desolate palace, crowned round him with provisions.

The people of Rome, indignant at the attack on the Supreme Pontiff, sent a body of 400 horsemen to conduct him back to the city. But the overweening pride of Boniface had made the chief cardinals his foes; they treated him with insolence, and he found himself a prisoner even in his own palace. Fear and mortification crushed his bodily as well as his mental strength, and about a month after his return to Rome he died, on the 11th of October, 1303.

Philip of France was released from his deadliest enemy, but his revenge was not satisfied. He demanded of the new Pope, Benedict XI., that the trial of Boniface before a general council for heresy and other crimes should still proceed. Benedict's reply was the excommunication of the persons who had been instrumental in the outrage upon the late Pope. The bull seemed to include the king of France.

It was issued on the 7th of June, 1304, and on the 27th of July Benedict was dead. He was at Perugia, and whilst at dinner a young girl, veiled and in the dress of a novice of the convent of St. Petronilla, offered him in a silver basin a present of fresh figs, sent, as she said, from the abbes. The Pope ate them eagerly, and death followed. At the time it was firmly believed he was poisoned, but his illness was more probably attributable to natural causes.

Philip's one object now was to secure the election of a Pope who should be entirely subject to him. The person selected in his own mind was Bertrand de Goth, bishop of Bordeaux. Summoning him to a secret interview in a forest near Paris, the king undertook to raise him to the papal dignity upon six conditions: 1, that he should revoke all ecclesiastical censures passed upon the king and his immediate friends; 2, that he should grant Philip for five years
a tenth of the whole revenue of the church; 3, that he should publicly condemn the memory of Pope Boniface; 4, that he should restore the Colonna family to all their honours; 5, that he should raise to the dignity of cardinal several friends of Philip, who were named. The sixth condition was left untold, but Philip exacted an oath of the archbishop that it should be fulfilled when demanded.

Philip’s despotic designs seemed now likely to be successful. The truce with Flanders had expired about nine months after the death of Boniface, and Philip had then renewed the war with success. The insurgents were defeated near Lille. But the Flemish citizens brought a fresh army into the field only three weeks afterwards, and Philip, seeing that the contest was likely to be long, showed himself willing to conclude peace. The Flemings agreed to pay the expenses of the war, and, as a temporary guarantee, to yield some of their towns and a portion of their territory; whilst Philip engaged to respect the ancient privileges of Flanders, and to recognise as count the eldest son of Guy de Dampierre, the count himself having died the previous year.

This treaty was signed on the 5th of June, 1305, and on that same day Bertrand de Goth, archbishop of Bordeaux, was raised to the papal dignity and took the name of Clement V. The coronation of the new Pope marked an epoch in the papal history. It took place at Lyons, in the dominions of the French king. Clement rode in state from the church to the palace prepared for him, and the king of France and his brothers held his bridle; but this deference on the part of Philip was a mere outward show. Avignon, not Rome, was from thenceforth to be the papal residence. It belonged to the Popes, but its close vicinity to France would enable Philip to compel submission to his will.

The time had now arrived when it was necessary to insist upon the fulfilment of the sixth condition made at the election of Clement. Wars in Flanders had exhausted the treasury, but by the suppression of the order of the Knights Templars and the seizure of their property it could be replenished; and this, it is supposed, was the secret compact.

The order of the Templars derived its origin from a band of nine French knights who, in the year 1118, had devoted themselves, with the special sanction of St. Bernard, to the protection of the pilgrims in the Holy Land; but it had by this time become so powerful as to form in almost every kingdom of the west a kind of separate republic, independent alike of Pope or king. It was a half-monastic, half-military community. Its members were vowed to obedience, chastity, and personal poverty; but the 9,000 knights who in the reign of Philippe le Bel belonged to it were ready to embark on any service for the aggrandisement and enrichment of their order. For
the community might be wealthy, though not its individual members; and as the crusading spirit diminished the services of the Knights Templars were bought by those who were unwilling to serve in the holy wars personally. Princes and nobles offered lands and treasures in return for their support; and a king of Aragon even left his kingdom to them as a legacy, but his people refused to carry out his wishes. To remain humble under such circumstances was difficult, and the haughty spirit of the Templars had long been so fully known that Richard Coeur de Lion is reported to have said on his deathbed, 'I leave my avarice to the monks of Citeaux, my luxury to the Grey monks, and my pride to the Templars.'

And with pride and riches came luxury and immorality. Public suspicion was excited. Report said that the Templars allied themselves with the infidels and practised the most debasing vices. The accusations, no doubt grossly exaggerated, were eagerly seized upon by Philippe le Bel. He was the deadly enemy of the Templars, for personal reasons. They had refused to admit him to their order, and they had lent him money which he had neither the will nor the power to repay, for on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter Isabelle with prince Edward of England they had advanced the princess's dowry. His pecuniary distress was extreme. The Jews had been already despoiled, only the Templars remained to be plundered. With the assistance of the Pope the object might be accomplished.

It was soon after his accession that Clement V. summoned the grand masters of both the military orders to Europe, on pretence of consulting with them on eastern affairs; but whether this invitation was the result of a secret understanding with Philip is not known.

The head of the Hospitallers excused himself. His community had been established in Rhodes after the end of the crusades, and the island was now besieged by the infidel. Jacques du Molay, the grand master of the Templars, obeyed the summons. He came in state with a large retinue. As he passed through the main streets of Paris the populace marvelled at the long train of sumptier mules making their way to the fortress of the Temple.

Unsuspicous of evil, Du Molay, after being courteously welcomed by Philip, went to Poitiers to meet the Pope; but on his return to Paris the storm burst. Philip, on the attestation of an apostate Templar, produced an array of revoltng accusations against the order, which was published throughout Christendom. Before any examination could be made, every Templar in Paris, including the grand master, who only the day before had held the pall at the funeral of the king's sister, was arrested and thrown into a dungeon. The following day an enquiry was instituted before the canons of Notre
CONFESSIONS AND RETRACTIONS OF THE TEMPLARS. 141

Dame and the masters of the University of Paris. During its con-
nuitude 140 prisoners were separately examined. Some were
tempted to acknowledge the crimes alleged by the hope of reward;
others were driven to confession by the infliction of horrible tor-
sure. Slowly, and not without many retraction, a sufficient number
of confessions were produced to form a plea for the destruction of
the order. Du Molay was amongst those who confessed to some of
the charges. How he was thus wrought upon—by what threats or
bodily agony—was never known, but even his example did not in-
fluence many of the nobler members of the order, and one brave old
knight in the south declared that 'if the grand master had uttered
such things he had lied in his throat.'

A similar system of injustice was carried on in other parts of
France, and at Philip's instigation was extended throughout Chris-
tendom.

The part taken by the Pope in these iniquitous proceedings was
that of a weak and selfish man, not utterly devoid of conscience, and
fully alive to the dignity of his position. He remonstrated at first
against Philip's insolent invasion of his own rights, and insisted that
the Templars could be judged by no one but himself. He even sent
legates to demand the surrender of the treasure of the order, which
the king of France had seized; but a conference with Philip brought
him to a more submissive state of mind, and he announced to Chris-
tendom that a general council was summoned for October 1310,
before which the accused should be brought to trial. In the mean-
time a commission was to examine and report upon the evidence and
lay it before the council. For several months the commission sat.
No less than 546 Templars appeared before it, and all declared the
acquisitions to be false. Du Molay retracted his previous confession,
so did many more; and the king, in alarm, caused the archbishop of
Sens to call a provincial council and condemn no less than fifty-four
of those who had thus recanted to be burnt at the stake. Du Molay
insisted that his confession had been altered, and he was kept for
further examination. And now, before the question of the Templars
was decided, the Pope was called upon to carry out another of the
conditions to which he had so solemnly pledged himself. Philip in-
sisted that at the coming council he should publicly condemn the
memory of Boniface VIII. Clement proposed a private enquiry
previously at Avignon. This was agreed to, and monstrous charges
were made against the dead Pope, and evidence brought forward to
support them. Philip, however, at last consented to give up this
prosecution of the memory of his enemy, and Clement in gratitude
pardoned all who had been concerned in the outrages at Anagni.

The Templars were less fortunate than the more open offenders.
When the council of Vienna met in October 1811, it declared
the order dissolved throughout Europe. The immense landed estates belonging to it were bestowed upon the Hospitallers, whilst two-thirds of the movable property were claimed by Philip for the expenses attendant upon the persecution.

But the tragedy was not yet over. The grand master Du Molay and three other great dignitaries were still pining in their dungeons. So long as they lived the order could not be said to be extinct. A commission was named for their trial. They were found guilty and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The four prisoners were brought out in chains and placed on a platform erected before the porch of Notre Dame. The cardinal archbishop of Albi was about to read the sentence, when the grand master advanced, and in a calm, clear voice thus spoke: 'Before heaven and earth, on the verge of death, where the least falsehood bears like an intolerable weight upon the soul, I protest that we have richly deserved death, not because of any heresy or sin of which ourselves or our order have been guilty, but because to save our lives we yielded to the seductive words of the Pope and the king, and so by our confessions brought ruin on our blameless brotherhood.'

The judges were confounded, the people full of sympathy. The prisoners were carried back to their dungeon till further counsel could be held.

But the king needed no counsel. Without a day's delay the four knights were condemned as relapsed heretics to be burnt alive. Two shrank from the sentence, again recanted, and pined away their lives in prison; the third, with Du Molay, stood firm. On the 20th of March, 1314, two pyres were raised on a little island in the Seine. The wood was green or wet, it would burn slowly; and while the fire was kindling round the limbs of the sufferers they would thus have time, like their friends, to recant. The aged, noble knights were led forth at the hour of vespers and tied each to the stake. The smoke rose thickly, the fire crept slowly upwards, but in their mortal agony the Templars continued to aver the innocence of their order. Philip sat by, a spectator and listener, apparently without remorse; and then from amidst the flames the voice of Du Molay is said to have been heard: 'I call on thee, Clement, Pope of Rome, and on thee, Philip, king of France and Navarre, to appear, the one within forty days the other in less than a year, before the Judgment-seat of God, to answer for the crimes done upon me and my brethren.'

The prophecy is mentioned by only one historian, and for this reason its credibility has been doubted; but certain it is that both the Pope and the king died within the times named. The health of Clement had long been failing, and he was about to visit Bordeaux, hoping to gain strength from his native air, when on his journey he was seized with a fatal illness, and on the night of the 20th of April
he expired. His attendants laid out his body, covered only with a single sheet, and then left it. The torches burning around caught the shroud, and when his retinue, after taking possession of his treasures, returned to bury it, they found only the ashes of the half-consumed remains, which were borne back to Carpentras, where Clement had lately held his court, and there solemnly interred.

Philip lived but a few months longer. As he was hunting in the forest of Fontainebleau, his horse fell with him, and he was so much injured that, on the 4th of November, 1314, he also died. A late repentance seems to have touched his heart, for with his last breath he besought his son Louis to have pity on the people, moderate the taxes, maintain justice, and coin no base money.

The reign of Philip IV. is marked by great oppression and injustice, but some of his laws, especially those which forbade private wars and trial by duel, were very beneficial to France, whilst the assembly of the States-General and the more clear definition made by Philip of the functions of the parliaments tended also to the maintenance of good government. Philip was the first French monarch who established custom houses and taxed imported goods. In his family relations Philip was very unfortunate; several of his daughters-in-law so scandalised the people by their ill-conduct that the king was obliged to imprison them closely; and one of them, Marguerite of Germany, the wife of his eldest son, Louis, was strangled in order that her husband might marry again.

CHAPTER XIX.

LOUIS X., LE HUTIN (THE DISORDERLY).

A.D. 1314-1316.

By the despotism of Philippe le Bel the church and the nobles were humbled and the king enriched. But Philip was no sooner laid in his grave than the feudal lords reclaimed their privileges. The nobles of Burgundy undertook to punish their own offenders, and other barons demanded the re-establishment of the challenge and trial by combat, and exacted taxes on their own account. The young king, Louis le Hutin (the Disorderly), then about twenty-six years of age, was powerless; he could not even defend his minister Enguerrand de Marigny, in whom his father had confided, and who was therefore regarded by the barons as their greatest enemy, and being accused of various offences was brought to trial for them.

His accuser was Charles de Valois, the brother of Philippe le Bel. There was no open cause to be alleged against Marigny, and so
cautious was he by nature that neither word nor writing could be brought as evidence against him. But Charles had recourse to the accusation of sorcery, against which, in those days, none could defend themselves. An image of the king in wax had, it was said, been made by order of the wife or sister of Marigny, which was to be melted in the fire, and as it dwindled away so would dwindle the person whom it represented. Marigny was condemned and hung on a gibbet, and his wife was thrown into prison. Ten years afterwards Charles de Valois became convinced of his injustice, and endeavoured to make reparation by restoring Marigny's estates to his children and causing his body to be honourably interred. But it was then too late to retrieve the ill consequences of the act. The kingdom, so strong under the government of Marigny, fell into a state of the most deplorable weakness after his death. A quarrel broke out with the Flemings, and Louis would fain have marched into Flanders; but his coffers were empty, and in order to raise money he had recourse to the serfs. He offered, on the payment of a certain sum, to set free all who belonged to his royal domains, but the serfs preferred their money to their liberty, and Louis was then actually obliged to make a law compelling them accept the proffered advantage. The nobles followed the king's example and made their serfs purchase their freedom, and thus a great change was set on foot in the social condition of the peasants, but there was no principle of right in it. The liberty granted was only a question of selfish calculation on the part of the king and the barons, and the real oppression of the poor continued to be very much what it had been before.

Louis at last collected an army, and entering Flanders besieged Courtrai. But the weather was bad; the roads were nearly impassable, and even in the camp it was not easy to pass from tent to tent without sinking up to the knees in mud. Provisions also ran short, and Louis was at last obliged to burn his baggage to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy, and then make the best of his way back to Paris. That was the chief foreign event of the year 1315; the chief domestic event was the king's second marriage with Clemence, daughter of the king of Hungary. Before another year had passed Louis was dead. He had been playing at tennis-ball at the castle of Vincennes, and when over-heated drank wine immoderately. The consequence was an illness which proved fatal. He expired on the 5th of June, 1316, in the twenty-seventh year of his age.
CHAPTER XX.
PHILIP V., LE LONG (THE LONG).
A.D. 1316-1322.

On the death of Louis X. the regency of France naturally fell to his second brother, Philip, in expectation of the child of Louis and Clemence, who was not born until about four months afterwards. The intermediate period was one of discussion as to the succession. If the child should be a girl, could she inherit the throne? The lawyers asserted that, according to the law of the Salian Franks, which was the acknowledged law of the French monarchy, females were excluded from the succession. If this were so Philip would be not regent, but king. The difficulty was set at rest for the moment when, on the 15th of November, 1316, queen Clemence gave birth to a boy, who received the name of John, but he lived only six days, and Philip was then crowned with all due solemnity. His right was disputed by the duke of Burgundy, who set up the claim of the princess Jeanne of Navarre, the daughter of Louis X. by his first wife; but Philip instantly summoned the States-General, and caused a formal decree to be published by that body declaring that females were incapable of inheriting the crown of France, and the opposition was carried no further.

The accession of Philip seemed likely to prove advantageous to his people, for his disposition was noble, and it was his sincere aim to render his country prosperous. Unhappily, however, he was so much imbued with the persecuting spirit of the age that, under the idea of duty, he lent himself to acts which caused widespread misery.

The Pope contemporary with Philip V. was John XXII, a man of humble parentage, his father being a cobbler, but who had raised himself by his talents from the position of a poor scholar patronised by a Franciscan friar to a dignity deemed superior to that of kings and emperors. Unfortunately his profound learning only served to exhibit more strongly the ignorance of the age in which he lived, for he gave the sanction of his authority to the common belief with regard to sorcery, and even considered his own life secured by virtue of a serpentine ring lent to him by Margaret, countess of Foix. Cruel punishments were enforced by him against all who were convicted in making the fatal waxen images, or in any of the many forms of sorcery then professed, such as shutting up evil spirits in looking-glasses, circlets, and rings. These proceedings were supported by Philip V. For it was now the Pope, not the king, who was
the master. The briefs, or pontifical letters, which John XXII, who, like his predecessors, resided at Avignon, addressed to Philip show his sense of the weakness of the king. He rebukes Philip for his habit of talking upon subjects of business or amusement in church, complains of the national disrespect for Sunday, and especially that it was made a day for shaving the head and trimming the beard, and on all points assumes an authority to which the king's father would never for a moment have submitted. The mixture of weakness, suspicion, and simplicity in Philip's character is especially shown by the orders issued for the management of his private and domestic affairs. The rules laid down mention 'that he will hear mass every day, but that no one is to interrupt him in chapel by offering petitions, and that no one shall speak to him in chapel except his confessor; also that no person of mean birth shall enter his dressing-room, nor assist in making his bed, and that especial care shall be taken that no sheets except his own shall be put upon his bed.' The last direction doubtless had reference to the common belief in poisoning and sorcery. Weakness and superstition, indeed, seem to have been the chief cause of the miseries of the reign of Philip V. He had no power over his nobles, and the peasantry, crushed by the exactions of their superiors, were at length goaded to madness. A second insurrection of the Pastoureaux broke out, led by a renegade monk; and, under the pretence of joining together to recover the sepulchre of Christ, a large body of peasants set forth on a wild journey to the east. At first they were unarmed and barefooted, and marching two and two begged for food at the gates of abbeys and castles; but ere they reached Paris they were an army and had begun to plunder. Swarming through the streets, they burst open the prisons, set free the prisoners, and then encamped close to the city and offered battle to the king's troops. Being unopposed, they set off for the south, and when they arrived in Languedoc their numbers were 40,000. The Jews, who had been driven from France by Philippe le Bel, but had returned during the reign of Louis Hutin, were the objects of their especial enmity. The Pope from the walls of Avignon might have beheld these wild bands ravaging the country. He issued a bull of excommunication against them and summoned the seneschal of Carcassonne to defend the shores of the Rhone. The fierce rabble soon found both their advance and retreat cut off. Suffering from want, cold, and fever, they were easily attacked, defeated, and hung without mercy, and the insurrection was at an end. But cruelty engenders cruelty. The following year the outcry against the Jews rose again, and to it was added a fresh horror. They had joined with the lepers, it was said, to poison the springs of water. Philip V. was engaged with his parliament at Poitiers when the murmurs against the wretched outcasts, victims of a terrible disease, assumed a definite
Lepers—Philip’s Death—Marriage of Charles IV.

Form. Confessions were declared to have been wrung from them. A conspiracy had been formed to poison all the fountains in France and Germany. The Jews had bribed them, so had the Moorish king of Granada. Such were the accusations. A decree was issued by Philip for the arrest of every leper, and of everyone suspected of infection. Then followed a peremptory order to clear the land of lepers. And the land was cleared; for in many parts of France the miserable people were burned alive. The Jews were treated with no less cruelty; great numbers were burnt, whilst their property was seized to enrich the royal treasury.

That same year Philip V. was attacked by fever. The cause of the illness could not be discovered. He lingered five months, and then died on the 3rd of January, 1322. He was only in the thirtieth year of his age.

CHAPTER XXI.

Charles IV., Le Bel (The Fair).

A.D. 1328-1498.

Philippe le Long, when he demanded of the States-General of France to issue a decree excluding females from the throne, had one son and four daughters. Only a few months afterwards his son died, and now, at his own death, his daughters were the first to suffer from the rule which he had himself been instrumental in establishing. His brother Charles, then about eight-and-twenty years of age, the third son of Philippe le Bel, claimed the throne and took possession of it without opposition. The events of this reign are but little known; there was no historian to chronicle them; but immediately after his accession Charles sought to divorce his wife, Blanche of Burgundy, who had been imprisoned for ill-conduct, and having brought forward the plea of too near relationship, obtained a dispensation from the Pope, and was permitted to marry the daughter of Henry of Luxembourg, late emperor of Germany.

The marriage was peculiarly acceptable to Pope John, who was carrying on a violent quarrel with the emperor Louis of Bavaria, and was bent upon deposing him and making the king of France emperor in his stead. The Luxembourg family were, in consequence of the marriage, brought into close relation with the French royal family. John, king of Bohemia, the son of Henry of Luxembourg and brother of the new queen, came to Paris and took part in the rejoicings at his sister’s coronation; and, to unite the families still
more closely, one of his sons was married to a French princess and another sent to be educated at the court of France.

All this promised well for the Pope's projects; and Charles le Bel repaired to Avignon, where he met King Robert of Naples, and with the aid of the Pope proceeded to partition out the greater part of Christendom. Charles was to have the empire and Robert Italy.

But the Germans were by no means willing thus to submit to the domination of the Pope. Charles expected the elector and princes of Germany to lay the imperial crown at his feet, but they held back, being unwilling to elect a foreigner, and at length ended their disputes by agreeing to have for the time two joint emperors, Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria.

Whilst Charles was thus entertaining a hope of becoming emperor of Germany he was also endeavouring to extend his dominions by attacking the English possessions in France.

England was at that time in a state of weakness and disorder from the wretched incapacity of the king, Edward II., and the disputes between him and his wife, Isabelle of France, the daughter of Philip IV. and the inheritor of his vices. Charles made aggressions upon Guinevere and defeated the English under the Earl of Kent, and Isabelle was despatched to Paris to negotiate a peace. When there she sent for her young son Edward (afterwards Edward III.) and began to form a plot for deposing her husband, Charles agreeing to assist her both with men and money. Within two months after her return to England the unfortunate Edward II. found himself a prisoner in the hands of his wife, and his murder speedily followed.

The death of Charles le Bel occurred the following year. On Christmas Eve the king was seized with a violent illness, and on the 31st of January, 1328, he expired at Vincennes, at the age of thirty-four. This early and rapid extinction of the family of Philippe le Bel was regarded as a manifest retribution for his crimes.

Charles de Valois, the youngest brother of Philippe le Bel and the claimant of the throne of Aragon, died about three years before his nephew. He has been noted as the son, the brother, the uncle, and the father of kings, but not a king himself. He had shared the crimes of Philippe le Bel, and remorse at last so took possession of him that he died of a disease occasioned by mental anguish, for which the physicians could find no remedy, and which was in consequence attributed to magic.
CHAPTER XXII.

PHILIPPE VI. (DE VALOIS).

A.D. 1328-1350.

Though Charles IV. had three wives (having married Jeanne d'Evreux after the death of Mary of Luxemburg) the succession was uncertain, for as he had as yet no son, and in the doubt whether the child whom he expected to be born of Jeanne d'Evreux would be a boy, he gave directions on his death-bed that in the event of the birth of a princess the council of peers should at once meet and adjudge the crown to him who should be deemed its lawful inheritor.

There were likely to be two chief claimants—Edward III. of England, the son of Isabelle, the late king's sister, and Philippe, the son of Charles de Valois—and immediately on the death of Charles it was found necessary to discuss which was the nearer in succession, as the English king claimed the regency. The argument against Edward was that his mother could not transmit to him a right which she did not herself possess, and even if this were denied there was another claimant, the comte d'Evreux, whose mother was a daughter of Louis X., and who would therefore have a prior claim. The rights transmitted through the female branch being thus so doubtful, they were at once set aside, and Philippe de Valois was accepted as regent of France. Two months afterwards the queen gave birth to a girl, and Philip was then at once declared king.

Philip VI. was at that time about five-and-thirty years of age. He was generous, brave, courteous, and possessed considerable talent, but his ruling passion was a delight in pomp and show. His coronation was solemnised at Rheims with unusual magnificence, and he then gathered around him his splendid and luxurious court. The castle of Vincennes was the Windsor of the house of Valois, and there Philip delighted to receive both kings and nobles. The building, with its four towers and drawbridges, its central donjon or keep, and its lovely clock-tower, stood in the centre of a noble forest, and in it from time to time assembled the kings of Navarre, Majorca, Bohemia, and Scotland, eager to engage in a tournament in the castle tilting-ground, or to join in hunting the deer which in the daytime hid themselves amongst the branching oaks, and at night ventured to trample the earth close around the walls of the castle. So attractive was Paris also, with its royal palaces, that John of Bohemia declared it to be the most knightly city in all the world. He wandered about Europe, but he never failed to return to the court of France, where
jousts and tournaments realised the romances of chivalry and recalled the days of the famous Arthur and the heroes of the Round Table.

There were, however, grave political affairs carried on amidst all this show of pleasure, and when Louis, count of Flanders, one of the most brilliant of the visitors at Vincennes on the occasion of the coronation festivities, entreated the king to assist him in subduing his revolted subjects, Philip eagerly seized the opportunity of strengthening himself by acquiring military glory. Orders were given for the speedy assembling of a large army, and the citizens of Bruges and Ypres and several other towns prepared to meet him at Cassel, where they had entrenched themselves on a hill, and in front of their camp set up a banner on which was inscribed—

Quand ce coq ici chantera
Le roi trouvé oy entrera.  

The 'roi trouvé' was Philippe de Valois, and the allusion was to his title to the throne, which was considered doubtful.

The Flemings were more lacking in patience than in courage, and demanded an immediate battle; and their leader Zannekin, dressed like a fish merchant, made his way into the French camp, the 23rd of August, 1328, and carried back a report of the enemy's condition. The nobles were amusing themselves—feasting, conversing, paying visits; the king himself was at dinner. The bold burghers acted upon the report and attacked the camp. They advanced even to the king's tent; but Philip and his knights were not thus to be taken. They turned bravely against the enemy, and the citizens, burdened by the weight of their splendid armour, found it difficult to move. No less than 13,000 are said to have been left dead on the field. Flanders at once submitted to the count, and Philip, after giving wise counsels for the future government of the country, returned triumphantly to Paris.

He now felt himself sufficiently powerful to confront England, and Edward III. was summoned to appear at his court and do homage for the duchy of Guienne. Edward complied and met Philip at Amiens, but he had made a secret reservation with his council of state to press his own claims to the crown of France on the first favourable opportunity.

Six years, however, went by before the looked-for hour arrived, and in the meantime Philip had raised up for himself an enemy in his own family, who was the chief cause of the reverses which France ultimately met with at the hands of Edward of England.

Robert d'Artois, the grandson of the count who fell in the

When this cock begins to sing
Here shall enter the foundling king.
ROBERT D'ARTOIS—POISONING AND FORGERY.

Battle of Courtrai, had married Jeanne, Philip's half-sister, and the two princes were on the most intimate terms; Robert had been especially urgent in upholding Philip's claims to the throne of France. He had himself a claim of a similar kind to the county of Artois, which had been adjudged to his father's youngest sister, Matilda, the countess of Burgundy. The king, it was said, would acknowledge Robert's right if he could produce some letter or paper in support of his title.

As time went on Robert spread a report that certain missing documents had come to light which rendered his claim indisputable, and the countess of Burgundy upon this came to St. Germains, where the court was sitting which was to try the case. The enquiry began in June 1329, and in the October following the countess died of a mysterious disease. Three months afterwards her daughter died also in the same singular way. She had been spending the evening with her ladies, and when she went to bed her butler, who had been formerly in attendance upon her mother, prepared for her some wine which she was accustomed to take. She had no sooner lain down to rest than she was seized with a terrible illness, and expired almost immediately, her body being entirely covered with black and white spots. Strong suspicions of poison were excited, and Robert d'Artois was freely spoken of as the guilty person, but still the trial proceeded.

The chief evidence produced by Robert was a packet of papers purporting to be a deed by which the county of Artois had been formally bequeathed to his father, so that it became his especial possession. In such a case the son would be the natural heir. The papers themselves were brought forward by Jeanne de Divion, a lady of questionable character, who said she had received them from the bishop of Arras, the friend of the last count of Artois. The bishop had given them to her on his death-bed, but up to this time she had secreted them.

The evidence as to this important paper was carefully sifted, and the witnesses who were brought forward became confused, and at length the demoiselle de Divion confessed they were a forgery. The instigator was Robert's wife, Jeanne de Valois, who had threatened to drown or burn Jeanne de Divion unless she would consent to give her aid. 'Both the count and his wife,' said the demoiselle de Divion, 'were so eager in the matter, and so sad, that they could neither eat, nor drink, nor rest, by night or day.' The seal of Artois had been obtained from an old charter which Jeanne de Divion had bought of a citizen for a hundred crowns. A skilful clerk had forged the writing, and then the countess's two ladies and herself had attached the seal to the paper, one holding the candle and the other helping her with the document.
This confession was of course fatal to all concerned. It was in vain that the demoiselle de Divion pleaded the threats of Jeanne de Valois. According to the cruel custom of the age she was burnt alive in the pig-market near the Porte St. Honoré. The king's sister was only imprisoned with her two children. The inferior culprits were dressed in white garments covered with figures of red tongues, and placed in the pillory. As for Robert d'Artois, overwhelmed with shame and fear, he fled to Brussels, and in his absence his estates were confiscated. From that time he became Philip's deadly foe.

It was the year after the death of Jeanne de Divion that a monk named Henry was sent for by the count to Brussels for some affair of importance not named. On his arrival Robert informed him that he had a secret to communicate, but it must be under the seal of confession. The monk agreed. The count opened a cabinet and showed a wax figure, about a foot and a half high, of a young man dressed according to the fashion of the times. 'Touch it not, brother Henry,' said the count; 'it is quite ready; it is baptised. They sent it to me from France baptised. It is for John of France. I tell this in confession; but there is another which I wish to have baptised by you.' 'And for whom is that intended?' asked the monk. 'It is for the queen,' said Robert. 'That is not for the real queen, but the evil spirit which has taken possession of her. If she or her son John were dead I should get on well with the king; so I pray you baptise the figure. Everything else is ready, godfathers and godmothers and all.' Brother Henry refused, declaring that it was a sinful belief and a sinful practice, to which Robert could only answer, 'I would rather strangle the devil than that the devil should strangle me.'

Rumours of these deeds reached the ear of Philip, and Robert d'Artois was compelled by threats to leave Flanders. In dire indignation the count crossed the Channel in disguise, and at the close of the year 1338 appeared at the court of Edward of England, prepared to give his support to the claims of a foreign prince upon the throne of France.

An edict issued by the French king forbidding all his vassals to harbour Robert d'Artois was received by Edward as a declaration of war. The Flemings were ready to be his allies, for their count was still unpopular. He lived in Paris, and when the war broke out, without consulting his subjects, he ordered all the English in Flanders to be arrested. Edward retaliated by arresting the Flemings in England. Upon this the people of Ghent chose Jacob van Artevelde, a brewer, as their leader, and he, calling together his fellow-citizens, with those of Ypres and Bruges, gave his advice as to the course to be pursued. 'Without the king of England,' he
said, 'they could not live, for the prosperity of Flanders rested upon cloth, and cloth could not be made without wool.' He counselled them to take the king of England for their friend.'

The nobles of Flanders as well as the citizens professed themselves ready to follow the suggestion of Artevelde, but the duke of Brabant, they said, held the highest rank amongst them, and he must speak first. The duke of Brabant made his declaration; but then the nobles had another difficulty. The emperor of Germany, Louis of Bavaria, must defy Philip before they did; for Flanders was subject to the empire. The emperor did what was required, for he also had a quarrel against France. In a diet at Coblenz, at which Edward himself was present, he heard the accusation brought against Philip, and afterwards placing one hand on the sceptre and the other on the globe, whilst a knight held over his head a naked sword, acknowledged Edward of England as the imperial vicar on the left bank of the Rhine. They were brave and bold words, but they went no further. The emperor reflected, had scruples, and at length, instead of engaging in a dangerous war with France, made his way over the Alps into Italy.

And now there came another obstacle. The Flemings were under promise to the Pope. They had engaged to pay him two millions of florins if they attacked the king of France. Jacob van Artevelde found a remedy for this difficulty. He proposed that the king of England should declare himself king of France. Edward consented, and the Flemings then openly avowed themselves in his favour. This took place in 1337.

Open war followed. For some time it was carried on chiefly in Flanders, without any remarkable success on either side; but in 1310, both Philip and Edward having prepared large fleets, well manned and equipped, an engagement took place near Helvetsluys, at the mouth of the Scheldt. Philip's fleet was supported by Genoese galleys and commanded by the treasurer Bahuchet, who understood little else than how to keep accounts. Having a horror of the sea, Bahuchet kept his fleet shut up in the port. In vain the Genoese commander tried to persuade him that he must give his ships room. The English fell upon them whilst they were still moored close together, and the result was the total defeat of the French, with the loss of 30,000 men. An enormous ship, the 'Christopher,' which had been taken from the English in the Channel some months before, was recaptured by Sir Walter Manny at the beginning of the engagement, and this mainly decided the fortunes of the day. The Genoese admiral escaped, but the unfortunate treasurer was hung at the mast of his own vessel. The effects of this defeat on the minds of the French were most important. They lost their naval courage, and the English remained masters of the Channel.
Edward, after the battle, proceeded to Ghent with his wife Philippa, who there gave birth to her third son, the famous John of Gaunt (or Ghent), duke of Lancaster. But after a rest of a few weeks he undertook the siege of Tournay. 60,000 Flemings supported him—a mighty host in number, but unfortunately deficient in military enterprise. Being weary with the siege of Tournay, so says the old chronicler Froissart, the Flemings went off to attack and pillage Arques, near St. Omer, but in the middle of the night they were all seized with such a wonderful panic that they rose up, rushed out of their tents, threw them to the ground with their banners, and fled, Robert of Artois and Henry of Flanders calling out after them, 'Good gentlemen, tell us wherefore do you flee?' To which no one stopped to reply, but each man took the shortest road to his own home, and the two counts had nothing to do but to return to Tournay and relate the tale.

A truce was now concluded, for with such allies the English could do nothing. The main object of the Flemish lords was money, and when they were paid by both parties they stayed at home. Fortunately for the ambition of the king of England an occasion for reopening the contest burst forth in Brittany, which was composed of much more inflammable materials.

A country stern and wild in its picturesque beauty, Brittany was to France in some respects what Scotland was to England. The Bretons had always been ready for war, always, as it seemed, seeking to find an enemy stronger than themselves. Their early history is a continuation of achievements marked with the chivalry, but also with more than the ordinary ferocity, of the middle ages. Duke John III. died without children in April 1341, leaving a niece and a half-brother both claiming the dukedom. The niece, the daughter of an elder brother, had married Charles de Blois, nephew of Philip VI. The French king was therefore on her side. The half-brother, Jean de Montfort, sought the support of Edward of England. The Bretons themselves were divided in their allegiance.

The Montforts had been a very remarkable family for many years. It was a Montfort who had urged Louis VI. to arm the communes of France; a Montfort who led the crusade against the Albigenses; a Montfort who in England laid the foundation of the authority and influence of the commons house of parliament; and now, in the fourteenth century, it was a Montfort whose name rallied the Bretons around the standard of resistance to France.

The opponent of the comte de Montfort, Charles de Blois, was deemed a saint. He confessed both morning and evening, heard five or six masses every day, made pilgrimages in the snow with bare feet to the shrine of St. Yves, the famous Breton saint, put pebbles in his shoes, and fastened tight cords round his body with hard knots.
which cut into the flesh. But as he had no pity for himself, neither had he any for others.

When Jean de Montfort, hearing of the death of his brother, took possession of Nantes, Charles de Blois began the contest by laying siege to the city and throwing into it the heads of thirty knights. Montfort yielded, and was sent as a prisoner to Philip and shut up in the Louvre, then both a palace and a prison. Jeanne, comtesse de Montfort, who, according to Froissart, had the courage of a man and the heart of a lion, was in Rennes when she heard that her husband was taken. She called her friends around her and presented to them her little boy, who bore his father's name. 'My lords,' she said, 'be not discouraged for the loss of our count; he was but one man. See my little child; he, by God's help, shall avenge his father and restore all that has been taken from us.' Shutting herself up in Hennebonne, she opened communications with Edward III. and patiently awaited his promised aid. The place was besieged by Charles de Blois. Jeanne made several vigorous sorties with her few troops, but her case was becoming desperate, and her lords were actually discussing before her the terms of capitulation, when the long looked for succour from England, under the command of Sir Walter Manny, arrived.

'Who then,' says Froissart, 'had seen the countess proudly descend the steps of the castle, and meeting Sir Walter Manny, embrace him and his companions one after the other, again and again, would truly have said that she was a valiant lady.'

The king of England came himself to Brittany at the end of the year, and the king of France did the same. It seemed as if the little war was likely to become great, but both the kings were poor and a peace for three years was agreed upon, the Bretons being left at liberty to carry on their quarrel. Philip was the first to renew the struggle. He invited to a tournament fifteen of the nobles of Brittany whom he had reason to believe favourable to England, and put them to death without a trial. The brother of one of these noblemen, being a priest, was fastened to a ladder and exposed to the people, who were allowed to stone him. Three nobles of Normandy were soon after executed on a similar plea, and Philip would fain have taken the comte d'Harcourt, but he escaped out of his hands and became as useful to the English as Robert d'Artois. The great feudal barons, it should be remembered, felt but little scruple in negotiating with a foreign prince. They looked upon themselves as independent, and the nobles of England and France were so closely connected, both politically and socially—even the language of the two courts being the same—that an alliance with England was in no way considered treason to France.

Edward of England could not hear with indifference of Philip's
acts of cruelty and injustice. The war was recommenced, but it was to be carried on by the English king without his chief ally, Jacob van Artevelde. The fickle burghers of Flanders had turned against their once popular leader; they accused him of appropriating to himself the revenues of the county, and an angry mob assembled before his house with the demand for a reckoning of the public money. Artevelde appeared at the window. 'I have taken not a farthing, gentlemen,' he said quietly. 'Go back to your homes and return tomorrow, and I will give you a full account.' 'Nay, nay,' was the cry; 'think not to escape. The treasure has been sent to England, and therefore shall you die.'

Then Artevelde folded his hands and wept and said, 'Gentlemen, you made me what I am. You swore to defend me; now you would kill me. Have I not governed you peaceably? Have I not restored your commerce? Have you not had all things at your disposal through me—corn, wool, merchandise of all kinds?' He was interrupted. 'Come down; we will hear no more.' And Artevelde, seeing his words to be useless, closed the window and fled to a church. Thither the mob followed him, and a weaver named Thomas Denis gave him his death-wound.

So Edward was to have no help from Flanders, and therefore, being urged by the comte d'Harcourt, he entered Normandy. Philip summoned his German allies, and John, king of Bohemia, with several other German nobles, joined his standard. Edward advanced nearly to Paris, pillaging and burning. Then Philip's increasing army made it prudent for him to retreat through Picardy. He reached the river Somme. The French guarded all the bridges, but a boy directed him to a ford passable at low tide, and near which the French had posted several thousand men. The English crossed safely, and the French followed along the banks of the river; but the tide was rising, and when they reached the ford it was again impassable. Philip marched his troops to Abbeville, where the Somme could be crossed without difficulty. He was prepared for a battle the next day. Not so the wet and famished English. But still less were they prepared to continue their retreat. Fighting seemed to involve the lesser risk, and when in the morning the French army was seen stationed in an excellent position upon the edge of the forest of Crecy, Edward gave orders to confront it.

The spirit of the French king was greatly stirred at the prospect of the conflict, for he hated the English. Summoning his marshals he said, 'Let the Genoese archers begin the battle in the name of God and St. Denis.' The Genoese, who alone were thought able to encounter the dreaded English archers, stepped forward; but the cords of their bows were wet and had lost their force. The English showered arrows upon them, whilst the artillery, used for the first time in battle, struck them down with balls. 'Quick! kill these
rascal Genoese; they do but cumber the way,' exclaimed Philip in
dire wrath. The French troops pressed forward over the fallen
archers, but in doing so they broke their ranks, and the English,
standing firm, fired on them. The disorder increased every moment.
The blind king John of Bohemia was stationed aloof, supported by
a knight on each side. 'I pray you,' he said, turning to them, 'lead
me where I may strike a good blow,' and the knights, fastening their
horses to his, rushed with him madly into the battle. Their bodies
were found the next morning, knights and horses still linked in
death. A small stone cross marks to this day the spot where they fell.

The great nobles of France fought desperately. The counts of
Alençon and Flanders traversed the enemy's lines at full gallop,
broke the ranks of the English archers, and pressed on to the spot
where the young prince of Wales, a mere boy, was commanding a
division. The earl of Warwick, who was in attendance on the prince,
sent to king Edward, who was watching the battle from a windmill
on an adjoining height, desiring more support; but the only answer
he received was, 'Let the boy win his spurs.' The English stood
immovable. The counts of Alençon and Flanders were slain, and
Philip, who had himself fought with most distinguished valour, after
standing for some time watching the slaughter of his bravest troops,
reluctantly galloped from the field and at daybreak drew his rein
before the gates of Amiens. 'Who is it,' asked the warder, 'that
thus seeks entrance as a fugitive?' 'The fortunes of France,' re-
plied Philip, and the gates were thrown open, whilst the inhabit-
ants crowded around their sovereign weeping and bewailing their
misfortunes.

It was indeed a sorrowful time for France. The English estab-
lished themselves in the country, for they were resolved to take
Calais, that they might be masters of the Straits. Edward built a
town around the town; he intended to prepare himself both for winter
and summer. There were streets and houses, with a market and shops,
well furnished by sea from England and Flanders. News came that
the Scots were invading England, but Edward never moved; he had
encircled the city and the inhabitants were starving. They must
sooner or later yield. Again came the report that Charles de Blois
had been made prisoner, thus affording an opening for continuing
the war in Brittany, but the English king was not tempted by the
prospect. Philip ardently desired to succour Calais. He offered the
Flemings money without stint. He would give up to them Lille,
Bethune, and Douay; he would make their citizens knights; he would
give them anything they desired if they would forsake Edward and
aid him. But entreaties and threats were alike powerless. Edward
remained stationary before Calais, and when at length, in the extremity
of hunger, the town capitulated after a siege of more than a year,
six of the principal citizens were obliged to give themselves up to Edward, and after enduring the greatest humiliation were only saved from death by the interposition of queen Philippa. The keys of Calais were the keys of France. The town, now become English, was for two centuries an open door for foreigners, and England was, as it were, once more united to the continent.

The loss of the battle of Crecy showed the superiority of the hardy infantry drawn from the commonalty of England over the nobles and knights who had been trained in France upon the feudal system. The chivalrous spirit was decaying, and a change was coming over the face of Europe, but it was not at once perceived. The immediate effect in France of the battle of Crecy was only that of utter discouragement. Petrarch, the Italian poet, who visited the country soon after the battle, gives, in a letter to a friend, a lamentable description of its state. 'It appeared,' he says, 'everywhere desolated by fire and sword. The houses were falling in ruins, except those which had been converted into fortresses, and traces of the havoc committed by the English were to be seen in all directions. In Paris many of the streets were quite deserted, and weeds and brambles grew in the highways.' Under such circumstances the truce which was now agreed upon must have been most welcome. But the power of rallying seemed for a while lost. Seasons of despondency are seasons of mortality. When men cease to have hope in life the springs of life seem to dry up within them. The depopulation of France was rapid in the latter days of Philip VI; and, to increase the evil, came the Black Death, an awful plague which began in Provence, and soon spread over the whole country. The young rather than the old were stricken by it. Men in perfect health one day were on the next carried to the grave, and the deaths at length became so numerous that burial was scarcely possible. Fear acted like contagion. To visit a sufferer was almost certainly to die, and only a few members of the religious orders ventured to touch and tend the sick. Everywhere prince and peasant suffered alike. Philip lost his wife, Jeanne of Burgundy; and the duchess of Normandy and the queen of Navarre and many other persons of distinction fell victims to the Black Death. Amongst them was Laura de Sades, the lady to whom the famous sonnets of Petrarch were addressed.

The terrible scourge lasted about two years. The excited superstition of the uneducated people showed itself in the wildest form. They invented fierce self-discipline in the presence of the judgments of God. Half-naked and bearing red crosses, they set forth in frantic processions, resting in every town one day and one night, and scourged themselves twice in the day with whips pointed with sharp iron. Noblemen, gentlemen, even ladies of high birth, joined these Flagellants, as they were named. The Pope condemned
them, the king pursued them, but still the excitement spread. It began in Germany, passed on to Flanders, and from thence it reached the north of France. At Christmas 1349 the Flagellants were reckoned at nearly 800,000. But the frenzy was never communicated to Italy. Boccaccio, the great novelist of the period and the author of the 'Decameron,' gives a description of the state of society when the Black Death appeared in Florence, which tends to show that instead of rousing the rich and fashionable to repentant terror, the awful calamity only served to sink them deeper in profligacy.

When at length, in 1350, the country was freed from the scourge, domestic comfort and happiness were again sought and marriages became the order of the day. It was proposed that the young prince John should marry his cousin the lovely Blanche of Navarre, who was just eighteen. The king suggested the alliance, but when he saw the beauty of his son's intended wife he put aside the disparity of age—for he was then fifty-eight years old—and insisted upon taking her himself. The disappointed John was obliged to be contented with a young widow of four-and-twenty, the heiress of Burgundy, who brought upon him not only the charge of governing Burgundy for her, but also that of educating her little boy. Other marriages took place at the same time, and the fêtes by which they were celebrated were especially marked by the introduction of new and absurd fashion in dress. The gentlemen's dress was quite tight and of two colours; their hair was tied in a queue, and they wore shoes with immensely long turned-up points, somewhat like snakes. The ladies wore enormous mitres on their heads, from which depended a quantity of ribbon, floating like the flags hanging from a mast; and so manlike were they that they insisted upon mounting fiery horses and wearing two daggers in their girdles. In vain the clergy preached against these absurdities, and in vain the sensible portion of the people ridiculed them. Folly and feasting were rapidly effacing the memory of the Black Death. In the midst of this frivolity the king was seized with a lingering sickness, and after an illness of a few months expired on the 22nd of August, 1350. He had reigned twenty-two years.

Philip VI. was the first French king who imposed a tax on salt. It was known as the 'gabelle,' but, though extremely profitable, it became ultimately oppressive and odious to the people.

In the last year of his reign the Dauphin or lord of Vienne, being about to retire into a monastery, sold his estate to Philip on behalf of prince Charles, the king's grandson, on condition that the province of Dauphiny should never be united to the crown of France. In after years the province was considered the inheritance of the reigning monarch's eldest son, who took the title of Dauphin.
CHAPTER XXIII.

JOHN THE GOOD (Le Bon).

A.D. 1360-1364.

John, the son of Philip VI, has been called the king of gentlemen. More chivalrous and more unfortunate than his father, he took for his model the blind John of Bohemia, who, linked to his knights, fought and fell at Crecy. But he began his reign by an act of cruelty. On the bare suspicion that his father's principal counsellor, the constable D'Eau, was keeping up an understanding with the English, he had him put to death, and bestowed his office on a favourite of his own, Charles de la Cerda, to whom he also gave the county of Angoulême. This county had only lately been ceded to the crown of France by the king of Navarre, upon condition that he should receive some other fiefs in exchange. John had withheld the fiefs, and now the king of Navarre indignantly laid claim to Angoulême as his own.

Charles of Navarre is known in history as Charles the Bad, and certainly his historical character justifies the epithet. But he was a man of great talents, fascinating manners, and remarkable eloquence; and was likely to be especially dangerous to John, because he had, in the eyes of some men, a very just claim to the throne of France. His mother being the daughter of Louis X., Charles would unquestionably have been the rightful sovereign except for the Salic law. John, anxious to convert a rival into a friend, had given the king of Navarre his daughter in marriage. But now there was a grave subject of complaint. Four years, however, went by before Charles openly showed his enmity. Then he surprised the constable de la Cerda at the town of L'Aigle, and caused him to be assassinated. John was intensely indignant, but he dared not show it; his own position was dangerous. He is known as John the Good, but good should be interpreted to mean prodigal, open-handed rather than high-principled. He spent in the present and promised for the future, and when he could not obtain money he made it by altering the coinage. This was his grand resource. At his accession a silver mark, then the current coin of France, was worth five livres and five sous; the next year it was declared to be worth four livres, the year after twelve livres, and at length it was even declared to be worth 10 sous livres. The natural result was utter confusion in the country. His promises were no sooner made than they were broken, and in some cases they were such as it was simply contradictory to keep. Th
nobles of Picardy, for instance, were told that the king would allow them to retain the right of carrying on private wars; the citizens of Normandy were assured that he would prohibit them. Both parties in gratitude voted a certain amount of aid to the royal treasury, and John was satisfied, though his subjects were not. But the northern provinces of France were less submissive than the southern, and proposed to take the question of taxation into their own hands, and decide for themselves the amount to be paid, receiving an account of the expenditure. Upon this condition they agreed to raise a large sum, partly by the 'gabelle,' which, like all taxes in those days, pressed most heavily upon the poor. England, in the middle ages, in this respect resembled France, but in England the middle and lower classes by degrees gained freedom and power, and were able to put an end to the injustice; whereas in France it went on silently, creating a sense of oppression which finally drove the people to revolution. Charles of Navarre held lands in France, and on these domains the 'gabelle' was demanded. But he, with the comte d'Harcourt and other French barons, refused to permit it. 'No man,' they said, 'in all France should dare to levy the tax within their territories, but he should pay for it by death.' The resistance was made known to the king, and, wounded to the quick, he exclaimed, 'I shall never know perfect happiness whilst these men are alive.' Summoning a small body of knights, he left Orleans, where he was then residing, and after riding for thirty hours arrived with his companions at the castle of Rouen. The Dauphin, as duke of Normandy, was holding his court there. It was one of the king's great grievances that his son had made a chosen friend of the king of Navarre. At that very moment they were feasting together with the comte d'Harcourt and other distinguished guests.

The king dismounted and strode into the banqueting-hall preceded by a squire, who cried, drawing his sword, 'Let no one stir on pain of death by this sword!' John approached the table and took hold of Charles of Navarre, and rudely shaking him exclaimed, 'Traitor, thou art not worthy to sit at my son's table! I will neither eat nor drink whilst thou livest!' Charles was arrested, but the Dauphin, who was very young, threw himself at his father's feet. 'Ah, sir,' he exclaimed, 'you dishonour me! What will be said of me when I have invited the king of Navarre and his barons to dine with me and you treat them thus?' 'Silence, Charles,' replied the king. 'They are wicked traitors; you know not all that I know,' and advancing to the comte d'Harcourt he struck him behind the shoulders, and gave orders that he, with two other nobles, should also be seized. The prisoners were taken into the courtyard of the castle, and all, with the exception of the king of Navarre, were beheaded on the spot. The rank of Charles saved his life, but he was carried off to
the Châtelet, where he was treated with great severity and daily threatened with death.

This terrible tragedy took place in April 1356, and in that same year war, stirred up by the brother of the king of Navarre and the brother of the comte d'Harcourt, broke out between France and England. The Black Prince, who was residing at Bordeaux, invaded the French territory. War in those days was not so much the advance of a regular army as the incursions of troops of brigands. The English left not a shed to shelter a horse, and the unhappy peasants returning to their burnt and plundered villages often could not find a post standing to enable them to say, 'This was my home,' or 'my inheritance.'

John made vigorous preparations to repulse his foe. He had 50,000 men, the prince not above 6,000; but when, after much time had been lost on both sides in scouring the country to obtain accurate information of the position of the respective armies, the two forces met in the neighbourhood of Poitiers, the prince, finding his troops well placed, determined at all risks to hazard a battle.

The English were stationed on the slope of a hill intersected with hedges and vineyards, and which could only be approached from Poitiers by a narrow, hollow causeway between two steep banks. It was scarcely possible, therefore, for cavalry to draw near. Behind the hedges and in ditches dug for the occasion the English archers were hidden, and there was also an ambuscade of 600 knights and archers under a famous knight, the Captal de Buch.

The battle began the following morning, the 19th of September, 1356. After a vain attempt at mediation made by two papal legates who were with the French army, two French marshals with a chosen body of knights charged gallantly up the hollow way striving to reach the heights where the English were posted, but they were assailed by the archers from behind the hedges and by the Captal de Buch from his ambuscade, and thrown into confusion. As they turned back the prince of Wales, acting by the advice of Sir John Chandos, rushed down from the heights and charged the French in front, and the fortunes of the day were then decided. The Dauphin, Charles, and his two brothers rode away from the field of battle, followed by 800 knights. The troops commanded by the duke of Orleans followed his example. The king remained, dealing blows on all sides with his battle-axe. His youngest son, Philip, kept close by him, warning him—'Father, strike to the right, now to the left;' but still the foe pressed forward, and eager cries were heard from those near! 'Yield! yield! or you are dead!' A knight of St. Omer, tall and powerful, made his way through the crowd. 'Sire, sire, yield!' he exclaimed. 'To whom should I yield?' said the king. 'Where is my cousin the prince of Wales?' 'Sire,' answered the
knights, 'I am Denis de Morbecque, a knight of Artois; but I am in the service of the king of England, because I have forfeited my lands in France.' 'Then,' replied John, 'I yield myself to you,' and as he spoke he tossed his right-hand glove to the knight as a token of submission. He was taken to the prince of Wales, and that same evening the Black Prince waited upon his royal prisoner at supper as if he had been his own father, and endeavouring to console him by saying, 'Ah, noble sir, though it was not God's Will that you should win the day, yet the prize of valour is yours, since every Englishman saw that none bore himself so bravely as you.'

John was first carried to Bordeaux, but the next spring he was conveyed to England, and made his entry into London upon a white horse, whilst the prince rode by his side on a small black palfrey. Nominally he was a prisoner in the Savoy Palace, but he was treated as a distinguished guest. The greater number of the numerous prisoners were sent back to France on the promise that they would speedily remit their ransom.

The alarm of the inhabitants of Paris was great when the fugitives from Poitiers, with the Dauphin at their head, returned with the report that the king was in the hands of the hated English. Very little help was to be expected from the Dauphin; he was but nineteen, weak and timid, and was known only as having invited the friends of the king of Navarre to the fatal dinner at Rouen and having given the signal for flight at the battle of Poitiers.

But Paris was ready to protect itself. Etienne Marcel, 'prévôt des marchands,' or the chief magistrate of the city, gave orders for the defence. Chains were forged to prevent any surprise by the English at night. The walls were raised, and on them were placed the few cannon which Paris possessed. And not only was the old city on the island in the Seine thus fortified, but walls were built round the suburbs, which had by this time extended far on each side of the river. These precautions required a long time for their completion, and in the meantime Marcel took advantage of the condition of the country to endeavour to obtain from the Dauphin certain important privileges for the lower orders. The States-General were assembled at Paris a month after the fatal battle of Poitiers. The nobles were for the most part prisoners. The bishops did not appear. The Dauphin heard the complaints brought forward, but, not being king, he could do nothing to remedy them, and therefore went away to Metz to receive his uncle the emperor Charles IV. of Germany, whilst the queen mother departed for Dijon to arrange a family marriage. The country was then left to govern itself. A frightful time followed. When the barons released from captivity in England returned to France to collect their ransom, they were obliged to extort it from the peasants. The poor people, in their
despair, left their homes and thronged to Paris, and behind them came troops of disbanded soldiers, pillaging and killing, and even torturing the unhappy peasants, who had nothing more to give. The Dauphin dismissed the States-General when he found the difficult questions which were under discussion, but they were summoned again in February of the next year (1537). Then Robert le Coq, bishop of Laon, a friend both to the king and the people, endeavoured to bring about an amicable settlement of public affairs. A list of grievances was presented to the Dauphin, with an address from the States-General. The Dauphin was advised to fear God, and to honour Him in honouring His ministers. He was warned that he should send far from him the wicked, and listen not to the counsels of the young, simple, and ignorant; and, in order that the necessary reforms should be carried out, it was proposed that a committee of thirty-six persons should be nominated by the States to aid the Dauphin with their advice when the assembly was not sitting. A kind of constitutional government was, in fact, planned, which would entirely put a stop to the sovereign's absolute authority. If these proposals were agreed to, the States promised to raise and support by a subsidy a body of 30,000 men, to be commanded by officers chosen by themselves.

The Dauphin signed the ordinance, but secretly he procured from his father a refusal to ratify it, and then, supported by his nobles, who urged him to resist the encroachments of the citizens, he forbade his subjects to pay the taxes which the States had voted. Etiene Marcel remonstrated, and the Dauphin revoked the prohibition. His weakness was fatal to himself and to his people. None could tell whom to obey.

Marcel and his friends, fearing the power of the nobles, now took a step which was destructive to their own honour. On the night of the 8th or 9th of November they released Charles of Navarre by force from his prison, brought him to Paris, and allowed him to make a public address to the people from a kind of pulpit outside the church of St. Germain des Prés. The Dauphin was present. With an insidious gentleness the king of Navarre addressed him. ‘Why,’ he asked, ‘had he been distrusted? Was he not French both on his father’s and his mother’s side? Was he not even nearer to the crown than the king of England?’ So long and so eloquent was the address that the citizens of Paris allowed their supper-hour to pass in listening, and when he concluded all were prepared to look to him as their leader. The next day the young Dauphin made an address, but it was less exciting than that of the king of Navarre, and, besides, the people had faith in the power of Charles the Bad; they thought he could deliver them from the brigands. Civil war was imminent.

The Dauphin about this time again had recourse to the fatal
expedient of altering the current coin. The very day after the order
was issued Marcel and a crowd of his followers, wearing red and
blue hoods, the colours of the town, forced their way into the apa-
ments of the prince, with whom they found his chief advisers, the
marshals of Champagne and Normandy. Roughly addressing him,
they called upon him to restore order in the kingdom. The Dauphin
replied, with more boldness than usual, 'I would do so willingly if
I had the means, but those who possess the revenues of the country
are the persons to take charge of it.' Angry words followed, and
at length Marcel, turning to his followers, exclaimed, 'Do your
business quickly,' and instantly the men threw themselves upon the
unhappy marshal of Champagne and killed him close to the Dauphin's
couch. The marshal of Normandy shut himself up in an adjoining
closet, but he also was taken and killed. The Dauphin was alone; all
his officers had fled. 'Save my life,' he exclaimed to Marcel. The
provost replied that there was nothing to fear, and giving him one
of the red and blue hoods bade him protect himself by the city
colours. Marcel then left the palace and proceeded to the Place de
la Grève, where a mob was assembled. Addressing them from a
window, he told them that those who had been killed were traitors,
and demanded if they would support him. Many assented, crying
out that they would be his in life and in death; and Marcel trium-
phantly returned to the unfortunate Dauphin, to assure him that there
need be no anxiety. What had been done was to avoid a greater evil,
and it was the will of the people. He had only to say that he
approved. The Dauphin could not but submit, and four days after
he was obliged to admit the king of Navarre to his intimacy, and
by the command of Marcel and Robert le Coq dine with him
every day.

Marcel thought he had gained the support of the king of Navarre,
but he had lost that of the States-General. Many of the deputies
quitted Paris, determined no longer to take part in a government
which had fallen into such hands, and when the Dauphin retired to
Compiègne the nobles also gathered round him.

At this crisis a terrible evil burst upon the afflicted country.
The brigands had become a powerful force and spread themselves
over the country. The citizens of Paris dared not allow the bells of
the churches to be rung except once in the evening, lest they might
fail to hear the approach of the lawless bands; and it is said that they
made a votive offering to the church of Notre Dame of a wax taper
the length of the circuit of the city.

The alarm was even greater in the provinces. There the peas-
ants dared not sleep. On the banks of the Loire they passed the
night on the little islands near the river, or in boats anchored in the
middle of it. In Picardy the inhabitants dug pits in which to hide
themselves. In other places they took possession of caverns which appear to have been formed in the Norman times, and which consisted of galleries with chambers on each side, and a well and shaft in the centre admitting both air and water. Here the women and children hid themselves whilst the men stole cautiously out to see if their enemies were near. But famine overtook them, and then in their turn the peasants became robbers and attacked the nobles. The proud barons had laughed at the peasant when they oppressed him; they had called him Jacques Bonhomme; and now Jacques gave his name to the most frightful peasant insurrection which has ever been known. The Jacquerie has become a general name for the massacre of the rich landowner by the poor cottager. The feudal castles were pillaged and burnt, and the savages murdered not only the barons but their wives and children, and whilst stained with the blood of their victims dressed themselves in the splendid robes which had been worn by them. The nobles, without any distinction of party, united as one man against these atrocities. Charles of Navarre invited the principal peasant leaders to a conference, and then seized them, and crowned him whom they called their king with red-hot iron. But Marcel could not afford thus to make an enemy of the Jacquerie, and, encouraged and supported by him, the peasants besieged Meaux, where the wife of the Dauphin, with the duchess of Orleans and about 300 ladies of rank, had taken shelter. A horrible massacre seemed every moment impending, when some English knights who were in the neighbourhood, headed by the Captal de Buch, hearing of the danger to which the ladies were exposed, rode gallantly to Meaux, and attacking the insurgents enabled the besieged citizens to make a successful sally and finally to succeed in utterly routing the peasants.

Then came the triumph of the nobles, and cruelly was it exhibited. The peasants were hunted down like wild beasts in every direction, and in the course of a few weeks the quietness of desolation reigned in the disturbed districts, whilst the Dauphin and his nobles encamped with a large army before the walls of Paris, where Marcel and his party still held sway.

The king of Navarre, who was then at St. Denis, treated secretly with the Dauphin, and was offered 400,000 florins if he would undertake to compel Paris and Marcel to yield, whilst at the very same time he was receiving large sums every week from Marcel for the payment of his troops. Marcel, indeed, was always on the road to St. Denis to consult with Charles of Navarre, and yet the Navarrese soldiers were devastating the country up to the walls of Paris. The citizens grew suspicious and gave him notice that they were resolved to chastise the Navarrese. They made a sortie accordingly in the direction of St. Cloud, and without having seen an enemy were
returning very weary—for the weather was hot (it was the 22nd of July)—dragging their swords and having unloosened their visors, when a body of about 400 men suddenly appeared in the road and fell upon them. The citizens fled, but 700 were killed before they could reach the gates. The blame was thrown upon Marcel. It was thought he had been treacherous and given notice to the enemy, and his life was in consequence in the greatest danger. He had but one resource left—to give up everything to the king of Navarre—himself, and Paris, and the kingdom if he could.

By a secret treaty with Charles the Bad it was agreed that on the night of the 31st of July the keys of the city should be delivered up. The agreement, however, was not kept so secret but that it was suspected, and Jean Maillart, one of the sheriffs of Paris, who desired an alliance with the Dauphin, prepared to defeat it. A little before midnight on the appointed night Maillart and two of the chief leaders of the Dauphin’s party were at the Porte St Antoine, by which the Navarrese were to be admitted. Here they found Marcel with the keys in his hands. Maillart accosted him: ‘Etienne, Etienne, what dost thou here at this hour?’ ‘What is that to thee?’ replied Marcel. ‘I am here to guard the city, which is in my charge.’ ‘By Heaven it is not so!’ exclaimed Maillart. ‘Thou art here for no good purpose. See,’ and he turned to his friends, ‘he has the keys of the gates in his hands; he would betray the city!’ ‘Thou liest!’ exclaimed Marcel. ‘Nay, traitor, but thou liest!’ replied Maillart, and he struck Marcel with his weapon, at the same time calling out, ‘Death, death to him and to his followers! they are traitors all!’ The unhappy provost was felled to the ground and killed with six of his followers, the rest being made prisoners.

The next morning Maillart summoned a public assembly and related the events of the night. Loud were the expressions of thankfulness, and when, two days afterwards, the Dauphin entered Paris leaning upon Marcel’s murderer, the acclamations and rejoicings were yet more vehement.

But with all this appearance of satisfaction the people had but little confidence in the Dauphin. His tall, spare form, his pale complexion, and long, melancholy face were displeasing to them. They expected nothing from him. He knew neither how to love nor how to hate. Everything was borne with the same air of indifference. On the day of his entry into Paris a citizen came up to him and said with an oath, ‘If they had listened to me, sire, you would never have entered Paris; but the people will do little for you.’ A nobleman standing near would have killed the man on the spot, but the Dauphin stopped him and replied quietly, ‘I can scarcely believe you, sir.’

Paris had been nearly starved before; it was in no better condi-
tion now. The king of Navarre stopped the communications with the provinces, and the peasants who had sought safety in the city were unable to return to their homes. The English, too, were adding to the general misery. They established themselves where they thought fit, and there was no one to oppose them; and at length, in utter despair, the Dauphin and the king of Navarre agreed to a peace, which, though disadvantageous to the Dauphin, would at least give breathing-time to the country. But peace was not in store for France, for at this time news arrived from London that the captive king John had made a treaty, ceding to England at least one-half of his dominions; and the Dauphin, roused from his apathy, not only refused to acknowledge the dishonourable treaty, but assembling the States-General at once declared war with England. Edward III. took the field with the full intention of conquering France, but he desired also to make war comfortably. The English carried with them carriages, mills, forges, ovens, and all kinds of movable workshops. They even furnished themselves with packs of hounds for the chase, and skilful with which they might fish in the rivers in Lent.

There was some reason indeed for these preparations. France was a desert, no crops having been sown for three years.

Landing at Calais on the 28th of October, 1359, the English army marched in the midst of rain and mud to Rheims. There Edward had set his heart upon being crowned, but seven weeks passed whilst he was besieging the city, and then he gave up the attempt and marched into Burgundy. The duke of Burgundy purchased the neutrality of his dominions for 200,000 gold crowns, and the English retired and encamped near Paris. 'From the Seine to Étampes,' says a contemporary eye-witness, 'there was not at that time a man to be seen.' Everyone had taken refuge in the suburbs of Paris, and from the heights the smoke of the burning villages in the environs was visible. Yet Edward dared not attack the city; why is not known. He moved his troops towards the Loire, promising them that they should return and plunder Paris in the autumn. But before the autumn arrived his plans were entirely changed. The English soldiers were wearied out with privation and inactivity, and a terrific tempest which broke upon them at Chartres utterly subdued their spirit. Edward, touched by their sufferings and by the misery of France, made, it is said, a vow to restore peace. On the 8th of May, 1360, a treaty was concluded at Bretigny by which the province of Aquitaine and four counties adjoining Calais were ceded to England in full sovereignty, whilst the ransom of king John was fixed at three millions of crowns. Edward of England, on his part, renounced his claim not only to the crown of France, but also to the ancient possessions of the Plantagenets north of the Loire.
This treaty excited the utmost joy in Paris. The Dauphin and the English commissioner went together to the church of Notre Dame to swear to its observance. The bells of the churches pealed forth merrily. The clergy ordered the Te Deum to be sung. Everyone was thankful except those who, like the armourers, had made fortunes by the war.

The provinces given up to England had no wish, however, to remain English. The people of Rochelle expressed the general feeling when they said, 'We shall submit to the English with our lips, but never with our hearts.' France had in fact become one great farm, worked for the benefit of England. The people laboured, but it was only to pay the prodigious sum demanded for the king's ransom.

The first instalment could scarcely have been raised but for the sacrifice made by the king in permitting the marriage of his young daughter Isabelle to the son of the ferocious Galeazzo Visconti, duke of Milan. Instead of receiving a dowry with the little princess, the duke, who thought the marriage would render him more respectable in the eyes of the Italians, consented to give one, and the sum thus obtained was paid to England.

At length John was set free, and on the 13th of December made his joyful entry into Paris. But the troubles of his reign were not over. The terrible plague, the Black Death, reappeared, and the queen was among its first victims. The young duke of Burgundy, her son by her first marriage, was also struck down by it, and John then asserted and made good his claim to the duchy, which he bestowed upon his youngest son, Philip—afterwards known as duke Philip the Bold—as a recompense (so it was expressly stated in the charter) for the courage and filial devotion shown by the prince in defending his father at the battle of Poitiers.

It was not long after this that prince Louis, John's second son, who had been left as a hostage at Calais under the treaty of Bretigny, became weary of his confinement and escaped. John's sense of honour was deeply wounded by this act. He surrendered himself again as a prisoner to England, and arrived in London in January 1364. Fetes, dinners, and suppers were prepared for the popular captive, but in the midst of these entertainments John was taken ill, and after a short period of suffering died at the Savoy Palace on the 6th of April, at the age of forty-five. Edward III. gave him a sumptuous funeral at St. Paul's, on which occasion, we are told by an eye-witness, that 4,000 torches, twelve feet high, and 4,000 wax tapers were burnt.
CHAPTER XXIV.

CHARLES V., LE SAGE (THE WISE).

A.D. 1364-1380.

The young king Charles V. was, it has been said, born old. His health was bad, owing to having taken poison, supposed to have been administered through the agency of Charles of Navarre. A German physician had stopped the progress of the poison at the time by opening an issue in the arm, but Charles was told that whenever the issue should close, his life could not be prolonged fifteen days. This anticipation of almost sudden death at any moment doubtless tended to give him the grave, thoughtful character which gained for him the name of Le Sage. War, so far as regarded his personal efforts, was an impossibility to him. He had a swollen hand and could not hold a lance. He never rode on horseback, and was the first king who could be represented in his effigy as seated. His pleasure was study and the company of learned men. He lived either at Vincennes, the Louvre, or his noble palace or Hôtel de St. Pol, built in the centre of a large garden, almost a park. This palace, a perfect labyrinth of apartments, wainscoted with rare woods, and the chimney-pieces supported by colossal statues of men and animals, was reserved for the princes of the blood royal, and kitchens, larders, bake-houses, and all things needful for a perfect royal establishment were provided in a manner to suit the customs of the age. Here, but for the unhappy condition of the country, Charles le Sage might have lived an enjoyable and useful life. As it was, he could never have known a really peaceful moment, but he nevertheless contrived, according to the modern French expression, to deserve well of his country. Seated in his study, he defied armies and insurrections, signed treaties which ruined England, and interfered in the affairs of the papacy to the aggrandisement of France.

The country had then three evils to contend with—the English, the Navarrese, and the companies of hired soldiers who infested the provinces. The first act of Charles was to choose able provincial governors and valiant military leaders. Languedoc was given to his brother Louis of Anjou; Philip was confirmed in his duchy of Burgundy; the centre of France Charles was to protect himself. But he needed an arm, a sword, and such could only be found amongst the Bretons.

Bertrand du Guesclin, the son of a poor Breton gentleman, had from his childhood been marked out for distinction, yet certainly
not from any personal attractions. He was of middle size, of a brown complexion, and had a flat nose, green eyes, wide shoulders, long arms, and small hands. Rough and rude, sometimes fighting with his companions, sometimes teasing and hurting them, he was at one time shut up by his father; yet it was decided that he must ultimately be famous, for a nun had predicted that he would live to be a valiant knight, and such also had been the prophecy of a certain demoiselle Tiphaine, whom the Bretons deemed a sorceress, but whom Du Guesclin nevertheless, when he came to man's estate, chose to marry.

And brave Du Guesclin unquestionably was. But he was besides shrewd and clever in his plans; he knew how to foresee and to provide for emergencies, and preferred to conquer by artifice rather than by arms. France could scarcely have had a better leader. The chosen champion of a king who could not do battle for himself, Du Guesclin's first achievement was warlike. He subdued the Navarrese, and then turned his attention to the war which was still being carried on in Brittany. The English were supporting Montfort, and the French king sent 1,000 lances, under Du Guesclin's charge, to the aid of Charles of Blois. They were defeated at the famous battle of Auray. Du Guesclin being unhorsed, was taken prisoner, and Charles of Blois was killed. Montfort shed tears over the body of his rival, for he regarded him as a saint. The haircloth worn by Charles beneath his cuirass redeemed many offences in his eyes, and it was remembered now that the count of Blois had fought not for himself, but out of regard for his wife, who by birth was the heiress of Brittany. The king of France, who took no pleasure in war, now made a treaty with Montfort, and persuaded the widow of Charles of Blois to rest contented with the duchy of Penthièvre and some other lesser territories, and having thus secured the allegiance of Brittany turned his attention to more vital affairs.

The long war had inflicted grievous wounds on the country, and general measures for the benefit of the people could not be carried out; but individual cases of protection to the oppressed tended to restore confidence in the government. Little, however, could be done whilst the Free Companies, first brought into the country by the English, were ravaging the provinces. Fortunately for France a civil war in Spain broke out about this time between Pedro the Cruel, king of Castile, and his illegitimate brother Henry of Trastamare. Pedro had rendered himself hateful by his tyranny and by the murder of his wife, Blanche of Bourbon, the sister of the queen of France. The members of his family dreaded a similar fate, and Henry of Trastamare fled across the Pyrenees, and appearing at the court of Charles, entreated his aid in deposing the tyrant.

Charles was only too glad to listen to the proposal. It gave him the opportunity of ridding the country of the Free Companions.
But a leader was needed, and Du Guesclin was still in prison. Charles paid his ransom on condition of his undertaking the expedition against Spain.

In December 1365 Du Guesclin entered Catalonia, and Pedro—forsaken by his friends and subjects—took refuge at the court which the Black Prince had established at Bordeaux.

The prince was persuaded to support his cause, for Don Pedro was willing to promise everything which was asked. He had amassed treasure, so he declared, kept in secret places known only to himself, and he could easily pay the troops, and if the prince would aid him the province of Biscay should be the recompense,—a tempting offer, for the possession of Biscay would give the English an entrance into the defiles of the Pyrenees, and be in fact a Calais for Spain.

The prince of Wales had more men than he needed; the difficulty was to feed them. When, on the 3rd of April, 1367, his army reached the Ebro between the villages of Najara and Navarre, he found himself in a country so destitute that a small loaf of bread could only be purchased for a florin. Henry of Trastamara was encamped on the opposite side, and was advised to keep the English in their present position by guarding the river and so starving them out. But his Spanish pride forbade this, and the battle began. Sir John Chandos commanded the English, and by his cool bravery gained the day. Three times Henry of Trastamara rallied his troops, but still in vain. The Spaniards fled. The Free Companies fought bravely, but all were killed or taken captive, and Chandos for the second time made the noble Du Guesclin his prisoner.

The Black Prince remained as a conqueror in Spain, waiting till Pedro the Cruel should pay the sum he had promised from his hidden treasures. It was a weary time. The heat of the climate was overpowering; illness broke out, and the English troops, wrathful at not receiving their pay, began to pillage. The prince of Wales, in despair, told them at last that they must seek their living elsewhere; but elsewhere could only mean France, and they accordingly entered that country, still pillaging, and saying that the prince had authorised them thus to pay themselves.

The only hope for France was that about this time Du Guesclin was set free on payment of a large ransom. Sir John Chandos declared that he would never have consented to this, but it happened one day that the prince of Wales being in a merry mood, and in the company of Du Guesclin, said to him, "Well, Bertrand, how do you get on?" "Excellently," was the reply. "Since I have been here I have discovered that I am the first knight in Christendom, for I am told by everyone that you do not dare to put me to ransom." The prince was piqued. "You think, then, Sir Bertrand," he said, "that it is because of your bravery that we keep you? Nay, but pay
100,000 francs and you are free.\(^1\) The sum was equal to a million of the present day, but Du Guesclin undertook to raise it. The kings of Castile and France, he believed, would help largely; but if they did not he was, as he said, certain that every woman in France who knew how to spin would work till the money was obtained. His confidence was not disappointed. The prince of Wales contributed 20,000 livres; Sir John Chandos offered his whole fortune. Du Guesclin, set free on parole, had actually collected the sum required, and was returning to Bordeaux, when he met ten poor knights also bent on obtaining a ransom. The kind-hearted knight gave them all that he had and went back to his captivity. But he did not long remain in it, for the king of France himself paid the sum desired, and Du Guesclin was once more at liberty.

And now the king felt that the time had arrived when he might really hope to free his country from the scourge of the English. The Black Prince was ill and unable to take the command of his forces, and Charles took advantage of this to renew his support of Henry of Trastamare. The armies of Pedro and Henry met at Montiel, Henry being aided by the Free Companies under Du Guesclin. Pedro was defeated and took refuge in the castle, and it is said that Henry of Trastamare having visited his brother in the night, was violently assaulted by him, and that in the struggle Henry seized Pedro's poniard and in self-defence killed him. Whatever may have been the precise circumstances under which Pedro met his death, it is certain that Henry was now recognised as the sovereign of Castile, and Charles V., having nothing further to fear from Spain, no longer hesitated to defy England.

On the 25th of January, 1369, the prince of Wales received at Bordeaux a doctor of civil law and a knight who came on the part of the king of France to summon the Black Prince to Paris, there to answer before his peers for certain molestation suffered by the prelates, barons, and knights of the Marches of Gascony. The prince, sick and suffering, listened to the message, and then taking up the words spoken under similar circumstances by his ancestor William the Conqueror, replied, 'We will go, but it will be with our helmet on our head and with 60,000 men in our company.' This answer was accepted quietly at the moment, and the French king even sent the Black Prince fifty pipes of good wine, which, however, were not accepted. But this appearance of goodwill was only temporary. Charles was no sooner fully prepared than he insultingly sent an open defiance to the king of England by the hands of one of the servants of his kitchen. At the same time he gave the command of his forces to his three brothers, the dukes of Burgundy, Anjou, and Berry, enjoining them on no account to engage in pitched battles, but to

\(^1\) Another account says that Du Guesclin himself fixed the sum for his ransom.
harass the enemy by skirmishes and sieges. The plan was wise, but irritating to both parties, and the principle was carried so far on the part of the French that on one occasion the duke of Bourbon saw his mother, who was also the mother of the queen of France, carried away on horseback by the enemy, and actually pass in front of his army, and yet he dared not risk a battle to save her, but was obliged to content himself with proposing a duel. It was a period of terrible suffering for the country. The English advanced to the gates of Paris, and the young king from his Hôtel de St. Pol saw the flames of the burning villages which he did not dare to aid; whilst the Black Prince, though sinking under a mortal disease, found strength to besiege and take Limoges, and order a massacre of every man, woman, and child in the city. Yet upon the whole the French were gaining ground. The redoubtable Sir John Chandos had died not very long after war was declared, and in the following year, 1370, soon after the taking of Limoges, the prince of Wales allowed himself to be persuaded by his physicians that it was needful to return to England, to breathe what a modern French writer, terms his native fog.

The French, under the command of Du Guesclin, now created constable of France, were then enabled to reconquer all the country between the rivers Loire and Gironde. The allegiance also of Brittany was regained. The Bretons were French in their sympathies, and when Du Guesclin appeared with an army in Brittany, the people deserted their duke, Jean de Montfort, who was obliged to flee to England, and once more ranged themselves on the side of France. Du Guesclin was accompanied in this expedition by Olivier de Clisson, a fierce knight who so hated the English that he had sworn never to give them quarter. From this circumstance he acquired the surname of the Butcher.

In July 1373 John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who had married the eldest daughter of Don Pedro, the late king of Castile, took the command of the army which Edward had raised for his final invasion of France. But the system of harassing the enemy whilst avoiding pitched battles, which had before been tried by Charles, proved again successful; and Edward at length accepted the mediation of the Pope, and a truce for two years was proclaimed. This cessation of hostilities was greatly prized by Edward's own subjects. To use the words of Michelet, 'it was incredibly difficult to make England like war.' The nation was already tired of it after the battle of Crécy. When, in order to pique their honour, the members of the House of Commons were asked, 'What, would you wish for perpetual peace?' they replied naively, 'Yes, certainly, we would accept it.' It had been thought that everything would be

1 Michelet.
finished when Calais was taken. Then came the victory at Poitiers, which quite turned the people's heads. They fancied that the king's ransom would prevent their ever being called upon to pay taxes. Then, when the war was carried into Spain, they imagined that Don Pedro's hidden treasures would make up for all their losses; but when they found that they had gained neither money nor territory they lost all patience, and the king was obliged to yield to the public clamour and bring the war to an end, at least for a time.

Both the Black Prince and his father died before the truce expired, and Charles refused to renew it, hoping to take advantage of the difficulties in which England would probably be placed under the long minority of Richard II. He owned, indeed, that Edward III. was a gallant prince, and ordered a religious service for him in the Sainte Chapelle; but four days after Edward's death the Spanish ships of Henry of Trastamare, with French troops on board, were threatening the coasts of England. Rye was reduced to ashes, Sussex and the Isle of Wight were ravaged, and the fleet then proceeded to attack Dartmouth and Plymouth, and in returning did injury to Southampton and Dover.

It was plain that the great leaders and defenders of England were no more. In the reign of Edward III. no one would have dared to undertake such an expedition.

Charles was at this time as successful in negotiation as in war. He married his brother Philip, duke of Burgundy, to the young heiress of the count of Flanders. This was the beginning of that powerful dukedom of Burgundy and Flanders which in after years was able to rival France both in military and political influence. The marriage was a great check to English ambition, for it had long been thought that the heiress of Flanders would marry one of the sons of Edward III., and finding themselves losing ground, the English government sought to strengthen themselves by the friendship of the king of Navarre. Charles the Bad accepted the offer of a treaty, but wishing to deceive the king of France, he sent his son, the comte de Beaumont, to Paris whilst it was under discussion. The king had, at that time, reason to suspect a plot against his life, and one of the comte de Beaumont's attendants, De Rue, a Navarrese nobleman, was arrested as being implicated in it. De Rue confessed that Charles of Navarre had planned to poison the king by the help of a young physician from Cyprus, who would, it was thought, easily obtain an introduction to Charles and please him, because he spoke Latin beautifully and was very argumentative.

Horrified at this revelation, the comte de Beaumont withdrew his fealty from his father and ordered the governors of the fortresses which the king of Navarre held in Normandy to deliver up all except Cherbourg to France; and Charles of Navarre, finding the war
likely to be unsuccessful in spite of the English alliance, was at length induced to purchase peace by the cession of several of his strongest castles. France was thus still further strengthened, whilst her territories were enlarged.

This sudden restoration of the down-trodden kingdom was regarded as a kind of miracle. Princes and foreigners crowded to Paris to look at and admire the sovereign who had conquered by determining not to fight; and when there the buildings which Charles in such troubled times had found the means to erect filled them with still greater surprise. The magnificence of the vast Hôtel de St. Pol, and the splendid hospitality which was there shown them, entirely deceived them as to the state of the kingdom. The sires de la Rivièrè, the clever minister of Charles and the most accomplished gentleman of his age, did the honours of the palace, exhibiting the galleries and libraries, and the buffets loaded with gold plate, and Charles was called the rich king. The time for which he had longed seemed at last to have arrived, and he well knew how to profit by it. His habits were regular and simple. He rose between six and seven in the morning, and gave audience to all, even the lowest, who wished to speak with him. He then dressed and attended mass at 8 o'clock, after which he devoted himself to business till 10, when he sat down to his first regular meal, instruments of music being played whilst he partook of it. Foreign ambassadors and strangers of all kinds were then received for about two hours, and an hour of rest followed. The afternoon was spent with private friends, when the king often amused himself with looking at jewels, treasures, and curiosities. Vespers succeeded, and the evening was, in the summer, spent in the gardens, where merchants and tradespeople came to exhibit their goods. In winter, stories from the Bible, or books of philosophy and science, were read aloud. An early supper was often followed by some theatrical representation, and then the king retired to rest.

The philosophers in whom Charles most delighted were his astrologers, but astrology was not then the mere vain dream which it afterwards became; it was connected with experiments in science, and the astrologers of Charles’s court were men of great talent and able to give him wise counsels, which he as wisely followed.

Charles V. may be said to be the first French king who understood the value of books. An essay on the right of peace and war, called by the whimsical title of the ‘Tree of Battles,’ was written by his orders. His tutor translated Aristotle, and one of his great lawyers made a version of the Bible in the national tongue.

Yet, while thus restoring the greatness of his country, Charles le Sage took no steps to give his people a voice in its government. He convoked the States-General only once and substituted in their place what was called the Assembly of Notables, consisting of
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Deputies from some of the towns and the university, a few prelates, and the great officers of his household. His own government was so prudent that everyone submitted to it without murmuring, but it was no good education for the people as it kept them in the condition of children rather than of men.

The position of the church at this time was one of great degradation. The Pope had never dared, permanently, to return to Rome since Clement V., the slave of Philippe le Bel, had taken up his abode at Avignon. One, indeed—Urban V.—had returned for a short time, but he was afraid to remain on account of the popular disturbances. His successor was a little more fortunate, and actually did establish himself in the city, and died there; but immediately afterwards a great schism broke out. Two Popes were elected: one—Urban VI., the first chosen—kept possession of Rome; the other, Clement VII., being supported by Charles V., went to Avignon. As the Avignon Popes had always been entirely under French influence, and the benefices in France were bestowed solely according to the king’s will, Charles was by many persons bitterly reproached for having in this matter consulted his own interest, more especially as the greater number of European sovereigns owned the validity of Urban’s election, and the famous Catharine of Siena, regarded as an inspired saint, guaranteed it.

The last years of the reign of Charles were disturbed by the necessity of interfering to save his subjects in Languedoc from the oppression of his brother Louis, duke of Anjou, the governor of the province. The people having risen in insurrection, Charles was obliged to send commissioners with power to reform abuses; but his own unjust conduct in Brittany led to still greater troubles. He was bent upon annexing the duchy to the crown, and with this view summoned the expelled duke, Jean de Montfort, to appear before the Court of Peers, and on receiving no reply declared the duke’s dominions forfeited.

The indignant Bretons, both nobles and citizens, rose in arms. The duke, returning from England, was received with transport; his subjects waited for him on the shore, and some rushed into the water up to their knees to meet him. Even Jeanne, the widow of Charles de Blois, came to Dinan to welcome him. The best leaders in the royal army were Bretons, and one after another they now gave up their command. The constable Du Guesclin would fain have done so, but Charles could not afford to lose his services; and as he refused to fight in Brittany, he was sent to put down some lawless bands of English Free Companies who were ravaging the frontiers of Languedoc.

Whilst besieging the small town of Château Randon Du Guesclin was seized with an illness which proved fatal. Feeling the near ap-
proach of death, he raised himself on his couch, and taking in his hands his constable's sword, he looked at it with tears in his eyes and said, 'It has aided me in overcoming the enemies of my king, but it has brought me cruel foes of my own. To you'—and he turned to his friend the marshal de Sancerre—'I commit it, and solemnly I declare that I have never betrayed the trust which the king reposed in me when he confided it to me.' Then uncovering his head he kissed his sword, and to the old captains and officers who surrounded his bed he said, 'Forget not, in whatever country you may be fighting, that priests, women, and children are not your enemies.'

Olivier de Clisson received his final message. 'Monsieur Olivier, I feel death near and can say but little. Tell the king that I would fain have fought for him longer and turned every Englishman out of his kingdom; but he has good servants, who will work for him;—you, the first, Monsieur Olivier. I recommend to him my wife and my brother, and—farewell—I can no more.'

The garrison of Randon had promised to deliver up the town if it was not succoured, and, faithful to their word, the officers laid the keys on the coffin of the great captain. Du Guesclin was interred at St. Denis, with almost royal honours, amongst the tombs of the French kings.

Two months afterwards the symptoms which it had been foreseen would be the precursors of the king's death became evident. Charles did not deceive himself as to the result. He called around him his three brothers, and his brother-in-law the duke of Bourbon, and commending his young son to their care, and giving them many wise counsels as to the management of the kingdom, he died at the castle of Beauté-sur-Marne, the 16th of September, 1380, at the age of forty-four.

Joanne de Bourbon, the wife of Charles V., died before her husband. She was a very graceful and accomplished woman, and the manners of the French court under her influence were greatly improved. But the advice given to the ladies of this age by a contemporary poet certainly gives a curious idea of the uncivilised habits even of the upper classes. Ladies are told to be neat in their dress, not to daub their fingers with their food, or make use of the table-cloth as a pocket-handkerchief. They are not to bounce into a room, but to give notice of their coming by a gentle cough. They are to walk in an orderly manner to church, and not to jump and run in the streets. Those who cannot read are to learn their psalters at home, so that they may be able to keep pace with the priests, but especially they are to refrain from stealing and telling lies.

Dress about this time underwent a great change. Hitherto all men in a respectable station of life had been accustomed to wear
hoods, which hung down the back, and the nobles had besides long flowing robes; but now the younger nobility adopted a short close-fitting jacket, with sleeves of a most extravagant size. An account sent in about this period for a dress prepared for Charles of Orleans, the brother of Charles V., describes the sleeves as having the music and words of a song inscribed upon them, the notes being marked by pearls and the words of the song embroidered. The gentlemen's boots of the period were intended to represent birds; the front projected in a sharp point like a beak, and the heel was lengthened out like a claw. The ladies carried on their heads large high horns, and on each side, instead of earrings, they wore false ears, which protruded so far that when they passed from one room to another they were obliged to move sideways. The fashions at last became so absurd that the king published an edict against them.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHARLES VI.

A.D. 1380-1461.

Though Charles V. on his death-bed had committed to his four brothers the care of his son, then only twelve years of age, he must have been well aware that the royal dukes were as ambitious and avaricious as the uncles of the young English king Richard II., who had come to his throne only three years before. The duke of Anjou, as the eldest brother, was of necessity named regent, but the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon were to share his authority, and the majority of the king was fixed at the early age of fourteen. The duke of Berri was not named by the king, but he was ultimately made governor of Languedoc. The duke of Anjou exhibited the baseness of his character even whilst his brother was breathing his last, for he hid himself in a room adjoining the death-chamber, and the moment the king was actually dead took into his keeping all the jewels, furniture, and plate, and seized also some treasures which Charles V. had, it was known, hidden in the walls of the castle of Melun, the precise spot being only known to the treasurer, who was now compelled to reveal it on the pain of instant death.

1 Froissart, from whose chronicles our chief knowledge of the events of this period is derived, was a Fleming, born at Valenciennes about 1337, and who died in 1410. He spent his life at the courts of the kings and feudal princes of France and England, and thus gained his information. But the true historian of Charles V. was a woman, Christine de Pisan, daughter of the king's astrologer.
The dukes took their nephew to Rheims for his coronation, but they would not allow him to pass through any town, lest he should hear complaints from the people; and though his entrance into Paris, on his return, was arranged with great splendour, fountains being made to flow with milk, wine, and rosewater, there was very little bread in the city, incendiary fires were desolating the country, and the people were loudly murmuring at the heavy taxes. The regent and his brothers were obliged to begin their administration by promises of their abolition. But the regent had no intention of keeping his word. One day a public crier appeared on horseback in one of the open squares and announced that some of the king's plate had been stolen, and a large reward should be given to anyone who would recover it. When he saw the crowd occupied with the news, he gave notice also that a new tax would be levied the next day on all articles exposed for sale. Then he rode off at full gallop. The following morning, the 1st of March, 1382, the collectors of taxes appeared in the market, and one of them began by demanding a payment from an old woman who had just sold a few cresses. A furious outcry burst forth, and in a very short time an open insurrection had begun. The people broke into the Hôtel de Ville and armed themselves with clubs and maces, and then proceeded to release the prisoners confined in the Châtelet. A promise from the court that the obnoxious tax should be abandoned induced them to lay down their arms, but they had no sooner done so than several of them were arrested, and, without trial, drowned in the Seine in the dead of night. As a natural consequence of this treachery the rebellion again broke out, and was only quelled by the skilful management of the advocate-general, Jean Desmarets, who was much beloved by the people, and who agreed with the insurgents that 100,000 francs should be paid to the covetous duke of Anjou, and that no further arrests should be made. Peace was then concluded between the government and the people.

Louis of Anjou had special reasons of his own for speedily bringing the French troubles to an end. He had been adopted by Joanna, queen of Naples, as her heir; and the queen being now dead, he was anxious to establish himself in his new dominions. The life of Joanna had been one of selfish wickedness. Her first husband, Andrea, son of the king of Hungary, had been murdered, and there was very little doubt that she was privy to the crime, and immediately afterwards she married her cousin, the prince of Tarento. A civil war, headed by Andrea's brother, king Louis of Hungary, followed. Joanna trusted to the support of Louis of Anjou, but his aid was delayed until too late to save her. She was taken prisoner by her enemies and ultimately smothered, and Louis of Anjou was left to make good his own claim. He had collected a
large army, and was enriched by the treasures which he had seized, when his brother Charles V. died. Men and money were, however, powerless against the enemies whom he had to encounter—an enervating climate, famine, and the hatred of the people whom he proposed to govern. Charles of Durazzo, a cousin of the late queen, and now the claimant of the throne, suffered these foes to do their work without a regular battle, and at the end of a few months men and means had alike vanished. The war-horses had died of hunger; the noble knights were mounted on asses; the duke had sold his plate, his jewels, even his crown, and at length, utterly broken down, died of a fever at Bari. His son inherited his claim and took the title of Louis II., king of Naples.

When Louis of Anjou left France, Philip, duke of Burgundy, became the chief ruler of the kingdom. Having married the heiress of Flanders, he was especially interested in quelling the insurrection which seemed almost chronic in that important province, and which was now carried on by Philip, the son of Jacob van Artevelde. The count eagerly sought the aid of his son-in-law, and the duke of Burgundy availed himself of the opportunity to give the young king his first experience of war.

Charles was by this time about fourteen years of age, and war was already his dream for the future, as hunting was his amusement for the present. Weak and excitable, it is said that his imagination had been fired whilst yet a boy by meeting in the chase a stag with a gilded collar round its neck, on which was inscribed 'Cæsar gave it me.' The incident impressed itself on his mind as a presage of victory, and when, on accompanying his uncle to Flanders, a great battle was gained by the French at Rosebecque, the young king placed in his escutcheon the wonderful stag, and chose the figure of a stag as a supporter for the arms of France. This battle of Rosebecque was fought on the 28th of November, 1382. The constable Olivier de Clisson commanded the French, and Philip van Artevelde the Flemings. Artevelde was amongst the slain, and with him fell a division of 8,000 citizens of Ghent, who were cut off to a man. The king's uncles led their nephew to the field of battle when the victory was gained, and made him look upon the hideous mass of dead bodies piled one upon another. 'It was he,' they said, 'who had gained the day, for he had given the signal for the fight, though he had been kept out of the action. Heaven had shone upon him, for the sun, after being obscured for five days, had streamed out upon the oriflamme the moment he had unfurled it.' The effect of this flattery was to harden the boy's heart against bloodshed, and especially to increase his indignation against those who in France, as well as in Flanders, had risen in insurrection against their lord; and on the return of the king and the dukes to Paris no less than 300 of the principal in-
habitants, accused of having taken part in the late disturbances, were executed. Amongst them was Jean Desmaretz, who had been instrumental in bringing about an agreement with Louis of Anjou, and who was a faithful servant of the crown as well as the friend of the people.

Two years after the victory at Rosebecque Louis, count of Flanders, died (1384), and his son-in-law Philip of Burgundy, generally known as Philip the Bold, succeeded in right of his wife to his ample dominions. He became, in fact, a powerful sovereign prince, owning not only Flanders, Artois, and part of Champagne, but also the duchy of Brabant. His eldest son had married a daughter of the duke of Bavaria, and this connection suggested the idea of an alliance between the young king and Isabella, or, as she is often called, Isabeau, a princess of the same family.

In order, however, that Charles might have a choice, a painter was ordered to take the likenesses of three princesses, daughters of the dukes of Bavaria, Lorraine, and Austria, and to bring them back to France for inspection. The Bavarian princess was the most beautiful, and the marriage being regularly arranged, Isabeau was brought in great state to Amiens. The ceremony was to take place at Arras, but Charles, fascinated by the charms of his intended bride, declared he would brook no delay, and they were accordingly married at Amiens on the 17th of July, 1385, the king being sixteen and the princess fourteen years of age. It had been the express wish of Charles V. that his son should ally himself with Germany, as a support against England; but the marriage proved most unfortunate. Isabeau was destitute of the qualities most to be prized in a woman, and was the source of infinite evil to France.

And now the duke of Burgundy proposed to himself an undertaking of the most arduous kind, nothing less than the conquest of England (1386). Peace had never really been made with the English. They still desolated the south of France and made their way into Castile. It seemed better to carry the war, if possible, into their own island, and the moment was propitious. The king, Richard II., was unpopular, and his subjects were on the point of rebellion. The country might be invaded and attacked before the approach of an enemy was perceived.

The preparations were prodigious. Not only were ships engaged for the troops, but a number of transport vessels were laden with wine, salt, meat, eggs, biscuits, hay, corn—everything, in fact, which could be needed for provisioning an army, besides, as we are told, a ready-made wooden city, cut and built in different portions in the forests of Brittany, and which, when set up, was to cover a space of three miles in diameter, and to be to the French what Calais was to
Charles VI. England. The materials are said to have filled seventy-two vessels. It was a grand idea, but the duke of Burgundy was not the king of France, and there were others to interfere with his projects. The duke of Berri, who cared nothing for the English expedition, occupied the king's attention by marrying his son to Charles's little sister, who was nine years old; then he made him travel so slowly that when he arrived on the coast the season was almost too far advanced to attempt crossing the Channel. The wooden city also was delayed, and on its arrival was found to be much injured. And in the meantime the English had become fully aware of their danger, and whilst the French soldiers were dismissed to ravage their own country the English fleet bore down upon the coast of Flanders and attacked, burnt, and captured a great part of the French fleet. A second attempt for the invasion of England was set on foot in the following year, 1387, but the constable De Clisson, who was to command the troops, was personally obnoxious to the duke of Brittany, and when the armament was on the point of sailing the duke decoyed him into a castle and made him pay a heavy sum for his liberty. His troops, deprived of their commander, dispersed, and the enterprise was again relinquished. It was in this year that Charles the Bad, of Navarre, met his death by a horrible accident. Being old and chilly, he wrapped himself in a cloth steeped in spirits of wine, and one of his servants sewed it up to his throat, and finding no scissors near at hand, burnt off the end of the thread with a lighted candle. The cloth, being very inflammable, burst out in a blaze, and the unhappy king of Navarre died a death of agony. The next year, 1388, an unsuccessful expedition was undertaken against the duke of Gueldres, as a punishment for his defiant behaviour to Charles, and this repeated failure so exasperated the people, who attributed every misfortune to the bad government of the dukes, that Charles was strenuously urged by the cardinal bishop of Laon to take the government upon himself.

Charles, now one-and-twenty, was quite willing to act upon his advice. The dukes of Burgundy and Berri were courteously thanked for the care they had taken of the king and the country, but it was intimated to them that their services would no longer be required, and in great disgust they quitted the court. On that same day the bishop of Laon was found dead, and there could be no doubt that he had been poisoned.

The change in the government was undoubtedly at first very advantageous. The constable De Clisson and several of the most able ministers of Charles V. were placed at the head of affairs, and for the next three years many measures for the public good were carried out, and a truce with England for three years was concluded. But whilst the government grew wiser the king grew more foolish.
His only delight was in extravagant fêtes and personal self-indulgence. His mind, which had been so early excited by being hailed as a conqueror at Rosebecque on a field strewn with the bodies of 26,000 dead, now required a stimulus of a different kind. His queen, Isabeau, had many times visited Paris, but she had still to make her first formal entrance. It was to be a fête especially for the people, and the Parisians entered into it with a gay forgetfulness of all but the amusement of the moment. The citizens for the most part dressed themselves in green. The king's attendants wore rose-colour. Young girls appeared at the windows with scarlet dresses and golden girdles. Milk and wine flowed from the fountains; musicians were stationed at each gate through which the queen was to pass. At certain broad thoroughfares children were stationed, to act 'mysteries' or scenes from sacred history. When the queen proceeded along the street of St. Denis, two little children representing angels were let down by a cord, and placed upon her head a crown of gold, singing as they did so—

Dame enclose entre fleurs-d-épis,
N'êtes-vous pas du Paradis?

And on arriving at the church of Notre Dame the people saw with astonishment a man with two torches in his hand descend by means of a cord from the great cathedral tower.

The king mixed with the crowd to enjoy the fêtes and the admiration bestowed on the beauty of his young wife; and in his extreme good-nature, knowing that there were many strangers in the city who regretted that they had never seen him display his skill in the jousts of the court, he took part in those of the city in order to please them.

The queen's fête was scarcely over when another was proposed in honour of Valentina Visconti, daughter of the duke of Milan, who became the bride of the duke of Orleans, the king's youngest brother. Valentina was beautiful and amiable, and Charles did well to welcome her to his kingdom, for she was destined to exercise more than any other person a beneficial influence upon him in the after years of his unhappy life.

At that time, however, all was apparently bright, and Valentina having received the honours prepared for her, the king prepared to make the tour of his southern provinces and enquire into the reports which had been brought him of the maladministration of his uncle the duc de Berri. He was unaccompanied even by the queen. He desired to be free to hear for himself the complaints of his people, and to enjoy himself without restraint. At Lyons he was received by four young girls on a dais covered with cloth of gold.
They conducted him to the palace of the archbishop, and there for four days games, fêtes, and balls occupied his attention.

At Avignon, the residence of the Pope, Clement VII, his reception was still more sumptuous, and he left Avignon entirely devoted to Clement, who had placed at his disposal a very large number of benefices, besides allowing him to nominate whom he pleased for the vacant archbishopric of Rheims.

On his arrival in Languedoc Charles heard nothing but complaints of the duc de Berri, but especially of the duke's treasurer, Betisac. This man confessed his crimes, but asserted that he had only acted under the orders of his master. As it was difficult to proceed against him, he was advised to avow himself a heretic, that his case might be reserved for the judgment of the Pope; he would then, it was suggested, be ultimately saved. The unhappy treasurer took the advice, and was burnt alive under the king's windows amidst the acclamations of the people, and thus the people of Languedoc were satisfied.

During this time a deep-laid plot was being formed for the purpose of upsetting the only authority which was able to save France from the consequences of its monarch's faults and follies. The 'marmousets,' or monkeys—such was the contemptuous epithet given to the chief ministers of the crown by the king's uncles—were hated by them with a deadly hatred, and the duke of Brittany shared the feeling. He could never forgive himself for having allowed the constable De Clisson to escape out of his hands, by accepting a ransom for him. Death would have relieved him of his enemy; why had he not availed himself of the opportunity? Now the temptation again presented itself.

Pierre de Craon, a relation of the duke, had been dismissed from the court, as he believed, at the instigation of the constable. Thirsting for revenge, he sought the support of the duke of Brittany, and with the duke's connivance returned to Paris by night, filled his house with his followers, and then with barred doors and closed windows waited for the 18th of June, 1392, when a grand gala was to take place at the royal residence, the Hôtel St. Pol. The constable, who was present at the fête, returned alone to his hôtel, which was in a quarter of the city where there were only large private houses, gardens, and convents. De Craon stationed himself with forty horsemen at the corner of one of the streets. When the constable reached the spot the torches were extinguished, and the ruffians threw themselves upon him, and De Craon, as he gave him what he hoped would be a deadly thrust, cried out, 'I am your enemy, Pierre de Craon!' The constable defended himself, leaning against the half-open door of a baker's shop. The baker had risen early, and was busy with his oven as De Clisson fell; half his body was within the
shop. The assassins dared not dismount to complete their work. They rode off, and the constable was left to the care of the baker.

The news of the attempted murder speedily reached the king's ears. Without waiting to dress himself or to summon his attendants, Charles threw a cloak around him and hastened to the spot. The constable had already recovered his consciousness, and the king, promising to revenge him, swore that never deed should be punished like that deed.

The murderer hid himself. The king's uncles said he was in Spain, but the king knew he was in Brittany. It was the duke who was the chief criminal, and Charles burned with the desire to invade Brittany. He summoned his uncles and bade them accompany him with their vessels; but they delayed.

The king was but just recovering from a fever; its effects were still visible. His uncles begged him to remain quiet, but he could not be persuaded. Impatiently mounting his horse, he led the way to Le Mans. There, being very unwell, he was induced to stay for three weeks; then thinking himself better, he unfurled his standard and rode forward with his troops. It was the middle of summer, the heat intense with the sultry oppressiveness of August. The king wore a coat of black velvet, and had a scarlet velvet cap on his head. The princes lingered behind him. They said it would cause less dust. Alone, Charles traversed the forest of Le Mans amidst trees of stunted growth, with the hot sun pouring down upon the open glades, and the heavy, heated mists covering the sandy distance. Twelve years before he had been riding in like manner alone in a forest, when the marvellous stag had appeared to him, with, as he supposed, its promise of victory and fame. He was young then, full of hope, his heart beating high with the prospect of future greatness. But how had all those hopes been disappointed! He had failed everywhere. He was not king even in his own dominions. His friend and counsellor was attacked and all but killed, and no one moved in his defence. Had it been a private gentleman who had thus suffered, twenty knights would have gathered around him offering him their swords. Charles had not even his relations. If they came to his support, it was only because he paid them. He had been obliged to restore Languedoc to the duc de Berri before he would move a step in his behalf, and his young brother, the handsome, clever Louis of Orleans, the husband of Valentina Visconti, who was winning the favour of all by his courtly manner, had even dared of late to place on his shield, amidst the fleurs-de-lis of France, the gilded serpent of Milan.

No! there was nothing to trust to, no one to depend upon; and yet what had he done to be thus hated? He would fain have exalted the condition of his people. If he was weak he was not
nature cruel, and his subjects knew it. Why should he thus be forsaken? Whilst thus traversing the forest, engaged, as may well be imagined, in a gloomy reverie, a man of wild, ferocious aspect, bare-headed and bare-legged, rushed from behind a tree, and seizing his bridle exclaimed, 'Stay, noble king, venture no further; thou art betrayed!' The attendants, hearing the cry, hastened forwards. The stranger was compelled to loosen his hold, and the king rode on; but still the man followed at a distance, shouting with increased energy, 'Thou art betrayed!'

It was now midday, and when the king emerged from the forest it was to enter on a sandy plain, upon which the sun poured down with almost vertical power. Two pages followed him, one bearing his lance, the other his helmet. The former fell asleep, and the lance, loosened from his grasp, fell upon the steel casque borne by his companion. The sudden noise and flash gave a shock to the king's already shaken nerves. He shuddered, drew his sword, and exclaiming 'Traitors! they would betray me!' attacked the unfortunate pages, and then spurred his horse against the duke of Orleans. The duke escaped, but four men were killed before the unhappy Charles could be checked. At length he was seized, disarmed, and laid upon the ground, and carried back to Le Mans in a state of unconsciousness.

On the third day his senses were restored, but he never entirely recovered his reason. Even in his best condition he was imbecile, and at times he was subject to fits of raving madness.

The king's unhappy condition almost necessitated the resumption of the regency by the duke of Burgundy. Two of the late ministers were at once imprisoned, and Olivier de Clisson was tried for embezzlement, his office as constable was taken from him, and he was exiled to Brittany.

In January 1393 the king's health suffered a serious relapse. A masked ball was given at the court on the occasion of the marriage of one of the ladies of the queen's household. Charles and five of the courtiers amused themselves by taking the disguise of savages, and wearing close-fitting dresses covered with pitch and tow, so as to resemble hair. The courtiers were chained together, but the king was free. The ball-room was lighted by torches (lamps and chandeliers being then unknown), and orders were given that the torch-bearers should station themselves against the wall. The king, musing himself in his disguise, was joking with his aunt, the young wife of the due de Berri, when the duke of Orleans, who had spent the evening elsewhere, and had probably drunk too freely, entered the room, and seizing a torch held it close to one of the savages, that he might discover who he was. The pitch and tow caught fire, and the unhappy men were instantly in flames, and wildly rushing about the room vainly tried to free themselves as the flames gained upon
them. The duchess of Berri seized the king, covered him with her dress, and prevented his moving. He was thus untouched, but four of the courtiers were burnt to death; the fifth, freeing himself at length from the chain which bound him, plunged into a large cistern of water placed in the buttery for the purpose of rinsing the drinking-cups, and thus escaped.

The king’s relapse after this horrible accident was very violent. Only Valentina of Orleans had any power over him; he knew her, called her his dear sister, insisted upon seeing her every day, and when she did not come to him would go and seek her. But this fascination, soothing though it was to the king, was not understood by the people. They attributed it to sorcery, and the duke of Burgundy took advantage of the outcry to banish Valentina from court, thus showing his enmity to her husband, Louis of Orleans, the only man in France who dared to be his rival. Three years passed, during which the king remained apparently hopelessly insane, but in 1396 a temporary restoration of reason was granted him, and he took advantage of it in a way which showed that a sense of right and a desire to work for the good of his people and of the Christian church was far more present to him than in the days when he had given himself up to frivolity and extravagance.

For twenty years Christendom had been distracted by the spectacle of two rival Popes; one holding his court at Rome, the other at Avignon. An endeavour was now made by Charles, supported by the University of Paris, to induce both the reigning Popes to relinquish their claims and allow a new election to be made. The Avignon Pope, Pedro de Luna, known as Benedict XIII., refused, however, to accede to the suggestion, and it was ultimately resolved by the church in France that the kingdom should be withdrawn from his authority. As he still remained firm a military force was sent against him, and for upwards of four years he was kept a close prisoner in his own palace.

It was during this same interval of reason that a definite peace was, in 1396, concluded with England, when Richard II. demanded the hand of the little princess Isabelle, then a child of only seven years of age. The betrothal was celebrated at an interview which took place between Charles and Richard at Calais.

This treaty afforded the nobles of France an opportunity of undertaking what they had long desired—a war against the Turks, who were rapidly spreading themselves over Europe. Already Bajazet their leader, had surrounded Constantinople, and now he threatened Hungary, and swore to give his horse hay on the altar of St. Peter at Rome. The duke of Burgundy obtained the command of the expedition for his son, the duke of Nevers, a young man of twenty. The army set forth in all the pomp of luxury. Banners
EXPEDITION AGAINST BAJAZET—DEPOSITION OF RICHARD II. 189

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standards, horsecloths, glittered with gold and silver; the tents were of green satin, the gorgeous plate needed for splendid entertainments was conveyed in separate carriages, and casks of exquisite wine were sent from the Danube, to be ready when required. Little was heard of the expedition till Christmas night 1396. Whilst Paris was in the midst of its rejoicings on the occasion of the sacred festival, a knight, booted and spurred, made his way into the royal presence at the Hôtel de St. Pol, and throwing himself on his knees before Charles, declared that he came as a messenger from the duke of Nevers, made a prisoner by the Turks. The army, with the exception of 28,000 men, had perished. The news was scarcely surprising; boasting folly had marked the expedition from its very commencement. The French believed that the Turks would never venture to encounter them, and Bajazet was only at six leagues' distance when the French general Bouicaut ordered the ears to be cut off of some persons in his camp who dared to prophesy the contrary.

The disaster was no sooner known than the king and the duke of Burgundy strove to appease the sultan by rich presents—a gold comfit-box, Norwegian falcons, linen from Rheims, tapestry from Arras representing the victories of Alexander the Great, and—what was far more important—the 200,000 ducats demanded for the young duke's ransom. The sultan, on his part, sent presents to the king of France, but they were a mere mockery—an iron club, a tambour, and some bows, the strings of which were formed of human intestines; and, that nothing might be wanting in insolence, the parting words of Bajazet to the duke of Nevers were, 'John, I know that thou art a great lord in thine own country, and the son of a great lord. Thou mayest one day wish to repair thine honour by assembling against me a powerful army. I might make thee swear not to do so; but no, I will exact no such oath. Attack me as thou wilt. But what I say to thee I say to the Christians who may follow thee—I am born always to fight and always to conquer.'

The failure of their Turkish expedition was a disgrace for the whole kingdom. The grief was universal. Only masses for the dead were heard in the churches, only mourning dresses seen in the streets. And scarcely had these outward signs of lamentation been put aside when again sorrowful news was brought to France. Richard II., the king's son-in-law, was deposed, and a prisoner in the power of the duke of Bolingbroke, now Henry IV. With Richard fell the hope of safety for France. The dream of peace was at an end, yet peace was the one thing which France needed.

The king's mind was again disordered, and his attendants had recourse for his recovery to means which savoured strongly of cronymancy. A young man said to have gained by his austere life power over the elements of nature was sent for from Languedoc,
His knowledge was declared to have been acquired by the study of a marvellous book called ‘Smagarad,’ the original of which had been given to Adam. For a hundred years Adam, it was said, had wept for the death of Abel. In his sorrow God sent him this book by the hand of an angel. It was to console him, to raise him from his degradation, to give him power over the stars. Such was the popular belief; but the book was not as successful for the cure of the unhappy Charles as for the consolation of Adam; and two hermits were then sought out, who made a potion of ground pearls, over which certain magical words were pronounced, and this was to be a certain cure. But it failed. The hermits attributed the failure to the sorceries of the duke of Orleans, and then the duke, in revenge, contrived that they should be beheaded, and their bodies quartered and hung up at the gates of Paris.

And all this time the poor king was quite aware of his terrible malady; and piteous were his tears and entreaties to be spared what he conceived to be the tormenting of an evil spirit. ‘If he who causes my suffering is amongst you, I pray him, in the name of our Lord, to cease and let me die.’

The hearts of the people were deeply touched by the misery of their king, for in his later years Charles, in his short intervals of reason, was always striving to do some good or remedy some evil; and the learned and popular preacher of the day, Jean Gerson, is defiance of the king’s relations, who were eagerly awaiting his death, publicly addressed himself to his insane sovereign with the wish, ‘O my king, mayest thou live for ever!’

When not too ill Charles was taken about to the different churches to hear mass, or else to be present at the representation of the sacred plays or mysteries by the Confraternity of the Passion in the Rue St. Denis, plays which were so popular that the priests were obliged to alter the hour of vespers to enable the people to attend them. When he could not go out pictures were given him for his amusement, and these at length took the form of cards. After the king began to play with them the court took up the idea, and cards became fashionable. Then the demand for them grew so great that a mode of printing instead of painting them was invented. Cards were indeed known before the time of Charles, but they were little in use. It is supposed that they originally came from the east. The four saints represented the four classes of the people; hearts were churchmen, or ‘gens de chœur’ (choirmen); spades, or pike-heads, were the nobles and the military; diamonds, or ‘carreaux,’ which were in fact square stones or tiles, were the workmen; and clubs—really representing trefoil or clover—were the peasants. The French had also names for the twelve court cards, the four kings being David, Alexander, Cæsar, and Charles or Charlemagne.
EUROPEAN SOVEREIGNS—JEAN SANS PEUR AND LOUIS OF ORLEANS, 191

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This game of kings and queens well represented the vicissitudes of the sovereigns of the time—Charles of France alternating between reason and insanity; Richard of England dethroned, and at length murdered by his cousin Bolingbroke; the German emperor, Wenceslaus, almost as mad from drunkenness as Charles was from natural infirmity; the Pope a prisoner in his palace, not having even wood enough for his kitchen; the sultan Bajazet captive, kept in an iron cage by Tamerlane the Tartar; and the dukes of Anjou, who called themselves kings of Naples, one after another, father, son, and grandson, striving to make good their claims, and all alike defeated and disgraced.

It would have seemed that the influence of kings was over. Yet Charles of France still retained the prestige attached to his position, and the free states in the north of Italy—Milan, Florence, and Genoa—called themselves his clients or dependents. Only in this way could Genoa escape subjection to the tyrannical Visconti, dukes of Milan.

Notwithstanding the king’s acknowledged incapacity no permanent regency had been appointed. The rival dukes of Burgundy and Orleans were respectively striving for the mastery, and civil war was an event which it might easily be seen could not be far distant.

The death of Philip of Burgundy, indeed, which took place in A.D. 1404, might have seemed an omen of peace, but the enmity survived in his son John, surnamed ‘Sans Peur,’ or the Fearless.

Philip the Bold had possessed many great qualities, but for his boundless extravagance he might have given prosperity to his country; but the insignificant-looking, awkward, taciturn John, the Fearless, was an unscrupulous ruffian on whose conscience lay no check either of religion or morality.

The hearts of the people were at first with the handsome and courteous Louis of Orleans. They pardoned his reckless profligacy in consideration of his winning manners. But when he brought upon them an increase of taxation, they (especially the Parisians) turned against him and sided with the duke of Burgundy, for Jean Sans Peur, who had vast possessions independent of France, could keep up his royal state without resorting to oppressive measures. He was a foreigner as well as a Frenchman, and he drew his money from Flanders and his men from Burgundy.

And money and men were still the great need of the country, for war was once more threatening. The little queen of England, the widow of Richard II., had been sent back to France by Henry IV., and Louis of Orleans took her under his protection, and declared himself the enemy of England. Philip of Burgundy, on the other hand, had upheld Henry, and his son now took the same part, and thus at every moment war with England might again break out, as the result of the antagonism of the French princes.
192 NEGLECT OF THE KING—PARTIES OF BURGUNDY AND ORLEANS.

Charles V.L.

Nothing told more for the Burgundian party than the sermon preached by an Augustinian monk against the queen and the duke of Orleans, the queen being present. The preacher inveighed against the profligacy and extravagance of the court, against dancing and fashion, fringes and large sleeves; and when afterwards called upon to deliver a discourse before the king, he told the unfortunate Charles that the taxes raised were no good to the country, that the king himself was clothed by the blood and tears of his people, that the duke (he used no other name) was cursed, and that God would without doubt cause the kingdom to pass into other hands.

The duke of Orleans at thirty years of age was indeed nothing but a boy in his devotion to luxury and frivolous amusements. His uncles had prevented him from mixing in politics, and now he had no taste for them. Money was the one thing he needed, and he asked for and obtained the government of the rich province of Normandy. This was in 1405. The fact was told to the king in one of his intervals of reason, and excited his suspicion. His attendants, who were the friends of the duke of Burgundy, assured him also that the queen and the duke neglected him when he was unconscious, that his servants were not paid, that his children were left without any care. It was all too true. The poor king had been left in the most disgraceful condition of dirt and misery; and now, when he became aware of it, he was easily persuaded to rid himself of his brother and trust to the protection of Jean Sans Peur.

The people were for the moment glad of the change. The duke of Orleans had lately caused a heavy tax to be laid upon them—a tax which the duke of Burgundy had openly declared should never be paid by any of his own subjects, and which had caused him abruptly to leave Paris.

The lower orders regarded the latter in consequence as their champion, and the queen, seeing cause for fear, escaped to Melun, accompanied by the duke of Orleans. She had given orders that the little Dauphin was to follow her next day, but Jean Sans Peur, who arrived in the meantime, prevented this. The child was detained in Paris, and in the absence of the king was called to preside at a council held by order of his cousin of Burgundy.

And now, for the space of two years, France might be said to be in a state of civil warfare. The two dukes assembled hostile forces and exchanged mutual defiance. But there was no regular battle, and at length the duke of Berri effected an apparent reconciliation between them. The position of the duke of Orleans was by this time greatly lowered; he had lost his one chief friend, the constable De Clisson; the people were growing weary of his folly, and they despised the queen, with whom he had become so closely allied as to excite the suspicion that her affections were given to him rather than to her husband.
It was in the autumn of the year 1407 that Louis of Orleans fell ill at his lovely Château de Beauné, built on the banks of the Marne, and overlooking the numerous wooded islets of the river. It was a time for serious thought, and the duke of Orleans, in spite of his frivolity, had always from time to time given indications of religious feeling. He had before this made some preparations for death—written a will full of Christian sentiments, and entreated that he might go to his tomb on a bier strewn with ashes.

Not the less, however, had he gone back to his sinful life when the fear of death had passed away; but now he had a strong presentiment that he was near his end, and to soothe this feeling he often visited the monastery of the Celestines, to which, when a child, his ‘gouvernante’ had taken him to repeat his prayers. Occasionally he spent several days together there, taking part in the services both by night and day. One night, whilst crossing the dormitory as he went to matins, he saw, or thought he saw, a figure of Death, and the vision was soon after confirmed by another. He imagined himself in the presence of God, about to receive the sentence of final judgment. The prior of the convent, to whom he confided the vision, believed in truth that it was a warning from Heaven, and bade him think of his soul and prepare to die.

But another, and in some respects a more surprising, vision soon after presented itself. Jean Sans Peur came to visit him. He was little expected, for only just before circumstances had occurred still further to embitter their mutual enmity; but Jean had been urged to this visit by the duke of Berri, and he came partly, it might be, to deceive his uncle, partly, probably, out of malicious curiosity to know his cousin’s actual condition.

The meeting was remarkably friendly, and when Louis of Orleans recovered and removed to Paris, the reconciliation was so far completed that on the 20th of November the duke of Berri persuaded his two nephews to receive the Eucharist together at the church of the Augustins, after which they partook of a sumptuous dinner given by their uncle, and parted with mutual embraces.

The duke of Orleans was doubtless sincere. He had shown evident signs of true repentance and amendment. He invited his cousin to dine with him the following Sunday, little knowing that there was no other Sunday in store for him on earth.

Quite recently there was still to be seen in Paris, at the corner of the old Rue du Temple, a light, elegant tower of the fifteenth century, in strong contrast with the ugly houses which surrounded it. In the time of Charles VI. this tower marked the enclosure of the Hôtel Barbette, occupied by queen Isabeau; for the queen objected to living at the Hôtel St. Pol, and had chosen this separate residence that she might amuse herself in it according to her own pleasure.
The gardens were large, and might even be called solitary, for they were shut in by houses which opened on the street.

Some weeks previous to the apparent reconciliation between the two dukes a house very near the Hôtel Barbette was hired by one of the partisans of the duke of Burgundy as a kind of magazine for the wine, corn, &c., which certain persons connected with the University of Paris received from the provinces, and which they had the privilege of selling without paying duty. And hither the duke of Burgundy brought by night a body of his followers.

The evening after the dinner given by the duke of Berri, Louis of Orleans, as was his wont, paid a visit to the queen at the Hôtel Barbette; he supped there and spent some time in gay conversation. Suddenly a message was brought that the king wished to speak with him. The duke, accompanied only by two squires mounted on one horse, and a few followers on foot with torches, immediately left the Hôtel Barbette, the rest of his attendants remaining behind, thinking that the duke would soon return. It was about eight o'clock, early for the court, but late for that retired part of the town, especially in the month of November. The duke, dressed in a black damask robe, rode behind his people, humming to himself, and playing with his glove, like a man with a light heart (these are the details given by an eye-witness); but as he reached the Porte Barbette a band of armed men rushed upon him and threw him upon the ground. Their leader struck him a deadly blow with an axe, and his companions then finished the fearful work by horribly mutilating him. The woman who by the light of the torches watched these proceedings from a window then saw a tall man in a red hood, which half covered his face, come out from the house occupied by the Burgundian party, and heard him say, 'Put out the torches and go; he is quite dead.' Some one gave the body another blow with a club; but there was no movement, only the duke's page, who lay dying by his master's side, after having in vain tried to save him, lifted himself up for a moment and cried, 'Ah, my lord and master!' And then there was silence in the street, broken only by the tread of the departing ruffians.

The remains of the murdered prince being found early the next morning, were carried to a neighbouring church. All his relations repaired to the church to sprinkle the dead body with consecrated water. Amongst them came the duke of Burgundy, who did not hesitate to stigmatise the murder as the most wicked and traitorous which had ever been committed in France. Suspicion had not yet fallen upon him; yet it is said that, in accordance with the popular superstition, blood flowed from the corpse on his approach.

The funeral took place at the church of the Celestines. The pall was borne by the duke of Berri, Louis of Anjou, king of Sicily, the
duke of Burgundy, and the duke of Bourbon, a crowd of nobles, knights, and citizens following. All, enemies and friends alike, mourned for the young and captivating prince cut off in the midst of his career, and when he seemed just upon the point of turning away from his sins and follies. The clergy especially regretted him. He had never neglected the outward forms of religion. He had kept a cell in the convent of the Celestines, had fasted and watched with the monks in Advent and Lent, and had given them a large Bible; bound in vellum and illuminated, which had belonged to his father, Charles V. And his will, when made known, turned the hearts of all: 'A worm and no man; a very scorn of men and the outcast of the people;'—so he spoke of himself, begging that his image might be carved upon his tomb as he should lie in death, clothed in the garb of a Celestian monk, with a rude stone for his pillow and holding in his hand an open book inscribed with the first words of the Creed of St. Athanasius.

The interest of the Parisians, thus aroused, was centred upon the question who was the duke's murderer. Suspicion fell upon a gentleman of the duke of Burgundy's household who had a private cause for enmity against Louis of Orleans; but when it was stated that the assassins had fled in the direction of the street in which Jean Sans Peur lived, and when the provost of Paris declared that he would undertake to discover the murderer if only he might be permitted to search the hôtels of the royal princes, the duke of Burgundy exhibited symptoms of uneasiness. He drew aside the duke of Berri and the king of Sicily and said, with a face white with fear and shame, 'It was I. The devil tempted me.' The two princes drew back, and the duke of Berri, bursting into tears, exclaimed, 'I have lost my two nephews!'

Jean Sans Peur was overwhelmed for the moment; but the deed was done, the evil irreparable, and he resolved to claim it as an act of heroism. He repaired to the royal council chamber. The door was closed. The duke of Berri gently withheld him from entering. The council, he said, would not receive him with pleasure. 'Be it as they will,' was the proud reply; only let no one be accused of the death of the duke of Orleans. It was I who commanded it.' And Jean Sans Peur returned to his house, mounted his horse, and rode off in the direction of Flanders.

A hundred knights, followers of the duke of Orleans, pursued; but in vain. At one o'clock in the morning Jean had reached the frontier fortress of Bapaume and was in safety. In memory of his escape he gave orders that the church bells should always be rung at that hour, and for years afterwards the citizens of Bapaume were awakened in the silence of the night by what was known as the Angelus of the duke of Burgundy.
Taking up his residence at Lille, Jean proceeded to justify himself in the eyes of the world. By word of mouth, by sermons, by writings, he sent abroad his apology. To the Flemings he said that the deed had been done in self-defence; the duke of Orleans was lying in wait for himself. And the Flemings believed him. In Paris the public excitement was increased by the arrival of the duchess Valentina with the avowed purpose of claiming justice from the king. The duchess entered the city with her second son and the young Isabelle, the widowed queen of England, who was only fifteen years of age; and the king of Sicily, the dukes of Berri and Bourbon, and the constable De Clermont went before her. The litter was covered with black cloth and drawn by four white horses, and the duchess and all her suite were in the deepest mourning. In this sorrowful guise they passed slowly through the streets of Paris on the 10th of December, 1407, in a winter so severe that the clerk who registered the decisions of the parliament of Paris could not write without melting the ink which froze in his pen, whilst a month later the parliament ceased its sitting entirely because of the cold.

Descending from her litter at the Hôtel St. Pol, the duchess of Orleans threw herself on her knees before the king, imploring justice on the murderer. Charles wept with her, but he was powerless. Advocates spoke for her, preachers made funeral orations in praise of the murdered prince; but whilst they talked Jean Sans Peur acted, and prepared to return with a body of men-at-arms protecting him. The princes of the royal family went to Amiens to stop him, but he received them with fêtes and excellent music, and continued his route to St. Denis, where he paid his devotions, and then went on to Paris, the people receiving him with shouts of welcome, thinking he would lessen the taxes. Even the queen constrained herself to receive him with civility, and the duke of Burgundy retired to his palace and caused two lances—one sharp, the other blunted—to be affixed to the gates as a sign that he was ready either for war or peace.

Jean Sans Peur professed to have no fear, but he made his soldiers camp round his palace; and to soothe his troubled imagination ordered a stone chamber to be built, in which he might dwell safely. More than all he sought to satisfy the public mind, and the day after his arrival a Franciscan monk, named Jean Petit, a learned doctor of the University of the Sorbonne, appeared at the Hôtel St. Pol, and before a large and noble assembly deliberately endeavoured to prove that assassination was not always a crime, and that the death of the duke of Orleans especially was a justifiable act, since the murdered prince was the enemy of God. 'Thanks and praise, therefore,' he said, 'were due to him who had rid the French people of a tyrant.'

The excuse was accepted, for no one dared to controvert it. Yet
the duke of Burgundy might still have found some difficulty in regaining his position but that shortly after he was summoned to Liège to quell an insurrection. When news came that he had gained a great victory at Hasbain all thought of opposing him was at an end.

On his return to Paris he received a fuller assurance of his own power and the weakness of his enemies. In the church of Notre Dame de Chartres, at the entrance of the choir, a scaffolding was erected, upon which, on an appointed day, a throne was placed for the king—the queen and the princes taking their seats near him. The duke of Burgundy's advocate then came forward and demanded that the king should cease to retain anger because of the deed which, for the good of the kingdom, had been committed against the duke of Orleans. The petition was formally granted, and the family of the murdered Louis, with the exception of his wife, who was ill, entered the church; and being informed of the pardon vouchsafed, were requested to agree to it, Jean Sans Peur adding himself, 'My dear cousins, I pray you to do so.'

The young princes wept; the queen, the Dauphin, and the royal dukes approached them and interceded for the duke of Burgundy. The king from the throne said, 'My very dear son, and my very dear nephew, agree, I pray you, to what we have done, and forgive.' And so the young duke of Orleans and his brother repeated the prescribed words; and a previously-arranged treaty was signed, by which the second son of the murdered prince agreed to marry the daughter of the murderer, receiving with her a dowry of 150,000 francs of gold. Well might the peace have been called 'la paix fourrée' (the patched-up peace); well might the registrar of the parliament, when copying it into his register, write on the margin, 'Peace, peace, while there is no peace.'

It was but the commencement of civil war. The duke of Burgundy entered into an intimate alliance with the despicable queen Isabeau, and by this means gained possession of the person of the Dauphin. But in 1410 the young duke Charles of Orleans, and others of his family, organised a powerful league against the duke of Burgundy, known as the league of the Armagnacs, from their chief the comte d'Armagnac, of Languedoc, whose daughter had married Charles of Orleans. A body of Armagnacs advanced towards Paris, with troops, collected chiefly from the south, who showed little reverence either for God or the king. They took the treasures belonging to the abbey of St. Denis, and were known to have seized a peasant, cut off his ears, and told him to go and show himself to his idiot of a king.

This conduct told greatly for the advantage of the duke of Burgundy. The towns turned against the Armagnacs, and the Parisians, trusting to neither party, formed a kind of city guard, composed of
the lowest of the people, and commanded by a butcher, a surgeon, an executioner, and a skinner called Caboche. From the latter these members of a mock government were called Cabochiens. Everyone suspected of being an Armagnac was at once killed by them.

The Armagnacs, however, at length got possession of the city, but were in their turn expelled by the Burgundians. The Orleans princes were then pronounced traitors, and by a royal edict banished from the kingdom, and thus were left without hope save in foreign aid. The English kings had never renounced their claim to their former territories in France, and now in 1412 Henry IV. engaged to aid the Armagnacs with a large force, if they on their part would help him to recover his rights, and would put into his hands twenty towns in the south.

The news of this alliance soon spread in an exaggerated form. The Armagnacs, it was said, had sworn to kill the king, to burn Paris, and to divide France. The duke of Burgundy spread the report. The university, the citizens, the common people, believed and repeated it. The poor king wept and asked what he could do.

Then came a terrible period of anarchy. The States-General were summoned, but they were timid and did nothing. The university made useless remonstrances, whilst the Cabochiens again came into power and pillaged, imprisoned, and murdered at their will; yet not without the pretense of reforming the state. On one occasion a party of the Cabochiens, headed by an old surgeon, Jean de Troyes, who had a great gift of speech, appeared at the Hôtel St. Pol to seek an interview with the Dauphin. The prince, by the advice of the duke of Burgundy, tremblingly showed himself at a window, and the surgeon then spoke. 'My lord,' he said, 'you see your very humble subjects, the citizens of Paris, in arms before you. They desire only thus to prove to you that they are willing to risk their lives in your service. All their regret is that you are surrounded by those who lead you astray. The just hatred which we entertain for these men leads us to demand that vengeance should be taken upon them, and that they should be delivered into our hands.'

The shouts of the mob confirmed the words of the speaker. The Dauphin replied firmly, 'Gentlemen and my good citizens, return, I beseech you, to your homes, and do not show an enmity so violent against those who are my faithful servants.' 'And,' interposed the chancellor, 'if you know that there are traitors about the Dauphin they will be punished. Only name them.' 'You, first!' was the cry. And a paper was placed in the chancellor's hands. It contained fifty names, his own being at the head.

The helpless Dauphin, shedding bitter tears, took a cross of gold from his wife, and made the duke of Burgundy swear that no harm should happen to his servants if they were given up. The duke
took the oath, but he could not keep it. The mob broke open the
gates of the palace and rushed through the rooms, seeking for those
whom they called traitors. The duc de Bar, the king's cousin,
with the Dauphin's chancellor, and several other persons, were carried
off to the prison of the Louvre. All, however, did not reach it.
Two of the Dauphin's attendants, who were considered to have
encouraged the prince in extravagant amusements, were killed at
once, and their bodies thrown into the Seine.

Such a state of things could not long continue. The citizens
of Paris after a while grew weary of the Cabochiens, and desired
peace at any price. The Armagnac party desired it likewise.
Although their alliance with England had for the time fallen
to the ground, in consequence of the death of Henry IV., they
were still very powerful, and the duke of Burgundy, who sided
with the Cabochiens, was unable any longer to withstand them.
They were admitted into Paris, the prisoners in the Louvre were
delivered, and the duke of Burgundy hastily left Paris.

The Armagnacs were now entirely triumphant. The Dauphin
and the duke of Orleans appeared in public wearing the same colours,
and everyone adopted the white scarf, which was the Armagnac
symbol, whilst the little children in the streets who sang Burgun-
dian songs were sure to be beaten by their parents. The daughter of
Jean Sans Peur, who was to have married the son of Louis of Orleans,
was sent back to her parents; the university condemned the dis-
course of Jean Petit in favour of assassination; the duke of Bur-
gundy was declared a rebel, and it was proposed to confiscate his
estates.

The civil war was for the time ended, but the terrible scourge
of a foreign invasion once more threatened the country. On the 16th
of April, 1415, the young Henry V. of England had announced to
his parliament that he intended to make a descent on France, and
two embassies, quickly following one another, immediately after-
wards made known to that country his claims. 'He was,' so said
his ambassadors, 'king of France by right; but he was willing to
await the death of the king, Charles VI., and in the meantime to
marry his daughter on condition of receiving with her all the pro-
vinces which had been ceded by the treaty of Bretigny.

A grand embassy, consisting of twelve persons, with a suite of
580 attendants, crossed to England to give a reply to this demand.
The Dauphin accepted the marriage with his sister, and offered an
enormous dowry and the province of Limousin instead of Nor-
mardy. For three months negotiations were carried on. Then all
being ready on Henry's side for the contemplated war, the ambas-
adors were dismissed with considerable presents and the assurance
that the king of England was about to follow them. Neither the
passage nor the landing of the English was disputed. They disembarked at Harfleur on the 14th of August, 1415, at the entrance of the Seine. The town was besieged and vigorously defended, but no succours came. The citizens were obliged to yield. Henry left Harfleur on the 8th of October, and marched across the country in the direction of Calais; but the spirit of the French had by this time been thoroughly roused, and a large army was collected to intercept his route. It was commanded by the constable D’Albret. The dukes of Orléans, Anjou, Alençon, and Bourbon supported him; but the duke of Burgundy held aloof. The English were in a great difficulty. The ford by which Edward III. had crossed the Somme was guarded, and they remounted the river as far as Amiens, where they were told of another ford seldom used, but still practicable. By this they crossed, and a message was then sent by the French prince to Henry, according to the chivalrous customs of the time, begging that he would name a day and place for the battle. Henry replied that he was marching straight to Calais, that he should enter no town, and therefore should always be found in the open field.

The road to Calais passed through a narrow plain between the villages of Agincourt and Tramécourt; on either side was a thick wood. It was a spot peculiarly unfitted for a successful battle, as there was no space for the movements of cavalry. Yet here the constable D’Albret determined to intercept the advance of the English.

The first sight of the French army, with its watch-fires and banners and 50,000 men ready for battle, must have been startling to the small English force, numbering between eleven and twelve thousand, who reached the ground near Agincourt on the cold, rainy night of the 24th of October. Yet the light-hearted Welshman, David Gam, who made his report of the enemy to the king, only said in a vaunting tone, ‘There are enough to be killed, enough to be taken prisoners, and enough to flee.’ ‘It would not have been amiss,’ observed Sir Walter Hungerford, ‘to have had 10,000 more of our brave archers.’ ‘Nay,’ exclaimed the king severely; ‘I would not have one more. It is God who has appointed our number. Our enemies place their confidence in their multitudes. I place mine in Him who so often gave victory to Judas Maccabeus.’ And without delay preparations were made for the morrow’s conflict. The banners were taken down and rolled up to save them from the rain. The men-at-arms employed themselves in repairing their armour, the archers in putting new cords to their bows; whilst sharp stakes were stuck in the ground in front of the English position to stop the advance of the cavalry. Then the soldiers made their confessions to their priests, addressed their prayers to God, and laid themselves down to rest on straw.
collected from the neighbouring villages. All this was done noiselessly. The king had commanded silence on penalty for the knights of the loss of their horses, and for the men of their right ears.

Very different was it in the French camp. There the chief occupation was making knights. The great fires which were burning in every direction showed to the enemy a confused swarm of squires and pages rushing about shouting and calling to one another. Many of the gentlemen passed the night in their heavy armour on horseback, in order that it might not be soiled by the wet mud in which the camp was half sunk. Even the horses seemed sad. Not one, it is said, was heard to neigh.

On the morning of the 25th of October, 1415, Henry of England led forth his troops to a field of young green corn where the ground was less saturated with the rain than elsewhere. Here he stationed them in one body—the lances in the centre, the archers at the sides. But the land around was in such a condition that neither army cared to begin the attack. The English king then sent another message to the French. 'He would give up the title of king of France; he would give back Harleuer; only he asked for Guienne and Ponthieu, marriage with a French princess, and 800,000 crowns.' The proposal was rejected. The French had looked forward to a battle, and a battle they would have.

The two armies were a strange contrast. On the French side were three immense squadrons, like three forests of lances, reaching far back into the narrow distance; in the front were the constable D'Albret and the royal princes, and a crowd of nobles with glittering inlaid armour, escutcheons and banners, their horses even half hidden by steel and gold. The English army were taw-stained and tattered; many of the archers had not even shoes. They wore caps of leather and osier, with a crossing of iron; and their axes and hatchets languing by their sides made them look like carpenters.

The French had archers also, but there was no place for them. They were men of low birth, and the nobles and knights objected to fight by their side.

At the decisive moment, the army of Henry being ranged in order, the command was given, 'Now strike!' and a shout arose from the English soldiers, whilst a tremendous discharge of arrows was poured into the enemy's ranks.

The French troops remained immovable, knights and horses apparently either enchanted or standing dead in their armour. In truth the huge battle-horses, bearing the heavy weight of their armed riders and of their own caparisons, had actually stuck fast in the muddy ground. When at length they did move it was only to plunge forward a few steps and then sink again. In addition to this the French were pressed together in a space so narrow that not
above two or three thousand men out of the great army were in a position to fight against the 11,000 English, even if the horses had been free to move. Two French squadrons, by great efforts of their spurs, did at length succeed in moving forward; but they were desperately assaulted by the English archers. 12,000 made the charge, but not more than 129 reached the English camp. There a fresh danger awaited them. The horses were wounded by the stakes which had been driven into the ground, and becoming ungovernable rushed back upon the French ranks. A horrible scene of confusion followed—frightened horses stamping, plunging, throwing their riders and falling upon them, stifling and crushing them, whilst the masses forming the bulk of the French force having stuck in the deep mud, instead of opening to let them pass, were unable to save either themselves or their routed companions. And then came down upon them the English force, not the archers, but the heavy troops, with hatchets, axes, clubs, heavy swords—and the fate of the unfortunate French was decided.

The rear-guard fled; only one nobleman—the duke of Brabant, the brother of Jean Sans Peur—showed a spirit of determined bravery, which might seem as if he would fain have redeemed by his life the honour of his family. He had reached the scene of battle late, not having even found time to put on his coat of armour, and in default of this he took his banner, cut it in a hole, through which he passed his head, and rushing forward upon the English was in a moment killed.

The number of prisoners taken by the English, or who voluntarily gave themselves up, was immense; and before it was decided what could be done with them a false report was brought to the king that a corps of French were plundering the camp, and that the Bretons and Gascons were preparing to renew the attack. Embarrassed by the prisoners, Henry gave a hasty order that each man should kill his captive. No one obeyed. The ransom of these prisoners was the prize which the whole army regarded as lawfully theirs, and a feeling of mercy also must have made them shrink from massacring their enemies in cold blood. But Henry was firm. It is the one great blot in his fame as a warrior. Two hundred men were appointed as executioners, and the miserable, unarmed prisoners were cut to pieces. The loss of the English at Agincourt was about 1,600, that of the French 10,000.

When the battle at length was over the archers began to ride the dead, and drew out from the heap of corpses many persons half living, amongst them the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon. The English took the road to Calais, and orders were given that when a halt was made some bread and wine should be taken to the duke of Orleans. But the report came back that the duke would eat nothing.
Charles VI.
The king immediately went to visit him. 'Fair cousin,' he said, 'how goes it with you?' 'Well, my lord,' was the answer. 'Wherefore, then, will you not eat nor drink?' 'I am fasting,' replied the duke. 'Fair cousin,' continued Henry, 'take not to heart what has happened. God has given me the victory, not that I am worthy of it, but, as I firmly believe, because the French deserved chastisement. If that which they tell me is true, never has there been seen such disorder, license, sin, and execrable vice as is this day to be seen in France. If God has at length poured down His wrath upon such a people, there is no cause for wonder.' And with this happy assurance that his countrymen were suffering the anger of Heaven Charles of Orleans and his friends were sent off to England.

The captivity of the duke of Orleans lasted for five-and-twenty years. Whilst the English felt there was any probability of his being placed on the throne of France they refused to accept a ransom. He was at first imprisoned at Windsor with his companions, but was soon separated from them and removed for a time to Pommret Castle; here he was treated honourably but severely, and being without society or amusement, except that of falconry, the unfortunate but accomplished prince found his chief solace in poetry. The most perfect French poetry in the middle ages was written by him.

The following lines to Spring are given as a specimen, the old spelling being altered so as to make it clear:

Le Temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froideur et de pluie,
Et s'est vêtu de broderie,
De soleil riant clair et beau.

Il n'y a bête ni oiseau
Qui en son jargon ne chante et crie,
'Le Temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froideur et de pluie,'

Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau
Portent une livrée jolie—
Gouttes d'argent, d'orfrivière,
Chacun s'habille de nouveau ;
Le Temps a laissé son manteau.

A portion of the duke's captivity was also spent at Groombridge, near Tunbridge, in the house of a Mr. Waller, the same gentleman who had found him lying amongst the slain on the field of Agincourt. Groombridge is still standing, and it is said that part of the house was built under the direction of Charles of Orleans. The prince also contributed to the repairs of the neighbouring church of Speldhurst, and his arms may still be seen over the porch.
DEATH IN THE ROYAL FAMILY—ENGLISH TRIUMPH.

Charles VI.

The victory of Agincourt had been decisive for the English, but they were not in a condition to profit by it. Henry returned immediately to England, and left France to be ruined by the conflicts of her princes.

Paris, the king, and the Dauphin were in the hands of the comte d'Armagnac, who had taken the title of constable of France, and the authority thus assumed was strengthened by the singular mortality which about this time struck down the members of the royal family. In the course of a few months the duke of Berri, Louis of Anjou, titular king of Sicily, and the Dauphin were dead. The Dauphin was about twenty years of age, handsome, indolent, profligate, and extravagant. His death was certainly not a great loss to his country, but it was followed with singular rapidity by that of his second brother, who had been brought up under the guardianship of the duke of Burgundy. Charles, the youngest son of the unhappy, insane king, then became Dauphin; but he was a child, and, except in name, the comte d'Armagnac was king. Unprincipled though he was, Armagnac's ability made him an acceptable ruler, for the position of France was perilous.

The cessation of hostilities with England was but temporary; everyone knew that. The English were rejoicing in triumphs and processions. They chanted thanksgivings, and talked of only waiting till the spring to take possession of their town of Paris; and the common people of England sung in their ballads—

As the king lay musing on his bed,
He thought himself upon a time—
Those tributes due from the French king,
That had not been paid for so long a time!
Fal la la lar, &c.

He called unto his lovely page,
His lovely page away came he,
Saying, 'You must go to the French king—
Those tributes that are due to me!'
Fal la la lar, &c.

Away, away, went this lovely page,
Away, away, and away went he,
Until he came to the king of France,
Where he fell down on his bended knee.
Fal la la lar, &c.

My master he doth greet you well,
He doth greet you most heartily.
If you don't send him those tributes home,
Oh, in French land you will soon him see!
Fal la la lar, &c.
BURGUNDIAN AND ARMAGNAC CONTESTS—HENRY V. IN NORMANDY. 205

Charles VI.

In the midst of this proud excitement came the news that the comte d'Armagnac, aided by Genoese vessels, was attacking Harfleur by sea. It was a bold attempt, and at first successful. The fleet sent by Henry to relieve Harfleur was repulsed, but the comte d'Armagnac could not follow up this success; he was too much occupied by his private interests in Paris. Jean Sans Peur was still striving to regain his power. A conspiracy was formed to introduce the Burgundians into the capital. It was headed by a lame canon, the archbishop's brother. Armagnac discovered the conspiracy; the canon was seized and dressed in his violet robes, carried in a cart through the city, and then blocked up in a niche in a wall, a little bread and water being given him to prolong his misery. The Armagnacs gave out that the object of the Burgundians was to kill the king and the Dauphin, and very many suspected persons were seized and drowned; and it was forbidden to bathe in the Seine, lest the numbers should be counted.

The duke of Burgundy revenged himself by stopping the supplies of food for the Parisians. Even the king suffered, and in one of his intervals of reason, being told that it was because of the Burgundians his dinners were so bad, he turned to the constable d'Armagnac and said, 'Why don' t you drive away those people?' They could not be driven away, but neither could they enter Paris. At length the duke of Burgundy carried off the queen to Tours, declaring that she was regent, and that she forbade the people to pay taxes. The prohibition proved a death-blow to the power of the comte d'Armagnac. The provinces turned against him; only Paris was under his authority, and the Parisians were ruined, hungry, and furious.

And in the meantime Henry V. had again landed in Normandy (August 1417), and had taken Caen and was besieging Rouen. His course was marked by consummate wisdom; all who submitted to him were protected; order was upheld, work and agriculture were fostered. Priests and women were treated with respect. Churches were guarded with reverence. His advance might indeed be compared to a kind of military promenade; and so secure did he feel that he had no hesitation in dividing his army into four bodies, so that he might undertake several sieges at a time. He had indeed little to fear. The comte d'Armagnac was helpless, and the duke of Burgundy was his secret friend and ally.

To re-enter Paris and seize the reins of government was the duke's object, and it was soon gained. A man named Leclere, an ironmonger, whose father kept the keys of the Porte St. Germain, having been ill-treated by the Armagnacs, stole the keys of the gate from under his father's pillow, and on an appointed night admitted 800 Burgundians into the city; 400 citizens joined them, and
they proceeded to the palace and took possession of the person of the king. The Dauphin, assisted by the provost of Paris, Tannegue
Duchâtel, fled to the fortress of the Bastille. The constable D'Ar-
magnac hid himself in the house of a mason. Then the Burgundians
poured into the city. Indescribable terror and misery were the
consequence. The citizens lived in dread that the Armagnacs would
return to deliver those of their party who were imprisoned. Night
after night they were wakened by the tocsin calling them to arms.

At length, on Sunday night, the 12th of June, 1418, the mob rushed to
the prisons, bent upon a massacre of the Armagnac prisoners. The
Châtelet, the Temple—all the prisons were visited. The captives
—even those imprisoned for debt—were murdered indiscriminately.
The constable D'Armagnac, two presidents of the parliament, several
magistrates, and even some bishops, perished in this terrible night.
The body of the comte d'Armagnac remained three days in the
palace, exposed to the derision and the revolting atrocities of the
people; the children played with the corpses of the dead, which lay
piled one upon another in the streets.

The Burgundian party were themselves alarmed at the spirit
which they had roused. They urged the duke of Burgundy, who
had not yet entered Paris, to come without delay. And he came,
accompanied by the queen Isabeau. The people were full of joy.
They cried with all their might, 'Long live the king, the queen,
the duke, and peace!' That was the one thing needed, but peace
came not; neither did provisions. The English guarded the river
Seine; the Armagnacs were close in the neighbourhood. A pesti-
lence broke out in Paris and the adjacent villages; 50,000 persons
died. They seemed to have been exhausted by previous excitement,
and had no strength to resist. Those who had been most busy in
the massacres sank at once in despondency; they refused all re-
ligious consolation; they would receive no sacraments. Seven or
eight hundred are said to have died despairingly, whilst others were
seen running about the streets crying out, 'Lost for ever!' and
then throwing themselves madly head foremost into a well.

But the people had not yet learnt their lesson. Again the cry
arose that the Burgundian chiefs would be willing to ransom any of
the Armagnacs who still remained in their power, and on a burning
day of August the prisons were a second time invaded by a mob,
with Capeluche, the executioner, at their head; they made their
way into the buildings by the roofs and killed prisoners and gaolers
alike. It was in vain that the duke of Burgundy ventured alone
into their midst, begging them to withdraw; in vain he shook hands
with Capeluche as a proof of his confidence; all he could obtain was
a promise that the prisoners, if given up to the mob, should not be
murdered, but carried to the Châtelet; and thither they were taken.
PUNISHMENT OF THE MOB—SIEGE OF ROUEN.

But other persons who had made no promise were waiting for them, and all were massacred. Jean Sans Peur had suffered a great humiliation. The murderous mob were his masters. To rid himself of them by force was impossible; but he succeeded by deception. Under the pretence of making a sally against the Armagnacs, he persuaded those who had distinguished themselves most in their cruel work to leave the city, and then he shut the gates upon them, and sentenced their leader Capeluche to death. Capeluche was by no means a ruffian. He was a shrewd, quiet-mannered man, who had saved a citizen from the massacre at the peril of his life, and who, when he did kill, piqued himself upon doing it skilfully. When it came to his own turn to die he gave careful instructions as to how the sentence was to be carried out.

Peace was for the moment restored to Paris, but not to France. Henry V. was still besieging Rouen, and the inhabitants were suffering the most terrible privations.

The duke promised that help should be sent, but the help was only an embassy; the Dauphin, who sided with the Armagnacs, sent one likewise. Both princes proposed to cede the provinces which did not belong to themselves, and the English king listened to them quietly, and then said, "The king is insane, the Dauphin a minor; the duke of Burgundy has no power to yield anything."—and the siege was continued. When horses, dogs, cats, and rats and mice became the only food of the unhappy citizens of Rouen, all who could not fight—12,000 persons, men, women, and children—were compelled to leave the city. They presented themselves at the English camp, and were repulsed. Unable to find any shelter, they encamped in the ditches of the fortifications, where they passed the months of winter. The children who were born during this period were fastened to a cord, drawn up into the city, baptised, and let down again.

On Christmas Day the English, touched by the misery of these poor creatures, sent them food by the hands of two priests; an offer of provisions was also made to those within the walls, but they refused to receive anything from the hands of their enemies.

The duke of Burgundy carried the king with him to St. Denis, and obliged him to take the oriflamme; but no effort for the relief of Rouen followed. At length a message from the besieged city said that 50,000 persons had died from hunger; and then the duke appeared touched, and sent away the messenger with a renewed promise of aid. But when they were gone he turned his back on Normandy, and carried off the king in another direction.

And so Rouen was compelled to yield, on condition of paying 800,000 gold crowns.

The duke of Burgundy now endeavoured to conciliate Henry.
He asked for an interview; and when it was granted, he took with him the young princess Katharine, who was to be offered in marriage to the English king. Henry was much pleased with his proposed bride, but he would not diminish any of his demands, and so far forgot his usual courtesy as to say, 'Fair cousin, know that we will have your king's daughter, or we will send both him and you out of the kingdom.'

The only hope for France now was in a reconciliation between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. It was brought about by a clever and handsome woman, the dame de Gisac, who was sent by the queen to the duke of Burgundy, and by her grace, beauty, and tears so softened his heart that on the 11th of July, 1419, the duke, kneeling before the Dauphin, at Melun, and in the presence of a large body of the friends and relations of the imprisoned and murdered Armagnacs, entered into a treaty with them of mutual friendship. Henry, alarmed at the news, became suddenly eager to conclude the proposed marriage, and sent to the princess Katharine a present of jewels, which, however, the Dauphin's followers intercepted and carried off to their master, thinking that what was offered to the sister might as well be taken to the brother.

The Dauphin was then only sixteen years of age, and surrounded by evil counsellors, some, like Duchâtel, the provost of Paris, being inclined to justify any royal crime by the excuse that the person against whom it was committed was a traitor. These men were fully persuaded that it was vain to put any confidence in the duke of Burgundy's promise. And now, regardless of the recent alliance, they formed a secret plan for his destruction—whether with or without the knowledge of the Dauphin, Charles, is uncertain. A request was made to the duke to meet the Dauphin a second time, at Montéreau, not very far from the forest of Fontainebleau. Here the river Seine was crossed by a bridge, and on this bridge a log wooden gallery or enclosure was erected for the interview. The enclosure had no barrier to separate the two parties, which was a common precaution in that distrustful age; and the duke's servants warned him that he would thus be in danger. Still he persisted in going; but when the time arrived he delayed, and Taunegruck Duchâtel went to meet him. On seeing him the duke exclaimed, striking Duchâtel on the shoulder, 'Here is one whom I may trust,' and Duchâtel hurried him forward, on the pretense that the Dauphin was waiting for him. Thus he was separated from his followers and entered the gallery accompanied only by the sire de Navailles whose brother, the Capitul de Buch, was fighting on the English side.

Accounts differ a little as to what then took place. The most probable story is that the Dauphin's attendants began the quarrel by reproaching the duke of Burgundy for his delay, whilst the duke
reproached the Dauphin for negligence in the affairs of the kingdom. Undoubtedly the murder both of the duke and the sire de Navailles followed immediately. Duchatel always insisted that he did not strike the duke, but there can be little doubt that the deed was planned by him.

The murder of Jean Sans Peur was not only a great crime, but an immense misfortune for the Dauphin. Unworthy though the duke had proved himself in his lifetime, and low as he had fallen in public opinion, as soon as he was dead there rose up a party attached to his name, and indignant at the treachery which had proved fatal to him.

It was impossible for the Dauphin to take the lead in the kingdom, and a treaty with the English was now the only thing talked of. Paris yielded because the inhabitants were starving. The queen yielded because, by the marriage of Katharine and Henry, if her son could not be king, at least her daughter would be queen. Philip, the son of Jean Sans Peur, known in history as Philip the Good, yielded because he would fain revenge his father.

In the month of November ambassadors were despatched to the English king and graciously received. 'Am I not of the same blood as the king of France?' said Henry. 'When I become the king's son-in-law I will defend him against all men.'

A treaty was entered into which gave him even more than he was himself inclined to ask for. Having the secret support of Philip of Burgundy, he demanded and received the reversion of the throne of France; and at the close of the treaty the utter degradation of the unfortunate Dauphin was announced to the world. Thus ran the words: 'Considering the horrible crimes perpetrated against France by Charles, the so-called Dauphin, we—our son the king Henry and also our dear son Philip of Burgundy—agree to make peace with the said Charles, except by common consent, and with consent of the three estates of the kingdom.'

The marriage of Henry and Katharine was solemnised at Troyes the 2nd of June, 1420. Magnificent fêtes were given on the occasion, but Henry did not suffer himself to be engaged by them so as to forget that the Dauphin and the Armagnac were still his lies. On the very day of the marriage, as he heard the preparations which were making for public jousts, he said, openly: 'I pray majesty the king, whose daughter I have espoused, and all his lords, and I command my own servants, that they be ready tomorrow to undertake with me the siege of the city of Sens, may everyone joust at his pleasure.' And on the next day strongly Katharine was left, whilst her husband departed to carry her against her brother. It proceeded slowly; though one place was taken, another resisted; but Henry, having the king on
his side, was recognised as having supreme power in France. In December he made his entry into Paris, riding between Charles VI. and Philip of Burgundy, who was in deep mourning. Behind him was carried, amongst other banners, a lance with a fox's tail attached to it. Henry was a great fox-hunter, and this was his own personal distinction. He was well received at Paris; the people regarded him as a messenger of peace. The chief ecclesiastics came in procession to meet the two kings, and brought them the sacred relics of the churches to kiss. Notre Dame was then visited, and prayers were said at the high altar; and afterwards the king of France retired to his Hôtel de St. Pol, whilst the king of England established himself in the fortress of the Louvre.

There for two years (1421-1422) the English monarch continued frequently to hold his court, and exercise the powers of royalty.

At Christmas and Whitsuntide he held levees, and feasted publicy with his young queen. The Parisians flocked to see their majesties sitting at table with crowns on their heads, whilst around them, in grand array, were the English bishops, nobles, and knights; and the starving crowd satisfied their eyes with the spectacle, but when they turned away they were not the less hungry; and they said to themselves, 'It was not so under our own kings; then an open table was kept; everyone sat down who would; the servants distributed largely both meat and drink.' Yet they could not but own that the English monarch was a noble king, tall and handsome; cold indeed in manner, yet courteous to the meanest; and they remarked to his praise that he never swore, that he said only 'Impossible!' or 'It may be so!' In general he said little, but when he did speak his words were sharp and cutting as a razor. Most especially they marvelled at his calm self-control; whatever might be the bad news brought to him, he received it without moving a muscle of his face. His impetuosity had shown itself at Agincourt, now he was too great to be excited.

Even in questions not connected with military glory, England had at this time triumphed over France. The residence of the Popes at Avignon had been for many years a great moral support for the French kings. The Pope had in fact become a kind of French patriarch, guided and governed by the French king. But this was now altered. At the beginning of the reign of Henry V., a council for the reform of the church, and for the settlement of the claims of the rival Popes, had been summoned to meet at Constance, A.D. 1414. Politicians doubted much the utility of the council, but Jean Gerson, the great theologian of the day, persisted in urging its necessity. After long discussions the three rival Popes were declared deposed, and a new Pope, Martin V., was appointed, whose residence was thenceforth to be not at Avignon, but at Rome. This was a great
blow for France, but it was the only mode by which the scandals that had degraded the church could be brought to an end. It would have been well indeed if the council of Constance had confined itself to the task of ecclesiastical reform, and had not, according to the dictates of the age, proceeded to persecution. The death of the two reformers, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who were burnt at the stake as heretics, must ever be painfully associated with its labours. Gerson, though a man of noted piety, was mainly instrumental in procuring their condemnation, yet, at the same time, he so entirely repudiated the doctrine of lawful assassination, broached by Jean Petit on the occasion of the murder of the duke of Orleans, that one of his main objects in urging the assembling of the council, was that such teaching should be solemnly condemned, as it was, by the voice of the church.

Henry V. had supported the election of Martin V., and the Pope in return was expected to favour his English claims. The German princes also looked to Henry as the arbiter of their differences, and the archbishops of Mayence and Treves rendered him homage. But foreign allies did not prevent his position in France from being critical, for the Dauphin Charles and his party still held their ground in the provinces beyond the Loire.

The Dauphin indeed commanded but little respect. He was very indolent, he understood nothing of military affairs, and the murder of Jean Sans Peur had left an ineffaceable stain upon his honour. But he was a Frenchman, fighting for France, and all who hated a foreign ruler were secretly on his side.

Money also was wanting to the English king. When the war began it was thought that the French might be compelled to pay the expenses of it, but after fifteen years of misgovernment and civil war, France was so impoverished that the conquerors were obliged to bring money into the country, rather than take money from it.

Henry felt his position keenly. The siege of Rouen had taken him a year. The siege of Meaux, which he had now begun, was likely to take him another year. At such a rate of progress when would France be conquered?

He was engaged in the siege of Meaux, seeing his army dwindle around him, when news was brought him that his wife had borne him a son at Windsor Castle. He showed no joy at the news, but only said, 'Henry of Monmouth will have a short reign and will have conquered much. Henry of Windsor will reign long and lose all. God's will be done.'

The foreboding was verified. After the winter campaign Henry was taken ill, and the duke of Burgundy, who was about to engage in a battle with the Dauphin's party, sent to him for help. 'I will
not send: I will go myself,' was his reply, and he set out, borne on a litter; but he could travel but a little way, and was obliged to return to Vincennes. The physicians told him that his end drew near, and he summoned his brothers to his side, committed his little son to their care, and gave them two wise counsels: one to keep on friendly terms with the duke of Burgundy; the other, to insist, whenever peace should be made, upon retaining Normandy.

Then he ordered the penitential psalms to be read, and when he came to the words 'Build Thou the walls of Jerusalem,' he exclaimed, 'Oh! if God would have permitted me to live, and complete this war in France, I would have conquered the Holy Land.' But it would seem that his conscience was not entirely easy, for he added, as if to reprove himself, 'I have not fought from vain glory. My wars have been sanctioned by priests and by honourable men; and I have not, therefore, imperilled my soul.' These were his last recorded words, and shortly after he expired, on the 13th of August, 1422. His body was carried to Westminster, and his English subjects lamented him even more as a saint than as a king.

Charles VI. lived but a few months after him, he died on the 21st of October. The citizens of Paris wept for their insane monarch, as the English wept for their victorious one. In the streets and at the windows people were seen bitterly grieving. 'Ah! they exclaimed, 'beloved prince! Never shall we have a king so good. War is now our inheritance. Thou art gone to thy rest; we live for tribulation and grief.'

They took the remains of the unfortunate Charles to St. Denis. His chamberlain, his confessor, and a few officers of his court, attended the funeral, but only one royal prince, the duke of Bedford, was present, and he was a foreigner. Charles had no sons living who could show him honour at his grave. Three were dead, and the only one who remained was the proscribed disinherited Dauphin.

When the body was let down into the vault, the head officers broke their staves and threw them into the grave, and then Berri, the king-at-arms, exclaimed, 'May God have mercy on the soul of the right noble and right excellent prince Charles, king of France, sixth of the name, our natural and sovereign lord!' A pause followed, and he added, 'Long live Henry, by the grace of God king of France and England, our sovereign lord!'

The condition of France, and especially Paris, when the death of Charles VI. took place is almost too terrible for description. In 1421, we are told that the country was so depopulated, that wolves made their way unmolested into the fields to feed upon the dead bodies which lay there, and at night even entered into Paris, which was almost deserted by the overtaxed citizens.

Strange it is that such a period should have been marked by new
DANCE OF DEATH—PROSPECTS OF CHARLES VII. 213

ns, if such they may be called, in music and dancing; but so...
The year of the assassination of the duke of Orleans is to be...
for the formation of a corps of fiddlers, who paraded the...
chanting to the sound of violins the various treaties of peace...
were made from time to time. The practice of proclaim-
ties publicly appears, however, to have been of still more...
but a more singular amusement was that of the Dance of...
'Danse Macabre'—which was exhibited at Paris in the...
ery of the Innocents only two years after Charles VI. died.
, in fact, an acted representation of the efforts of Death to...
er man at every stage of life—childhood, youth, and age—and...
final success. This play no doubt had its origin in the...
ries, or religious dramas, which were encouraged as giving...
tion to the ignorant, and the struggle originally was described...
between Satan and the soul. But now it was death—
 death, under the form of a skeleton, which was brought before...
visible people; and whilst famine and disease made the...
 in its most horrible forms a familiar spectacle, it was yet...
de for them to find a momentary forgetfulness of their misery-
picted representation. Paintings describing the Dance of...
are still to be seen on the covered bridge over the Reuss at...
me. The play itself is said to have been introduced into...

CHAPTER XXVI.

CHARLES VII.

A.D. 1422-1476.

y VI., a child not a year old—English by his father, French...
mother—was now the acknowledged successor of his grand-
Charles VI. Yet at the very time when he was proclaimed...
claim of the Dauphin to be Charles VII. was made in...
chapel of the castle of Meun, near Bourges. The Dauphin...
t out on mourning on the preceding day, but now he was dressed...
charlot—a sign of hope and victory, for even at that time of...
ous humiliation there were cheering tokens for the future.
party was by no means wanting in influence. The duke of...
, whose daughter he had married, was on his side. The...
powerful barons of Languedoc—the counts of Clermont and...
don—stood by him. The duke of Milan furnished him with
1,500 men. The Scotch earls of Douglas and Buchan brought a reinforcement of 6,000. If only Charles had possessed sufficient energy to make the most of his advantages, he might have spared France years of misery, and saved the lives of hundreds of his people. But his excellent abilities, his wise intentions, his goodness of heart, were all marred by his indolence and love of amusement. At the age of twenty, when, if at any time, exertion should be a pleasure, Charles could do nothing but make courteous promises and speak grateful words. Deeds he was not ready for, and money he had none to give; for he was so poor that even his shoemaker, we are told, hesitated to let him have his boots, because they were not paid for. His appearance also was against him. Though he had a pleasant face, he was small in stature, and remarkable for very thin legs. He looked to the best advantage when he wore a long cloak; but generally he was dressed in a short green tunic, and the people laughed at his small limbs and very large knees.

The English styled him in derision the king of Bourges, because it was there he had fixed his residence. But they were not wise in their ridicule, for the king of Bourges was a Frenchman, whilst the king of France was an Englishman; and the vast advantage of nationality they had yet to learn to their cost. For the present, however, all seemed to favour the fulfilment of the arrangement by which Henry VI. of England had been placed on the French throne. He was, indeed, an infant; but the clever and firm-minded John, duke of Bedford, his uncle, was prepared to govern in his name as regent. Paris, and the provinces north of the Loire, acknowledged his authority, and the support of the all-powerful Philip of Burgundy, however doubtful it might once have been, was, as it appeared, secured by the marriage of Bedford to one of Philip's sisters.

In 1423 and 1424 two battles were fought, in both of which the friends of Charles were defeated, and his brave Scotch allies especially suffered; but desperate though his condition must then have seemed, the germ of discord had already been sown in the English court, and it was soon to produce its fatal and inevitable results.

The duke of Burgundy, who was also count of Flanders, had endeavoured to enlarge and secure his dominions by the marriage of his sickly cousin, the duke of Brabant, with Jaqueline, countess of Hainault and Holland, two provinces closely adjoining Flanders. The duke of Brabant was not likely either to live long; and if he should die without children, the duke of Burgundy would be his heir.

It was a selfish, ill-advised marriage, and Jaqueline, who was
high-spirited and unprincipled, finding the yoke intolerable, left her melancholy, infirm husband and crossed over to England. She then obtained from the deposed Pope, Pedro de Luna, a decree annulling her marriage, and forthwith presented herself to the duke of Gloucester, a younger brother of the Regent Bedford, and proposed to become his wife. Gloucester accepted her, and, of course, the duke of Burgundy interfered, and encouraged the duke of Brabant to resist such an unlawful repudiation.

And at the same time he himself and the duke of Gloucester defied each other to mortal combat. It was a mere bravado; but the duke of Burgundy soon afterwards took possession of the town of Mons, where the countess Jaqueline was residing, and then shut her up in Ghent until the question of her marriage should be decided by the true Pope, Martin V. The countess managed to escape, but the Pope annulled her marriage with Gloucester, who soon took another wife, and the haughty countess at length found herself obliged so far to humble herself as to recognise Philip of Burgundy as the lawful heir to Brabant, and engage not to marry again without his permission.

These events had two important consequences. They diverted the attention of the duke of Burgundy from the war with Charles, and alienated his interests from those of the Regent Bedford and the English.

The cause of the French monarch must under such circumstances have gained ground but for the weakness of his character, more especially as he was not without a shrewd and wise counsellor in the person of his mother-in-law, Yolande, the widowed duchess of Anjou. Yolande, after the death of her husband, Louis II. (so-called because of his claims to the kingdom of Naples), was recognised as the head of the house of Anjou, and she endeavoured to keep up its influence by marrying her daughter Marie to the king of France, and her son René to the heiress of Lorraine. She was a selfish, intriguing woman, whose chief object was to keep the English from invading her own territories. But she was very useful to Charles, more especially in recommending him to appoint the brave and clever count de Richemont, the brother of the duke of Brittany, to be constable of France, and by this means gain over the duke to his side. Richemont, however, soon rendered himself obnoxious to his master by the sternness of his character. Charles was governed by favourites. Two of them, the sire de Giac and the sire de Beaulieu, who had interfered with Richemont’s plans, were, by the constable’s orders, arrested and condemned to death without form of law. It was a cruel act. But De Giac at least deserved his fate, for he had poisoned his wife. Richemont then provided Charles with another favourite, named La Trémouille, and the first use
which the youth made of his influence was to persuade his royal master to dismiss the constable.

The unfortunate Charles now found himself as helpless as ever. His party seemed incurably divided, and the English seizing the opportunity for a determined move which might end the contest, assembled about ten or twelve thousand men, and laid siege to Orleans, the key to the southern provinces (1428). The citizens were all on the side of Charles. Orleans had been the general refuge for the Armagnac party, and now they agreed to burn the suburbs rather than allow them to remain as a shelter for the English. They taxed themselves heavily, they cast cannon, they collected a garrison of soldiers from various nations, and placed them under the command of Dunois, the illegitimate brother of the imprisoned duke of Orleans, and with heroic cheerfulness prepared themselves to endure the privations of a siege.

Famine was not, however, their greatest danger, for the English had not been able entirely to surround the city, and provisions found admittance with tolerable ease. On one day 900 pigs were brought into the town. As for the English bullets, the citizens only laughed at them, for scarcely anyone was killed, and the people declared that they had known a bullet carry off a man’s shoe without injuring his foot. Their own cannon, on the other hand, worked wonders. Distinct names were given to them. One cast by a clever gunner of Lorraine, and known as ‘Master John,’ was the cause of special alarm to the enemy; its discharge was fatal. And still worse was it when, from time to time, ‘Master John’ was allowed to feign death, and was taken away for a little while, only to reappear quite unexpectedly when the English were least prepared for him.

Exchanges of compliments were not wanting between the two camps. Violins were the fashion of the day, and some were sent to the English to diminish their weariness during the long winter, whilst Dunois forwarded to the earl of Suffolk a fur coat in exchange for a plate of figs. But that which most excited the pride of the Orleanists was the death of the English general, lord Salisbury. He was inspecting the small towers outside the town, when his conductor pointed to the city of Orleans and said, ‘My lord, you see your town.’ The earl looked. At that moment a bullet struck him in the eye and carried away part of his head. The bullet, it was said, was fired by the gunner’s son whilst his father was gone to dinner. There were other excitements also of a specially military character. Sorties, skirmishes for the protection of convoys of provisions, even duels for the amusement of both sides—two Gascons against two Englishmen, the Gascons having the advantage; a fight between the pages of the two armies, when the English pages had the victory;
and a proposal of six Frenchmen to have a joust with the English, an offer which, however, was not accepted.

The siege was carried on slowly but surely. Once successfully completed, the south of France would be at the mercy of the English. The due de Bourbon, anxious to aid his countrymen, sent a body of troops under the command of his eldest son, the comte de Clermont, to attack a convoy of provisions for the English, which had been despatched from Paris by the duke of Bedford. It consisted of 300 waggons, filled with munitions of war and provisions, more especially herrings for the approaching season of Lent. As the convoy drew near the town, soldiers and carts advancing in file, the Gascon leader La Hire, who was with the French party, urged an immediate attack, but the young comte de Clermont preferred waiting till all his troops had come up. In the meantime the English took the alarm. Sir John Falstaff, their commander, made a halt, and collecting the waggons made a circle round them with pointed stakes. The French presently advanced impetuously, but the English stood firm, and then, seeing that the ranks of their enemies were broken by the violence of their onset, sallied forth from their enclosure behind the stakes and entirely dispersed them. The citizens of Orleans called this unfortunate conflict 'the battle of the herrings,' for the bullets had pierced the barrels, and the ground was more strewn with herrings than with dead bodies.

The defeat, slight though it was, entirely discouraged the besieged. Many persons hitherto distinguished as leaders forsook the city. By the 18th of February the comte de Clermont, the admiral of France, the chancellor, and the bishop of Orleans had departed, assuring the citizens, however, that they would soon return with reinforcements. Dunod alone preserved his courage.

Feeling that it would be better to fall into French than English hands, he sent to the duke of Burgundy, offering to yield the city if the regent Bedford would then retire. The duke went immediately to Paris to lay the proposition before the regent, who replied drily 'that he should be sorry to have beaten the bush only that the duke of Burgundy might have the birds.' And the duke, much wounded by this answer, immediately withdrew all his forces from Orleans.

The hopes of the besieged citizens were thus at their lowest ebb, when aid was sent of a nature which, if it cannot be called strictly miraculous, must certainly be regarded as one of the most manifest interpositions of Providence for the relief of a kingdom that has ever been vouchsafed to man.

It was at the beginning of March 1429 that Charles VII., then residing at Chinon, assembled his little court for the purpose of receiving and interrogating a young peasant girl, Jeanne d'Arc, a
native of the village of Domremy, who came with a strange tale of miraculous visions, which she stated had convinced her that it was her mission to save her country, and especially to deliver Orleans.

Charles was fully informed as to the character and pretensions of the girl. She had left her home under the protection of an uncle, openly stating her intentions. Having gained over to a belief in her inspiration the sire de Baudricourt, a French commander in her own neighbourhood, she had been conducted by him to the duke of Lorraine, and by the duke despatched under a guard of soldiers to Chinon, that the king might judge of her sincerity or of her imposture.

It was evening—fifty torches illumined the hall, and more than 300 courtiers were gathered round their sovereign, all desirous to see one who must be, so they thought, either a sorceress or inspired. A young girl was introduced; she was apparently about eighteen, rather tall, with a face attractive but of no remarkable beauty. Simple and modest in manner, though wearing the dress of a boy, she entered the hall humbly, and without the slightest hesitation knelt down before the king, who, to test her powers, had placed himself amongst his courtiers, so as not to be distinguished from them. Charles in vain endeavoured to persuade her that she had mistaken him. In a voice singularly sweet and penetrating she said, 'Gente Dauphin'—he had not yet been crowned according to the customary ceremonies, and she would not acknowledge him as king—'the King of Heaven has sent me to tell you that you shall be consecrated and crowned at Rheims, and shall be the viceroy of the King of Heaven, who is the King of France.'

Charles, greatly struck by her manner, took her aside, and after some minutes' private conversation returned to his courtiers, saying that he believed in her. She had told him things known only to himself and God. His conviction could not, however, at once be shared by others, and it was proposed that a careful investigation of Jeanne d'Arc's claims should be made, under the direction of the archbishop of Rheims. To this prelate Jeanne gave her history with evident truthfulness. She was the daughter of an honest peasant, and had been brought up religiously, but without regular education. She could sew and spin, but she could neither read not write. The village of Domremy was surrounded by the forests of the Vosges, and the legends of the forest had doubtless early stimulated an imaginative and devotional temperament, which found its vent in religious worship and acts of charity. Jeanne was a constant attendant upon all the services of the church, and unwearied in her care of the sick and suffering. The miseries caused by the civil wars reached even to her secluded home. Fugitives arrived at the village, and Jeanne assisted in recovering them. She gave up her
own bed, and went herself to sleep in the barn. Once when a troop of brigands passed through Domremy her parents fled with their family, and returned only to find the village sacked and the church burnt. Thus Jeanne learnt by personal experience the horrors of war. She thought of the women who had in the old days been instrumental in saving Israel from its enemies. If, as everyone said, the ruin of the kingdom had been the work of a woman, the unnatural Isabeau, who had deserted her own son, might it not be possible that its salvation should also come from a woman? The suggestion haunted her. Whilst tending her father’s cattle in the forest, Jeanne had full leisure for the indulgence of dreams as to the possibility of saving her country, and at length her vague imaginations took a most remarkable and definite form.

The following is her own account of the direct origin of her mission:—On a certain summer day—a fasting day—at noon, being in her father’s garden quite close to the church, she saw a dazzling light and heard a voice say, ‘Jeanne, be a good and wise child, and go often to church.’ She was frightened, but neither saw nor heard more.

But a second time she heard the voice, and saw the dazzling light; and in the midst of the light were figures of noble gentlemen and knights, and one who had wings said to her: ‘Jeanne, go to the aid of the king of France, and thou shalt restore to him his kingdom.’ She replied, trembling: ‘Sir, I am only a poor girl; I can neither ride a horse nor lead soldiers.’ The voice replied: ‘Thou shalt go to M. de Baudricourt, the captain at Vaucouleurs, and he will take thee to the king. Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret will aid thee.’

A great struggle then arose in her mind, more especially when, having communicated her wishes to her father, he swore that rather than allow her to go amongst the rude soldiers he would drown her with his own hands. Her uncle was, however, after a time converted to a belief in her mission, and under his protection she was allowed to depart, after having embraced her friends, especially, as she said, her dear little companion Manette, whom she recommended to the protection of God. As for her greatest friend and companion, Hanquette, the one whom she loved the best, she thought it better to go without seeing her.

And now she stood before the noblest of her countrymen, who were to decide how far they might accept her as an inspired leader, or reject her as an enthusiastic impostor.

‘Jeanne,’ said a grave Dominican, ‘thou declarlest that God wills to deliver the people of France. He does not need soldiers.’

‘Ah,’ replied Jeanne, quietly, ‘the soldiers will fight, and God will give the victory.’

‘Tell us,’ enquired a sarcastic professor of theology at the Uni-
versity of Poitiers—who spoke the country dialect of Limousin—' in what language did the heavenly voice address thee?'

'In a better language than thine,' answered Jeanne, sharply.

'Dost thou believe in God?' exclaimed the angry professor.

'God wills not that we should believe thy words unless thou show us a sign.'

Jeanne replied: 'I am not come to work signs and miracles. My sign will be the raising of the siege of Orleans. Give me soldiers, and let them be few or many I will go thither.'

The examiners continued their enquiries several days, till at length, apparently impatient of the delay caused by this endless caution, Jeanne exclaimed: 'Listen—there is more in God's Book than yours. I know not A from B, but I come on God's part to raise the siege of Orleans, and to have the Dauphin consecrated at Rheims. First, however, I must write to the English, and summon them to retire. Have you paper and ink? Write; I will dictate.'

Even her judges dared not disobey her, and a summons to go back to England was written to the English leader. At last came the decision. The mission of Jeanne was real. Her services might without fear be accepted.

She was then treated with all honour. It was a singular sight when Jeanne for the first time appeared in public, in her white armour, riding her splendid black war-horse, and with a page bearing before her a white standard embroidered with the lilies of France. At her side hung a small hatchet, and a sword which had been taken, at her own request, from the altar of Saint Catherine-de-Fierbois, but which she wore only as a token of war. 'I will not,' she said, 'make use of my sword to kill anyone. I love it; but I love my standard forty times as well.'

Whilst these events were passing in the French camp, the position of the English before Orleans was far from satisfactory. The winter had weakened them, the Burgundians had forsaken them, and their leaders, instead of closely investing the town, had allowed them to be dispersed in isolated bodies, which had no communication with each other. If the French had only been united the siege might, without difficulty, have been raised; but a fierce independence was the crying evil of the captains of the French army. Brave they were, and not without a certain superstitious religion; but amongst them were to be found some of the most determined and ferocious men who ever existed. One, Gilles de Reth, is said to have been the original of Blue Beard.

The appearance of Jeanne amongst such men was like a vision from heaven. It touched the yet glimmering spark of a better nature. The Gascon chief, La Hire, who had been accustomed to make his
little prayer for God's help when he went forth to pillage and kill, now checked his profane oaths, and swore—with Jeanne's permission—only by his stick. The captains forsook their profligate habits and went to confession; and as the army journeyed along the banks of the Loire, on its way to Orleans, Jeanne caused an altar to be erected under the blue sky, and in the midst of the sunny pastures of Touraine, and there the enthusiastic soldiers devoted themselves to her service, and vowed to follow her withersoever she would lead them.

To Orleans or to Jerusalem! what mattered it? And the hope of a crusade in lieu of a civil war seems to have floated in Jeanne's mind; for in the letter which she sent to the English generals she graciously proposed to them to unite with the French, and undertake with them the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.

As the French forces approached Orleans, Dunois came to welcome their maiden leader. Arrangements were made that she should enter the city with a convoy of provisions, whilst the rest of the troops should proceed to Blois, and about eight o'clock in the evening of the 29th of April, in the midst of a dense crowd, Jeanne rode slowly up the street, speaking gently to the people who pressed around, anxious even to touch her horse. After visiting the church, she proceeded to the house of the treasurer of the duke of Orleans, with whose wife and daughter she was to make her abode.

The terror of the English when they heard that the Maid—the sorceress, as they regarded her—was actually within the walls of the besieged city was extreme. The leaders, indeed, gave way to the most gross abuse, and bestowed upon her epithets so degrading that when they came to Jeanne's ears she wept bitterly; but the common soldiers, convinced that a higher than earthly power was fighting against them, from that moment lost their confidence.

But the English were not Jeanne's only enemies. The commanders of the French troops, who had been sent to Blois, and afterwards, protected by Jeanne and a body of priests, entered the city, were by no means disposed to submit to her authority, or to share their glory with a woman.

Jeanne was a hero in courage and in action, but a woman still in tenderness; and on the first occasion, when an attack was made against an English fort, she shed tears on the field of battle over those who had died without the last office of religion, and took some of the English prisoners under her own protection, to save them from the ferocity of her friends. The taking of this fort was the first success, and it was soon followed by another, in which Jeanne and the Gascon La Hire were, by their bravery, mainly instrumental. There only then remained the fort of the Tournelles, which was the strongest position that the English held. It was at first proposed to
attack it on the 8th of May, but the French leaders held a secret council, and Jeanne was told that they had resolved on delay. Probably their wish only was to deceive her, and prevent her from being present. Jeanne, aware of their insincerity, merely said: 'You have been at your council and I have been at mine.' And turning to her chaplain she added: 'Come to me to-morrow at daybreak, and do not leave me; I shall have much to do. Blood will flow from my body. I shall be wounded above the breast.'

The sun was rising over the Loire on the following morning when the French forces embarked in their boats on the river to attack the Tournelles. The English defended the fort valiantly, and the assailants faltered, when Jeanne jumped into the ditch, seized a ladder, and placed it against the wall. At that instant an arrow struck her between the shoulder and the heart. She was laid upon the grass and her armour taken off. At the first sight of the deep wound Jeanne wept and lamented. But suddenly she started up, sent away her attendants, ordered some oil to be laid upon the wound, and accusing herself of sinful weakness, owned herself willing to submit entirely to the Will of God. The fight continued during the day, but without any apparent advantage. The standard of the Maid of Orleans, so dreaded by the enemy, was held by a Basque soldier; and Jeanne, encouraging him, said: 'When the standard touches the wall you will be able to enter.' It did touch the wall, and the French, excited to desperation, rushed forward and scaled the fortress as though they had ascended by steps. The people of Orleans, who had been watching the fight from the other side of the Loire, now hastened across the river, and valiantly supported their friends; and when night came, the fort of the Tournelles was theirs.

The fate of the Tournelles decided that of Orleans. The next day, which was Sunday, May 8th, 1429, the whole of the English army was in retreat, under the command of Talbot and Suffolk. Proudly and in good order they marched away, and Jeanne forbade that they should be pursued; but before they were quite out of sight she caused an altar to be erected in the plain and mass to be said, and in the very presence of the enemy the people rendered thanks to God for His aid.

The effect of the deliverance of Orleans was prodigious. A supernatural power was everywhere recognised. Some said Jeanne's influence was from the Evil-one; but the generality owned that it was from God, and that Charles VII. had the claim of right to His favour.

And now it was needful that the king should seize the fortunate moment and proceed to Rheims to be crowned. The English had made one fatal mistake; they had delayed the coronation of the young Henry VI., and the first crowned would surely remain
king. Besides, it would be a grand thing for Charles VII to make his royal progress through English France, and thus to take possession of it. So said Jeanne; and though her advice to some seemed folly, it was after some hesitation adopted. The advance was one of difficulty, being frequently interrupted by the English. At Troyes the gates of the city were closed, in preparation for a siege. But Jeanne led the troops to the assault, and the enemy, seized with a sudden panic, threw down their arms.

This was on the 9th of July, and on the 15th the royal forces entered Rheims.

The people came to meet their king, joyously chanting hymns.

'Oh, good and pious people,' exclaimed Jeanne, 'if I am to die, I would fain be buried here!'

The archbishop, who heard the speech, said: 'Do you then think you are about to die?'

'I know not,' was the answer. 'It will be as God pleases. Yet I would wish that it may be His will that I should go back to my brothers and sisters. They would be so happy to see me. But at least I have done what our Lord commanded me to do,' and looking up to Heaven she returned thanks to Almighty God.

And at that moment, says an old chronicler, 'All who saw her believed more than ever that her mission was from God.'

Sunday, the 17th, was fixed for the coronation, and on that morning, before going to the cathedral, Jeanne dictated a letter to the duke of Burgundy, recalling nothing of the past, only praying that on both sides forgiveness might be granted, as became good and loyal Christians.

The ceremony of coronation was performed by the archbishop of Rheims, the Maid of Orleans standing by his side with her standard in her hand. Charles was anointed with the consecrated oil of St. Remi, and according to the ancient ritual was lifted upon his throne by the ecclesiastical peers, and afterwards waited upon by the lay nobles. At the moment of his coronation Jeanne knelt and said, as she embraced his knees and wept, 'Oh, gentle king, God's will has been accomplished! He ordained that I should cause the siege of Orleans to be raised, and that I should bring you to Rheims to be crowned, thus showing that you are the true king, and that to you the kingdom of France belongs by right.'

Yes, Jeanne had been permitted to accomplish the Will of God. She had fulfilled her mission; and from that time a presentiment of her own fate seems to have brooded over her. Even from the beginning, indeed, she had said: 'Make use of me now, for I shall live little more than a year.' And the fulfilment of the foreboding was drawing near. The regent Bedford and the duke of Burgundy were again friends. Vigorous preparations were making for the defence
of Paris, but Charles was sunk in indolence. Vainly Jeanne strove to rouse him, and when she failed, she undertook herself to urge the French generals to action. Paris was reached first. The army of Charles was repulsed in an attack on the Porte St. Honoré, and Charles led his army back to the further side of the Loire. Jeanne's heart sunk. The king, indeed, bestowed honours upon her, and granted letters of nobility to her family and their descendants, and exempted her village from taxes. But what was this compared with the deliverance of France from the English yoke!

The winter came, and nothing was done or could be done. In the spring of 1430 Jeanne again renewed the war, and appears to have exercised civil as well as military authority. In an engagement fought near Lagny, she captured a ferocious brigand, and delivered him up to execution. The man richly deserved his fate, but the Burgundian party were incensed, and when the hour of revenge came they exacted it to the full. By this time Jeanne seems to have lost somewhat of the womanly tenderness that had made her shrink from the sight of blood. But her simplicity was unchanged, and she never looked upon herself as aught but the humble peasant girl, whose influence was derived solely from God. She pretended to no power of foretelling events, and when asked to consecrate crosses and chaplets by touching them, she laughed, and said to dame Margaret, the woman in whose house she lodged at Bourges, 'Touch them yourself; they will be just as good.'

But the humility and purity which strengthened her general influence only increased the malice of her enemies, both secret and avowed. Treachery was the one thing which Jeanne dreaded. As the spring advanced she accompanied the French army to Compiegne, which was immediately besieged by Philip of Burgundy; and as she went on a certain day to receive the Eucharist in the church of St. Jacques she leaned sadly against a pillar, and said to the assembled crowd: 'My good friends and my dear children, I tell you surely that there is one who has sold me to the enemy. I am betrayed, and soon I shall be delivered over to death. Pray God for me, I beseech you, for I shall no longer be able to serve my king, nor the noble kingdom of France.'

The following day, the 23rd of May, she made a vigorous sortie at the head of a body of troops. The Burgundians were vastly superior in numbers, and the Maid and her soldiers were driven back; but the drawbridge had been raised, and the gates were closed against them. Jeanne defended herself bravely, but when further resistance was seen to be useless, she delivered up her sword to John of Luxembourg, a vassal of the duke of Burgundy.

The English were bent upon obtaining possession of her person. So enraged were they against her, that a poor woman had been
burnt alive by them merely for saying that she thought her a good woman, and regarded her as a sorceress. They now sent a message in the name of the vicar of the Inquisition at Rome, demanding that Jeanne should be delivered into their hands. The vicar of the Inquisition was, indeed, a man of no influence, but his instigator was cardinal Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, Bedford’s brother, a prelate whose hatred it was well known would be deadly.

For the sum of ten thousand francs Jeanne was sold to the duke of Bedford, and early in the month of November she was taken to Rouen, placed in an iron cage, and heavily chained.

A trial before the ecclesiastical tribunal would be the surest way of effecting her ruin, and Pierre Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, in whose diocese she had been taken prisoner, undertook the enquiry as to Jeanne’s pretensions, her character, and conduct. He was assisted by fifty doctors of the Sorbonne, and the vicar of the inquisitor-general for France.

For sixteen days the trial was carried on. The accusations chiefly related to Jeanne’s supposed sorcery, and to certain heretical opinions which it was said she entertained, and also to the fact that she had assumed the dress of a boy. The Maid herself insisted upon the reality of the visions and voices which had urged her to her mission; but her examiners contrived to find twelve articles of accusation which were said to be proved, and she was threatened with death by fire unless she would confess and retract. In accordance with this decision, on an appointed day, the cardinal bishop of Winchester, two judges, and twenty-three assessors, took their places on a platform erected in the church-yard of St. Ouen; whilst on an opposite platform stood Jeanne, in her customary man’s dress, and around her the torturers, the notaries to receive her confession, and a preacher who was to admonish her. In the distance was to be seen the executioner with his cart, ready to carry her off as soon as she should be condemned.

The preacher—the most famous of his day—William Erard, began his speech. ‘O noble house of France,’ he said, ‘hitherto the protector of the faith, how hast thou been thus deceived by a heretic and schismatic! It is to thee, Jeanne, that I address myself, and I tell thee that thy king is a heretic and a schismatic.’

‘Sir,’ exclaimed Jeanne, forgetting her danger and interrupting him, ‘on my faith, with all reverence, I say and swear that he is the most noble of all Christians, that he is the one who loves best the faith and the church. He is not what you say.’

‘Silence her instantly!’ cried the bishop of Beauvais, who was present, and a long examination then began, mingled with arguments and threats. Jeanne was at length induced to sign a retraction of her supposed errors. A pen was placed in her hands, but she
could not write, and with a smile she drew a circle. The secretary took her hand and caused her to make a cross.

The sentence of grace was very severe. 'Jeanne, in our mercy and moderation we condemn you to pass the rest of your days in prison, there to weep for your sins, eating the bread of grief and drinking the water of anguish.'

Jeanne, obedient to her judges, had before this given up her boy's dress, but there seems no doubt that when she was sent back to prison her enemies secretly compelled her to resume it, and then charged it upon her as a sin; and when in addition she announced that a voice from heaven had told her that she ought not to have abjured to save her life, her fate was certain. She was declared a relapsed heretic, and delivered over to the civil authority to receive the terrible punishment of death by burning.

The bishop of Beauvais sent a confessor to announce the sentence. Jeanne burst forth in horror: 'Alas! must I be treated so cruelly? Must my body be reduced to ashes? I would rather have been beheaded seven times, than to be thus burnt.'

Still she buoyed herself up with the belief that some one would interpose. She trusted in the king and in the 'good people of France.' But Charles made not the slightest effort for her. Swayed by the influence of La Trémouille, and of the archbishop of Rheims, who was Jeanne's deadly enemy, he set aside every sentiment of generosity and humanity, and left the unhappy girl to her fate.

When on the fatal day Jeanne's last hope had forsaken her, and she was about to be fastened to the stake in the old market-place of Rouen, the simple spirit of fervent piety which had marked her earliest years again supported her. She knelt in prayer, invoking God, the Virgin, and the saints, asking pardon of her fellow-creatures, and bestowing it; and earnestly she entreated the priests to say, each one of them, a mass for her soul. Even the bishop of Beauvais shed tears, and the cardinal bishop of Winchester lamented; but neither prelate nor noble raised a voice or an arm to save her.

The crowd looked on horror-struck, still and silent. Jeanne as she beheld them exclaimed, 'Ah! Rouen, Rouen! I fear that thou wilt have much to suffer from my death.'

They put a paper mitre on her head on which was written, 'Heretic, Relapsed, Apostate, Idolater.' And then she was fastened to the stake. At the moment when the flames touched her she uttered one cry of agony, but recovering herself instantly, she called upon God and His angels and exclaimed, 'Yes, my voices were from God! My voices have not deceived me.' Then her head sank upon her breast, and her last word was 'Jesus!'

Ten thousand men wept. The executioner that night went in terror to his confessor, acknowledging his grievous sin, and unable
was now in Paris. He had been brought there in December of winter, about the time that Jeanne d'Arc was made the little English monarch was now nine years old, a child of health, who seemed already marked for suffering. Though France, he yet knew little of those from whom he derived his name of the French throne. His grandmother, Isabeau, was at the Hôtel St. Pol, but he had no intercourse with her; only when he was taken by the bishop of Winchester through the streets, the carriage stopped before the palace, and the pale, as he looked up at the windows, saw the figure of a lady there, and was told that it was his grandmother. They touched each other for a few moments, and then the young king, in salutation, and the aged Isabeau made a humble bow to him as her king, and turning away, burst into tears. His disposition was gentle; in a private station he might have been, but he was wholly unfit for government, and his education, the stern earl of Warwick weakened even the little self-reliance which he naturally possessed. His life was one of humiliation, which began even with his coronation. His coronation was according to the English customs. It was not a coronation of the king, but of the bishop of Winchester who placed the crown of France on his head. The little, pale, weak boy, although he was afterwards allowed a solemn and public interview with her grandchild. As for Katharine, from whom he derived his claim, she was in Wales, having already married Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman. The great king of Paris had no attention shown them on the occasion.
they should have had more done for them at the marriage of a goldsmith. The ill-feeling soon became so marked that it was thought advisable that Henry should be taken to Rouen. There he was lodged in the castle not far from the prison of the Maid of Orleans, and soon afterwards he was carried back to England.

The feeble tie that attached the duke of Burgundy to the English party was by this time thoroughly weakened. The duke had learnt to estimate at its true value the apparent friendship of the regent Bedford and his brother Gloucester. He had in his possession secret letters in which the earl of Gloucester informed the regent that efforts were being made to bring back Philip of Burgundy to the party of Charles. He proposed, therefore, that Philip should be arrested. Bedford's reply was that it would be better to have him killed at the jousts in Paris. A subsequent letter stated that the opportunity for this had failed, but that he might be taken and carried off on his journey. With such a correspondence in his hands, it was natural that Philip should feel the moment arrived for breaking off his alliance with the English. The duchess of Bedford, who was his sister, died about this time (1432), and the regent, then forty years old, without giving any notice to the duke of Burgundy, almost immediately married a pretty young girl of seventeen, the daughter of the comte de St. Pol. The duke's indignation on this occasion plainly showed that an open rupture was at hand. One difficulty in the way of reconciliation with Charles was the duke's personal enmity to the family of Anjou, who were the king's near relations; but this obstacle was removed by the chivalrous and kind-hearted René, count of Anjou, who, having fought against the Burgundian party and been taken prisoner, amused himself in his captivity by painting pictures for churches; and when Philip of Burgundy came to see him, presented him with a likeness of Jean Sans Peur. It was impossible after this to be his enemy, and the duke restored René to liberty under certain stipulations.

And if the duke of Burgundy would fain have had some settlement of affairs which should rid the country of the English, much more were the wisest counsellors of Charles impatient for the same end. The only person who was inclined to put obstacles in the way was the unworthy favourite, La Trémouille, and Charles was compelled to consent to his arrest and imprisonment. The comte de Richemont was now at the head of the king's council, and at length it was definitely agreed with the duke of Burgundy that a general congress of European princes should be convened at Arras to consider the possible conditions of peace (1435).

It was a grand assembly. To it came the ecclesiastical ambassadors from the council of Basle, which was then sitting; those also of the Pope, the emperor, the kings of Castile, Aragon, Naples,
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VII.

march, and various other powers. England was represented by
a cardinal bishop of Winchester. The question to be first de-
ded was that of the rival claims of Charles VII. of France and
Henry VI. of England, but upon this point the demands of the
English were held to be perfectly inadmissible, for they insisted that
Charles should leave Henry in undisturbed possession of the king-
nom. The English commissioners departed unsatisfied, and the
ends of Charles then turned to the duke of Burgundy, demanding
open support. The duke hesitated. 'His honour,' he said, 'was
stake. He had signed the treaty of Troyes, and thus had ac-
knowledged Henry V. of England to be the successor of Charles VI.;
I was he not also bound to revenge the murder of his father?" A
strong consultation followed, in which, in order to leave everyone free
to say what he thought, the parties whose rights and duties were
assured were called Darius and Ahaseurus. The conclusion finally
lived at was that the treaty of Troyes was invalid, because it con-
cluded agreements which Charles VI. had no power to make. The
use of Burgundy was only too willing to accept this interpretation,
and not the death of the regent Bedford, which took place at Rouen
while the discussions at Arras were still going on, seems finally to
have decided him. His engagements had been made to the regent
personally (such was the reasoning of the age) by the death of
Bedford; therefore he was released from them, and only one diffi-
culty, that of his father's murder, remained. Before the duke of
Burgundy would be satisfied upon this matter Charles was called
on to own that at the time of the murder he was young and
inexperienced, and ill-advised, and to promise that he would now use all
time and diligence to discover and punish the offenders. He also undertook
to found an expiatory chapel and a monastery at Montereau, and to
set up a stone cross upon the bridge. The ceremony of recon-
ciliation took place publicly in a church at Arras. The dean of
the city, on the part of the king, threw himself at the feet of duke
Philip, and craved forgiveness for the murder of Jean Sans Peur;
the duke raised and embraced him, and declared that from
forthwith there should never be war between king Charles and
himself. The duke of Bourbon and the constable De Richemont,
dveral other French and Burgundian nobles also swore peace.
The general reconciliation was completed by the marriage of
Philip of Burgundy with the daughter of the king of
of Anjou. René had, as was before stated, been released
on bail on certain conditions, when he presented the duke of
Burgundy with the handsome portrait of Jean Sans Peur; but finding
that he could not keep the conditions, he had voluntarily returned
prison. Now Philip of Burgundy again released him, and remitted
portion of his ransom in favour of a marriage which, by closely
uniting the three great branches of the royal family to each other, and to the king, rendered the full restoration of Charles to his legitimate position almost a certainty.

It is remarkable that at the very time when the hopes of the king were thus raised, his mother, Isabeau of Bavaria, died in neglect and obscurity at Paris. Her selfishness, profligacy, and utter disregard of parental duty, had awakened universal contempt. She was buried at St. Denis without any show of royal honours; and when a monument was afterwards erected over her, the sculptor, instead of placing at her feet, according to the fashion of the time, the figure of a dog, substituted that of a wolf.

The peace of Arras was a death-blow to the English. In the spring of the following year, 1436, their forces left Paris amidst the shouts and taunts of the populace; and the following year, November 1437, king Charles made his triumphal entry. He had not visited his capital since—nineteen years before—he had been carried off by his mother and the Armagnac princes, when Jean Sans Peur took possession of it. He was received enthusiastically, but was unable long to remain there, for a dreadful epidemic broke out, and the streets were so deserted that wolves again made their appearance, and fourteen persons are said to have been devoured by them in one week.

Civil war had indeed left fatal effects everywhere. In the provinces the soldiers, unused to labour, became brigands. They called themselves 'écorceurs,' or flayers, and were under the command of leaders such as La Hire and Santraillies, who had distinguished themselves at the siege of Orleans. The constable De Richemont waged a fairly successful war against them, but they were not entirely subdued until the king, roused, it is said, by the remonstrance of his favourite, Agnes Sorel, a woman of talent as well as beauty, convoked the States-General at Orleans in 1439, and published, with their concurrence, an ordinance by which it was declared high treason for any nobleman to call soldiers on his own account, whilst at the same time it was decreed to establish a permanent army, the officers being nominated by the king. This increase of royal power awakened discontent among the nobles, and several of them leagued with the 'écorceurs' to resist it. A new form of insurrection was the result. It was called the Praguerie, in reference to a religious war at that time carrying on in Germany, between the Hussites, or Reformers of Bohemia, and the Roman Catholics. Louis, the Dauphin, the dukes of Bourron and Alençon, and the loyal Dunois joined it; but the king, supported by the duke of Burgundy and the constable De Richemont, was soon able to make head against it.

In 1440 the duke of Orleans was released from his long captivity.
 incapacity of Henry VI. In 1444 a truce for twenty-two
was concluded, and in the hope of effecting the much-
peace by a marriage, it was agreed that Marguerite, the
and beautiful daughter of René of Anjou, and niece of the
France, should become the bride of Henry VI. of England.
marriage was solemnised at Nancy, early in 1445; but the
was broken, and war renewed and carried on to the disad-
of the English till the year 1453. Then, when the brave
earl of Shrewsbury, who, at the age of eighty, commanded
lish forces, was, with his son, mortally wounded in a battle
on, the last hope of retaining the French possessions on the
was over. Bitter had been the warfare for 120 years; now
nuing save Calais and Guines was lost. It must have been a
for English pride, but looking back after the experience of
an 400 years, there is probably no one who would, in the
ay, hesitate to own that the restoration of the provinces once
 coveted would be not only an injustice to France, but a
urse to England, entailing as it must an inextinguishable
between the two nations.
the same year, 1453, was marked by another event of the
importance to Europe, the taking of Constantinople by the
Latin Empire, which had been established by Baldwin de
i in 1204, lasted about fifty years. It was then uprooted,
Greek princes were reinstated. The Eastern Empire was,
falling to decay, and its sovereigns proved wholly unable
and the constant attacks of the Turks, who were advancing
cast into Europe. By degrees the empire lost almost
France being freed from the English rule, it might have been hoped that the sad and stormy life of Charles VII. would have been marked by peace at its close, but so it was not destined to be; for the conduct of the Dauphin, Louis, brought the king greater grief than he could have experienced even in the desperate struggle of the civil wars.

Singularly precocious, having never, it would seem, known childhood or youth, the restless, keen-sighted, selfish Dauphin had from the age of fourteen placed himself in opposition to his father. At sixteen he would fain have joined with those who desired to dethrone Charles; and though he was forgiven and had considerable scattered domains assigned him, his ambitious spirit was still dissatisfied. He desired the possession of some large province, such as Normandy, Guienne, or Languedoc. With either of these under his authority he would have found no difficulty in seizing more. He might, perhaps, have succeeded, but for the influence of Agnes Sorel and Pierre de Brézé, the king’s minister. Supported by them, Charles refused his demands, and Louis then retired to his own territory of Dauphiny, where he kept up a kind of court, frequented by his father’s enemies. His young wife, Margaret, daughter of James I. of Scotland, heartbroken from his ill-treatment, died of an illness which might have been cured, but the remedies for which she rejected, saying, ‘Fie upon life! speak of it no more.’ Louis then married a princess of Savoy, in direct opposition to the wishes of Charles, and maintained a great show of intimacy with the duke of Burgundy, the avowed rival of the French monarch, and at length he left France altogether and took up his residence at Brussels.

The court of Burgundy was at this time the centre of the chivalry and luxury of Christendom. The institution of the Order of the Golden Fleece attracted the bravest knights to Philip’s camp; and the most beautiful women to his court; and his fêtes were on a scale of extravagant, though uncouth, magnificence which in the present day appears almost fabulous. But these brilliant scenes had a serious side: the great nobles of Christendom visited the duke of Burgundy’s court for pleasure, but they remained for business. All who had any private enmity against the king of France had but to repair to Brussels to find encouragement in their rebellions longings, and at the head of the discontented nobles was the Dauphin.

When Charles heard of his flight and his reception at the court of Burgundy, he remarked, ‘The duke is harbouring a fox who will eat up his poultry;’ but Philip himself apparently had no such fears. He and his duchess treated the Dauphin almost as if he were king, whilst Louis, on the other hand, exhibited himself in the character of the most forlorn, forsaken, pitiable prince in the world. He brought tears into the eyes of his listeners as he spoke of the persecutions he had endured.
Charles VII.

The duke offered to put everything at his disposal—himself, his subjects, his treasure, only he was not prepared to furnish the Dauphin with an army which would enable him to return to France and make his father prisoner. Affairs were not as yet in condition for such a step. He was himself old, his dominions were not quite secure. The duchy of Burgundy was made up of too many parts to be easily governed. The Burgundians were French by origin, and spoke French, but in other parts of the duke’s territory there were at least twenty or thirty different dialects, a circumstance which in itself involved perpetual risk of misunderstandings and feuds. The great commercial cities of Ghent and Bruges, moreover, were always on the verge of insurrection, whilst in other parts variety in government brought conflicting interests in daily life. Liege was subject to its bishop. Namur was entirely feudal in its rule, the affairs of Luxembourg were mixed up with those of the German empire, and between Luxembourg and Brabant there was a small territory whose sympathies were entirely French.

The Dauphin, residing at the court of Philip as a fugitive, was precisely in the position which could best enable him to see the weak points in its apparent greatness. He could observe and think. He waited patiently at Genappe, near Brussels, living with difficulty upon the pension granted him by the duke, and when he wanted more money, pledging his wife’s dowry and borrowing from the Flemish merchants.

He was friendly with everyone, and his only business was to be a pleasant companion, to laugh and make others laugh. Being an insatiable reader, he sent for his library from Dauphigny, and it is probable that he was one of the first possessors of the printed books which began to be circulated at this period. But his taste was very different from that of Philip of Burgundy, who delighted in the long, chivalrous romances of the time. The Dauphin liked tales which were far from pure, and was a clever relater of anecdotes of the same character, and by means of which he could throw ridicule upon his rather precise, though brave and noble cousin the comte de Charolais. The stiffness of the Burgundian court was wearisome to him. His dry, shrewd mind found no interest in the past, and could admire nothing and no one in the present, except, perhaps, the new duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, who had lately raised himself from being a leader of one of the numerous bands of hired soldiers called ‘condottieri,’ which were employed in the wars of the period, to the lordship of one of the noblest states in Italy. Between Sforza and the Dauphin there was always a close understanding, but for anyone besides Louis might profess friendship, but he certainly did not feel it; and during his residence at Brussels the only two objects which he seems to have
had at heart were to drive his father to despair and to undermine the power of the prince who was sheltering him.

The first object was quickly accomplished. The conviction of his son’s baseness crushed Charles to the dust. Tormented by the idea that the Dauphin was conspiring against his life, he sank into a state of imbecility, which was almost insanity. At length he absolutely refused to take any nourishment, and, after a total abstinence of seven days, he died on the 22nd of July, 1461, at the age of fifty-eight.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LOUIS XI.

A.D. 1461-1483.

The nobles of France wept at the funeral of Charles VII., and not without cause. His funeral was in a certain sense their own, for it betokened the extinction of their feudal power. The shout of ‘Vive le roi!’ raised over the coffin of the dead monarch found little response from them. Dunois, who had lived through anarchy and civil war, and could fully appreciate the blessings of an undisturbed government, only murmured in a low voice, ‘Let everyone look out for himself.’

The French nobles took the advice and hastened to meet their new sovereign, who, on the tidings of his father’s death, at once prepared to leave Flanders. The duke of Burgundy made a great show of his protection. ‘I intend,’ he said, ‘to take the king to Rheims for his coronation with 100,000 men in my train.’ The speech was reported to Louis, who enquired drily of the sire de Croye, the duke’s confidant, ‘Why does my fair uncle wish to take with him so large a force? Am I not king? What is he afraid of?’ And the duke was persuaded to dismiss the larger portion of his followers.

The journey was not one of mere pomp. Louis XI., from the first moment of his accession, showed himself resolved to exercise his independent authority. Concessions were granted to the towns, changes made in the local governments without consultation or advice from any person. Up to this period he had lived without trust in any human being, and without trust he was prepared to reign. His chief source of anxiety arose from the Burgundian nobles. They had been his intimate companions; he had talked with one, followed the chase with another, and been entertained by all generously. Now they would expect rewards, which Louis was by no means prepared to give. But he kept his own counsel, and the only
disturbance on the journey arose from the multitude of complimentary addresses which everywhere greeted him. But they were cut short; some of his liege subjects were told not to approach; upon others he turned his back; and those who had prepared a learned harangue were directed to be brief. The bishop of Lisieux made a long speech upon the necessity of lessening the taxes, and the crafty Louis begged the prelate to put his speech into writing; that he might be able to refresh his memory with it when he had leisure.

He was still mean in his outward appearance, and the coronation at Rheims was the triumph of the duke of Burgundy rather than the king of France. The duke, on his splendid horse, in the midst of his archers and pages, looked like an emperor. The king, shabbily dressed, went before him as if merely to announce his coming. It would have seemed indeed as if the whole object of the ceremonial was to contrast the power of the two sovereigns. As the procession entered Rheims, all eyes were attracted by the Burgundian knights—men and horses alike covered with velvet, gold, and precious stones. The banner of the duke floated over 140 magnificent chariots, bearing gold and silver plate, money to be thrown to the people, and even choice wines for the feast; whilst behind were the animals destined for the coronation banquet—the small sheep of Ardennes and the fat bullocks of Flanders.

The king, on the other hand, appeared as a man belonging to another world, humble, penitent, and rigidly devout. After midnight on the eve of the coronation he heard matins and communicated. In the morning he was early in the choir of the church—awaiting the arrival of the procession with the sacred anointing oil. As it drew near, he hastened forward and threw himself on his knees, and when the bishop of Laon would have raised him, he still continued kneeling. The same show of humility continued during the day.

The ceremony of anointing being performed, the king ascended his throne, and the duke of Burgundy, as first peer of the realm, rose, held up the crown that all might see it, and then, after a long pause, gently rested it upon the king’s head, and exclaimed, ‘Vive le roi, Montjoie St. Denis!’ and a responsive shout rose from the assembled crowd. At the banquet the king appeared wearing his crown, but it was too large; he quietly took it off and laid it by his side, whilst, leaving the princes almost without notice, he talked freely with one of his attendants, Philippe Pol, a shrewd, clever man who stood behind his chair. He was obliged, however, at length to give his attention elsewhere, for a great noise was heard, and there entered the banquet hall a body of men bearing ornaments and cups of gold, which were the presents made to the king by the duke of Burgundy in honour of the joyous occasion. Philip was indeed full of courtesy on this
day. He must have felt himself the real master of the kingdom, and it would matter little to him to pay outward homage to his liege lord. Even in Paris, where he had not made his appearance for nine-and-twenty years, the citizens in the old quarter of the city where his palace stood had never forgotten him, and on his entrance he had been thus accosted by a butcher, 'Oh, free-hearted, noble duke of Burgundy, welcome to the city of Paris! Long is it since you were here, and much has your presence been desired.' And now the duke undertook to do justice and to confer favours, and monks, beggars, ladies who had lost their fortunes, clergy whose churches were out of repair, all flocked to him with petitions. At the gates of his palace, the Hôtel d'Artois, to increase his popularity, an open table was kept, and three knights were always in attendance to exhibit the famous Gideon tapestry and the gorgeous velvet furniture. But a still more open display was needed by the duke, and it was proposed to hold a tournament, at which there was no doubt he would win all hearts. On the morning appointed, his own horses not being ready at the precise time, he mounted the hackney of his niece, the duchess of Orleans, and taking her behind him, and placing one of her young attendants, a beautiful girl of fifteen, before him, he trotted through the streets to the lists, whilst all the people cried, 'Look at the kind prince, a prince whom anyone might wish to serve! Happy are those whom he loves! Ah, he is not like our king, who wears an old grey coat and a rosary, and hates nothing but joy.'

But they were wrong, for the king in the grey coat had his own special little pleasure on that day; and when the comte de Charolais and Adolphus of Cleves, and all the great Flemish nobles had jostled nobly, there came forward a rough man-at-arms, dressed in goat-skin, but well mounted, who, being paid especially by Louis, rushed into the lists and overthrew the whole set of nobles, to the intense satisfaction of the king, who was looking at them from behind a curtain.

He would not publicly appear, though the tournament was held at the very gates of his residence, the Hôtel des Tournelles. A vast, dreary, half-furnished dwelling it was, little fitted for fêtes. And the king's whim was to live there as if in camp, with the few servants he had brought from Flanders. In the grey cape and spatterdashes which he continued to wear as he had done when an exile, he looked as if always preparing for a journey, and anyone who had seen him as he sat in his gloomy palace, scheming and planning, might have taken him for a spirit condemned unwillingly to haunt the home of his ancestors.

Only in the evening he went out, with a man named Bische, who had formerly been useful to him as a spy over his father, and who alone had admittance to him at all hours.
FOREIGN PLANS—DEPARTURE OF PHILIP—PRAGMATIC SANCTION. 237

Bische was especially necessary now; Louis was planning to
in from Philip of Burgundy the fortresses on the Somme, by
such the duke could overawe France, and by making friends with
the English in Calais, admit a foreign enemy into the country; and
he was always kept near the comte de Châlons to induce him
to enter into the scheme, and persuade the old duke to meet the
shoes of the French king. Louis was himself apparently devoted
the comte, whom he caressed, as the dearest of his friends. He
was also to win over to his side the sire de Croye, the duke of Bur-
undy’s favourite minister, offering him pensions, lands, offices, any
thing which might tempt him to desert his master’s interests
those of France. The duke, after a time, took his leave of
ris, but he departed far from satisfied. Louis after all had only
ooked him. He had bestowed upon him thanks and honours, but
thing else. Permission had been given him to name twenty-four
unsellors for the parliament, but not one took his seat. A free
ofic of merchandise had been granted to Burgundy, but the parlia-
ment refused to register the edict. When the duke was out of
ris the governor of the Bastille hurried after him, and offered him
the king’s part the keys of the fortress; but it was a little too
for such a mark of confidence. The magnificent duke had, in
it, gained nothing from his visit to Rheims and Paris but external
atness.

And now, being left free, Louis proceeded to carry out his
fully-mediated plan for concentrating all authority in the
ands of the sovereign. He began by depriving the nobles of a
wige granted by Charles VII. of giving away vacant benefices.
act, called the Pragmatic Sanction, was considered the
at safeguard of the French, or Gallican Church, as it prevented the
pes from bestowing the vacant offices on their own friends. But
ouis professed to be extremely scandalised at it. He even doubted
ether his father’s salvation could be secure whilst it remained un-
sealed. He insisted that a pontifical absolution should be pro-
ce over Charles at St. Denis before he could admit himself
be satisfied; and when, at his request, the Pope despatched a bull
lishing the Pragmatic Sanction, Louis seized it, read it devoutly,
ired, kissed it, and declared that it should be kept for ever in a
den box. It was deserving of such appreciation no doubt, for from
enceforth Louis intended to take ecclesiastical offices into his own
nds, and by bestowing them on his supporters to pay them for any
ices he might require.

Having thus strengthened his authority at home, Louis turned
attention to affairs abroad. The Spanish kingdom of Aragon
at that time threatened with civil war. Its sovereign, John II,
robbed his eldest son Carlos, prince of Viana, of the inheritance
of Navarre, which had descended to him from his mother. John’s subjects—especially the Catalans—espoused the cause of Carlos, whose talents and virtues had greatly endeared him to them. They rose in insurrection, and when the prince was taken prisoner and died, not without suspicion of poison, they applied to Louis for support, declaring that Don Carlos on his death-bed had begged him to undertake their defence. Louis could not refuse such a pious legacy, but before he ventured to engage openly against the king of Aragon, it was needful to guard against any interference from his great feudal barons. The surest mode of preventing this was to excite disputes amongst them. The duke of Brittany was made his lieutenant for eight months in the provinces between the Seine and the Loire, or in other words, in the half of Normandy. But the comte de Charolais had a claim upon Normandy, for Louis had once pretended to give the whole of the province to him. Of course, therefore, the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany were ready for a quarrel, and Louis had no cause to fear their uniting against him. In the same way he awoke enmity between the houses of Bourbon and Anjou, taking Guienne from the duke of Bourbon and giving it, with Languedoc, to the brother of René of Anjou. The power was only nominal, for the king had taken care to place his own friends in positions of trust in the provinces; but the arrangement served its purpose. The two dukes had enough to do in settling their own affairs without troubling themselves about his; and when all this was done, Louis was able to prepare for the business he was undertaking in the south by solemnly—religiously according to his notions of religion—making offerings to saints and churches, especially undertaking a pilgrimage to Brittany. These Breton pilgrimages had a singular attraction for him as well as for his subjects. The stations, situated for the most part on the borders of France, gave him an opportunity of wandering about and spying out everything which was going on. On this occasion the king expressed himself particularly curious to visit the shrine of his patron St. Saviour of Redon, who he declared had protected him in his adversity. He set out alone, desiring not to be troubled in his devotions, and by the sound of a trumpet it was proclaimed that no one was to follow him on pain of death. He chose to travel as a poor man, for such he had been in those bygone days, and with only five attendants, like himself poorly clad. He had a guard, indeed, but far behind, and cannon and culverin under the command of a good officer; but the preparations for war moved on peaceably, noiselessly, giving no cause for alarm. From Redon Louis went to Nantes, and the frightened duke of Brittany thought he intended to carry off from that place the rich dowager duchess of Brittany and marry her; but he passed on
to Rochelle, Tours, Bayonne, always as he went winning the regard of the citizens by confirming old privileges, granting new ones, and being considered the good-hearted friend of everyone of inferior degree. As the king of France drew nearer to Spain, the king of Aragon took a new view of his position. Louis had never openly given his support to the rebellion; he was not bound to these Catalans, and he might even turn to the other side if sufficient inducement were offered. Whilst still on the road to the south a negotiation had been opened by him with the king of Aragon's son-in-law, the comte de Foix, and if the border provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne were pledged to him, with their revenues as security, it was nearly certain that he would give up the Catalans and aid John of Aragon with a body of French lances.

The king of Aragon hesitated to make this cession, but he was in too perilous a position finally to refuse his consent; and Louis retraced his steps, not having fought a single battle, yet enriched by a present hold upon two important provinces, and with the prospect of permanently making him his own. This was in the second year of his reign, 1462. And now he proposed to carry out that first wish of his heart, the possession of the towns on the Somme.

Philip of Burgundy was by this time ill as well as old, suffering much from gout and asthma, but much more from his tyrants—Louis XI. and the comte de Charolais. The comte, who had a proud, violent temper, was constantly quarrelling with the French king upon questions of jurisdiction connected with the border towns; and these disturbances made the duke miserable. His subjects were scarcely less so, for every fresh illness made them tremble for his life, and with him would, they well knew, depart all that had secured to them a peaceable existence.

The Croye family were especially anxious. The comte de Charolais detested them, and they knew it. In their fear and ambition they began to collect arms, and take possession of fortified places; and Louis, who knew everything that was going on in Flanders, by his secret machinations urged them forward. Then, when they had gone so far that their position became perilous, he professed himself willing to support them if only they would succeed in obtaining from the duke of Burgundy the cession of the towns on the Somme.

The sire de Croye had no alternative. To lose the favour of Louis was to become the victim of the enmity of the comte de Charolais. He endeavoured to persuade the old duke that it was for his interest to give up what Louis desired to have. Philip could not be made to believe, but he could be persuaded to act; and, conquered at length by weariness of the subject, he signed the agreement. Yet with one hope of escape: Louis was to give 400,000
crowns as the price of the cities; and how was so large a sum to be obtained?

But he did not understand the man with whom he had to deal. By borrowing, entreat ing, begging, and plundering, Louis raised the money, and, to the great disappointment of Philip of Burgundy, it was ready on the appointed day; and the duke as he received it turned reproachfully to his favourite and said, 'Croye, Croye, no man can serve two masters.'

Louis was now beginning to feel himself really powerful. He ruled Burgundy by the sire de Croye, he was the intimate ally of Sforza in Italy, he was carrying on cunning negotiations with the Swiss, and in England he was the acknowledged friend of the all-powerful earl of Warwick, who, in the civil war between the houses of York and Lancaster, made and unmade kings at his pleasure. At home he governed by sowing dissension, whilst at the same time he gathered around him the sons of the great nobles, professing to educate and treat them as his children. The heir of the house of Albret, the children of the count of Alençon, the young count of Foix, whom he had made his brother-in-law, and the little duke of Orleans, whom he intended should one day be his son-in-law, were all brought up at his court. Never had any king so many children round him. It seemed as if, like the kind father of a family, he could not do without them. And it was true he could not, for they were hostages for the good conduct of their relations. Universal distrust was in fact the guiding principle of the king's actions; the only persons in whom he placed any confidence were new men—men whom he had himself raised, and some whom he had first ruined and then re-established. He respected none except those who were strong enough to do him injury. But Louis had one enemy whom he did not even endeavour to make his friend—the comte de Chalons. Grieveously angered by the conduct of Louis, and especially by the cession of the towns on the Somme, the comte looked upon Louis as his deadly rival, and their mutual ill-will showed itself in perpetual provocations and retaliations destined to produce fatal results, more especially to Burgundy. By his own subjects Louis was universally dreaded and hated. His secret and apparently irresistible power was crushing every class in the kingdom. Old customs were overthrown, old privileges disregarded; the clergy were robbed of their revenues, the citizens and merchants found their traffic interfered with. Yet no one dared rebel, for the king's spies were ubiquitous, and his rapid, restless, searching eyes seemed to discover what was passing in the world, in the kingdom, in each man's breast. The crowning act of tyranny in the sight of the nobles was that of forbidding them to pursue the amusement of the chase. Even at his accession Louis had shown his intentions upon
this point. The sire de Montmorency having on one occasion the honour of receiving the king at his castle, arranged a hunting expedition for him, and with that view collected together all kinds of implements for the chase. When Louis arrived he ordered them to be collected together in a heap and burnt. This was but one specimen of a deliberate determination at length carried into effect. But to forbid the chase was to the nobles an unpardonable injury. It drove them to desperation, and in their desperation they pondered not only upon their own grievances, but upon those of the nation; and the result in the year 1465 was a league which was to shake the power of the hated Louis to its centre.

At the head of this league, known as the League of the Public Good, was the comte de Charolais, who entered into a strict alliance with the duke of Brittany, the two princes being soon joined by the dukes of Bourbon, Lorraine, Alençon, and Nemours. The duke of Brittany had long been at open enmity with Louis, for he was in fact an independent sovereign, only bound to France by the feudal tie of homage, and the king’s endeavour to interfere in several instances in the affairs of the duchy was regarded as a dire insult.

The resources of Louis were weak. He could reckon indeed upon aid from Francesco Sforza, who offered to send him a body of troops under the command of his son Galeazzo; but of the twenty-four provinces into which France was divided, only fourteen really belonged to the king, and these could not be depended upon.

The first need in such a crisis was to know everything and to know it quickly, and Louis was no sooner aware of the combination of the nobles than he established posts at every four leagues, with relays of horses, which, on pain of death, were to be used only for the king’s service; and then, after endeavouring to justify his acts by making explanations to the cities and provinces which thought they had causes of complaint against him, he convoked an assembly of the princes, and, in a speech which he intended should be touching, spoke to them of his exiled, miserable life before his accession and the burden of government which now rested upon him; reminded them of the increase of the French territory by the addition of Roussillon and Cerdagne and the towns on the Somme, and called upon them to bear witness to the incessant labour by which he maintained peace in his dominions.

The princes applauded. ‘No sovereign,’ they said, ‘had ever spoken more honestly and openly.’ Some were even affected to tears. Old René, of Anjou, stood up and declared that they were one and all devoted to the king, and he spoke for himself in all sincerity; but the rest of the princes, notwithstanding their tears, had in their
possession the treaty which bound them to the comte de Charolais, and they were fully determined to carry it out.

The duke of Brittany now sent to the king an embassy headed by his special favourite. Louis caressed the favourite, and thought he had gained him to his side; but when he departed he found that the ambassador had carried away with him the duke of Berri, the king’s brother, a youth of eighteen; and soon afterwards there appeared a manifesto from the young prince, stating that his brother governed so badly that the kingdom would be lost if he (the duke of Berri) did not take measures to save it.

The open declaration of war soon followed, and the position of affairs was certainly awkward for the king. His chief hope of success lay in rapidity. If he could attack his enemies separately before they could unite, he might hope to overpower them. His preparations were admirable. His army was small, not above twelve or thirteen hundred, but everyone knew his place and his duty; and the arrangements were such that labourers, shopkeepers, and clergy pursued their usual avocations as easily as in a time of peace. His danger was treachery: some of his nobles still professed to adhere to him, but they might at any moment forsake him.

The comte de Charolais advanced into France with a large army, everywhere proclaiming that he was coming for the good of the kingdom, and as the lieutenant of the duke of Berri. Paris was his destination, but Louis was bent upon taking possession of the capital before he could reach it. Following out the plan of separate attacks, he had already defeated the forces of some of the other princes in the provinces; but real victory would depend upon the overthrow of the Burgundians and the adhesion of Paris to his cause.

Proudly, and with an amount of careless defiance vividly described by Philip de Comines, the French chronicler, who was in the Burgundian army at the time, the forces of the comte de Charolais advanced till they reached the suburbs of St. Denis. They wished to frighten Paris, and by means of their artillery they made a great noise, hoping to induce the Parisians at once to send them the keys of the city; but the only result was a conference at the gate of St. Denis, which ended in the rough rejection by the king’s marshal of their demand.

Then the Burgundians began to think that it was possible they had made a mistake; they had come far from home, and had shown their courage by venturing as far as Paris; now, as no one appeared with whom to fight, it might be as well to return.

The comte de St. Pol, however, who had urged on the war apparently in the hope that he might one day be constable of France, persuaded them to halt in the neighbourhood of Paris, and at Mont-Pérenchy they awaited the arrival of the king’s army.

On the 16th of July Louis with his forces appeared early in the
morning. He expected support from his troops in Paris, and for four hours he waited on a hill, stationing himself in an old tower from which he could overlook the surrounding county. No reinforcements appeared. Messengers were sent to Paris, but they only brought back the reply that the city could not be left. They had gone through the streets crying out that the king was in danger, and the citizens shut their doors. Longer delay was impossible. The king advanced and overthrew the comte de St. Pol, and the comte de Charolais also advanced, and not only compelled the king to retreat to the height, but even passed him, and found himself at length half a league beyond Montlhéry, with only a very few followers. There he was attacked, wounded, and with difficulty rescued by one of his knights. The position of both princes was singular. The king was still at Montlhéry with only his guard, and the comte de Charolais was in the plain beyond, and equally without protection. The two armies had fled, and which was the victor? The comte made the show of victory, and when his scattered troops re-assembled, he took possession of the field of battle and, according to ancient usage, caused a bell to be rung and proclamation to be made that, if any person desired to fight with him, he was ready to meet him. The king made no show, but he hastened with his few followers to Paris and was admitted as sovereign. Then came excuses, protestations, from those who had hesitated to aid him. All were received graciously; Louis supped with one of his faithful friends, many of the chief citizens and their wives being present, and at the supper he narrated the events of the day—how he had been the first to attack, and how he had gained the victory. The Parisians, on their part, were full of congratulations, and, the battle being over, they were delighted to gather the spoils. Thirty thousand, says an old chronicler, went out to collect what they could from the chests, trunks, and boxes which were left in the camps.

It was soon known, however, that the battle of Montlhéry had been by no means decisive. The comte de Charolais was still outside Paris waiting for his allies. They came slowly, one by one, and with them came disunion and discussion, whilst the comte stood apart, silent and stern, scarcely smiling even when he was told that the dukes of Berri and Brittany were so delicate that they wore silk cuirasses made to imitate iron.

But affairs could not remain stationary. The king, after collecting and training all the forces he could gather, left Paris for Normandy, and the Parisians then determined to negotiate a peace for themselves with the princes. A deputation was sent to the duke of Berri, the nominal leader of the league, who was at the Château de Beauté. The duke received the members seated. At his side stood the comte de Charolais. Dunois, old and gouty, was also
present, and by him the terms of negotiation were very soon decided. If the Parisians did not open their gates to the princes on Sunday (it was then Friday), they might expect a general assault on Monday.

On Saturday, at an early hour, there was a great meeting at the Hôtel de Ville. The frightened citizens thought it would be wise to yield, but the king's troops were at that moment under review in the Place de la Grève. What was to be done with them? The citizens grew thoughtful. They sent a message to the princes, saying that they could not act without the king, to which Dunois replied that Paris would be attacked the next day. But the morrow came, and, instead of the army of the league fighting their way into Paris, the king's troops fought their way out. They made a sortie and brought back sixty horses.

On the 28th of August the king himself returned with more troops and provisions. He had taken good care from his first arrival that there should be no famine in Paris: bread, wine, meat, everything was abundant, even eel pies, which were cried about the streets. It was the besiegers who were likely to die of hunger. The crafty Louis knew this, and trusted to famine and distraction to do for him what he was unable to do for himself. To sow division amongst his enemies was, in fact, his one object. 'And to know how to do this is,' says Philip de Comines, 'a great gift when God bestows it upon a prince.'

His agents had long been busy in Flanders, exciting the citizens of Liège to revolt, and on the 30th of August they broke out into insurrection, and the comte de Charolais, finding that home affairs required his presence, accepted the idea of peace. But the demands of the princes were exorbitant. Normandy for the duke of Berri; Picardy, including the towns on the Somme, for the comte de Charolais; two counties for the duke of Brittany, the constable's sword for the comte de St. Pol. For the public good, nothing, except a council to enquire into and reform abuses.

Louis hesitated, but his subjects were against him. The Parisians made songs and ballads which were circulated through the city, and even sent to the princes. They distrusted the king, and dreaded the undisciplined Normandy troops whom he had brought into Paris. If a conflict between the soldiers and the citizens were to take place, the king's cause would be ruined.

No time was to be lost, and Louis demanded an interview with the comte de Charolais. They met at Conflans. 'The Normans wish for a duke,' said Louis. 'Well, they shall have one.' And with one stroke of the pen he yielded to his young brother the richest province of his kingdom. Everything else followed. And when the treaty was concluded, Louis was to all outward appearance
bound hand and foot to the will of his nobles. Whether the agree-
ment would last might well be doubted, but the comte de Charolais
was seemingly well satisfied, as he promenaded the amiable, smiling
king before all his nobles and his army, and addressing them said,
‘Gentlemen, you and I are devoted to the service of the king, our
sovereign lord, and are ready to serve him at all times and in all
need.’

France was now practically a kingdom with two heads; one,
Louis XL, reigned at Paris; the other, the duke of Berri, at Rouen.
Such a state of things was intolerable, and if the people felt it to be
so, much more did the sovereign.

On the 25th of November, six weeks after peace had been
signed, Louis, who was then making a pilgrimage to Notre Dame de
Clery, received some letters from his brother, which he showed to
the duke of Bourbon. ‘See,’ he said, ‘my brother cannot get on
with my cousin of Brittany. I must go to his assistance, and take
back my duchy of Normandy.’ He had a fair excuse, if he had
been sufficiently conscientious to need one, for the cession of
the duchy had been pronounced by the parliament of Paris an illegal
dismemberment of the kingdom; moreover, which was doubtless
more to the purpose in his eyes, the task was not likely to prove
difficult. The comte de Charolais and the dukes of Brittany and
Bourbon were the persons most likely to oppose it, and Louis had
means of dealing with each. The comte was occupied with Liége
and its claims to be independent under its prince bishop. Secret
assistance given to the insurrection effectually prevented him
from interfering in the affairs of Normandy. As for the duke of
Brittany, it needed only to offer him a mountain of gold—120,000
gold crowns—and he was certain not to move a finger for Normandy;
whilst the duke of Bourbon, being promised the government of the
whole of the south of France, became perfectly willing to aid in taking
from the duke of Berri the territory which, by treaty, had just been
given him. Town after town in Normandy, on some pretext or
another, now came to implore the king’s protection. Each was wel-
comed kindly, and protection was accorded. Louis was, by degrees,
regaining the whole province. The comte de Charolais wrote to the
king gently in favour of Monsieur (such was the title of the king’s
brother), and Louis wrote back as gently to entreat the comte to
have pity upon his own rebellious subjects. The comte could do no
more. Before another month was over the business was completed.
Normandy had voluntarily placed itself under the protection of
Louis, and Monsieur was a fugitive in Brittany.

The comte de Charolais was indignant, and wrote to expostulate.
A friendly letter from Louis in reply offered him Picardy, which, by
treaty, the comte had already. As regarded Normandy, ‘the cession,’
said the king, 'was not legal, and he had therefore tried to negotiate with his brother for its restoration. If the conference was broken off it was not his fault. He was greatly grieved.' But, grieved or not, he entered Rouen on the 7th of February, 1466, and from that time Normandy became an inalienable possession of the crown of France.

To have retaken Normandy so cunningly was even in this age of cunning a notable deed. No one was more mortified at it than the duke of Brittany, and, in concert with the comte de Charolais, he began to plan revenge by forming an alliance with England. There were, however, serious difficulties in the way. The wars of the Roses had by this time drawn to a close, and Edward IV., the head of the house of York, was seated on the throne of England. The earl of Warwick, who had mainly contributed to this event, was not only a friend and ally of France, but also governor of Calais, a town which might be termed the gate of admission to France. No intrigues with the house of Lancaster could bring an English army into the country so long as the Yorkists were in power. And it was with the Lancasterians only that the Burgundians had hitherto been connected, Philip of Burgundy's wife being the daughter of John of Gaunt.

There were now, however, reasons for a change in the Burgundian policy. The duchess of Burgundy hated Louis even more than she hated Edward, and she sacrificed the lesser hatred to the greater. To obtain the help of England she agreed to a marriage between Margaret, the young sister of the English king, with the comte de Charolais.

When the news of this intended marriage reached the ears of Louis he immediately prepared for war. It was a question of life or death for him. Burgundy, Brittany, and England would form a coalition against which it would be impossible to stand, unless he could be sure of the support of the different branches of the royal family and of the powerful St. Pol, now constable of France. The latter was by far the most doubtful. The princes of the blood royal, Bourbon, Anjou, and Orleans, were likely, from interested motives, to remain faithful to the head of the family. But the constable St. Pol, though now holding office under the French monarch, had been from childhood the immediate friend of the comte de Charolais; his property and his children were in Burgundy, and he was moreover personally allied with the house of York, for the queen of England, Elizabeth Woodville, was his niece. Only one circumstance was in favour of Louis. The constable St. Pol was in love with the young and beautiful sister of the duke of Bourbon. But although he was a handsome man, royal in mien, splendid in dress and habits, he was a widower of fifty, and the young lady would have preferred him as a father-in-
law. Support for his suit was needed. The comte de Charolais showed himself in no way eager to give it; perhaps he thought that the constable was rising in the world too rapidly; but at the very moment when St. Pol was brooding over the misfortune of his age, the king made advances to him, coming open-armed, eager to confer benefits, and offering him one of his own nieces, a princess of Savoy, promising, in addition, that his son and daughter should also intermarry with the Savoy family.

The constable's ambition was worked upon and his support secured. Louis had, however, less reason than he imagined to fear a war with England. The comte de Charolais, it is true, after some hesitation, agreed to the marriage with Margaret of York, but the earl of Warwick and the English were not, therefore, prepared to support Burgundy in a French war; and before the marriage was celebrated, the earl of Warwick himself visited France with the intention of soothing Louis.

The king received him at Rouen, the clergy of the city in their gorgeous robes going out to meet him with cross and banner. Warwick took up his abode in a monastery, where the king also lodged in an adjoining apartment. Even this was too much of a separation, and Louis caused the wall between the two rooms to be pierced, so that they might be able to converse by night as well as by day. Warwick was also received into most intimate intercourse with the queen and princesses; and the king made a point of taking him and his suite through the town and requesting them to visit the cloth and velvet stores, from which the English took what they liked, and the king paid for it.

No money seemed thrown away which at that moment might secure the friendship of England, and as a consequence peace with Burgundy. Louis had continued his secret support of the insurgents at Liège and the adjoining town of Dinant, and now both towns had been besieged and taken, and Dinant had been burnt; and whilst the duke of Burgundy was full of dire wrath with the king of France for his intrigues, the unhappy citizens were execrating the name of the false monarch who, to suit his own purpose, had urged them to a revolt, which he had no intention of openly upholding at this unsatisfactory juncture for France.

Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, died on the 15th of June, 1467, and Charles the Bold, comte de Charolais, succeeded to his title and dominions.

Charles the Bold had already shown himself deserving the epithet applied to him, but his power had hitherto been restricted, and his character had been only partially understood. That he would be a sovereign whose subjects would have much to do and much to suffer was expected. Strong of limb, with powerful arms
and long hands, a rude jouster able to overthrow any opponent who might venture to encounter him, his physical energy displayed itself in his movements, whilst the vigour of his will could be read in the sparkle of the clear blue eye, which was in striking contrast with his olive complexion and the heavy masses of his hair. He was a man likely to weary out the world long before he grew weary himself. The Flemings, the Dutch, and all his subjects of German origin, were full of hope on the accession of their young count. He spoke their language, he had borrowed their money, he lived with them and like them, on the dykes and by the sea. They thought they understood him, but they were not prepared to find him a man of business, careful of money, a shrewd calculator. Yet such Charles the Bold was. He took his father’s private treasure into his own hands, but only that it might be safe. The open table kept by the good duke, where the nobles and officers ate and drank with their lord, was exchanged for one which might have better suited a monastery. The officers of the Burgundian court were divided and placed at different tables, and when the repast was ended they fled out before their lord in order, so that he might note who was absent, and diminish their pay accordingly.

No man was more industrious than the new duke, in the morning holding councils, in the evening working with his officers. Like the king of France, he had it at heart to change his position from a feudal to an absolute sovereign, and in this he was likely to render himself unpopular among his lords; but he was noble and chivalrous, the head of the Order of the Golden Fleece; and those whom Louis XI. had thought to win by bribes now turned to Charles of Burgundy as their natural and rightful leader.

A new League for the Public Good began to be talked of, and the aid of the English king was confidently expected. Louis, perfectly well acquainted with all that was going on, had recourse to an expedient for which his enemies were not prepared. They wished to rouse England; he determined to rouse France. The States-General were convoked in the month of April 1468, and the question was put to them, were they willing that France should lose Normandy? There was full evidence that negotiations had been entered into with Edward of England, by which, if he joined the duke of Burgundy and the members of the League for the Public Good, several towns in Normandy were to be yielded to him.

The States-General were horror-struck. That a vassal of France should be found willing to give the English a fresh footing in the country was incredible. All present, princes and nobles, rose up in support of the king. So great, indeed, was the general enthusiasm, that at Paris a tournament of children was held in preparation for war, and in their inexperience they really wounded themselves.
MARRIAGE OF CHARLES—EXPECTATION OF WAR.

Whilst these events were passing at Paris, the duke of Burgundy was at Bruges, awaiting the arrival of his intended wife, Margaret of York. His former friend, but now open enemy, the constable St. Pol, appeared there also, entering the city noisily with drum and trumpets, and with his constable's sword carried before him. Complaints were made upon the subject, to which St. Pol replied that Bruges was in fact part of France, and that he as constable had a right to go wherever he chose in that style.

The wedding festivities were grand but solemn, the many-coloured banners of the nobles being overshadowed by the gloomy black and violet of their master. Two cardinals assisted at the marriage ceremony. One, cardinal Baluze, was really a spy of the king of France, and the other, the Pope's legate, had been sent to ask from Charles what he was very unwilling to grant, remission of the payment exacted of the citizens of Liége. In the tournament which followed was introduced a figure of St. George, the English patron saint, whilst two ancient heroes, Hercules and Theseus, were represented disarming a king, who knelt before them and owned himself their serf. This, of course, was intended to represent Edward and Charles overpowering Louis. The duke took part in the tournament, and then, suddenly leaving his bride, set out for Holland to enforce the payment of the 'aide' or tax required for the expenses of the marriage.

This warlike fête and the duke's abrupt departure seemed to betoken immediate action. For three months Louis had been daily expecting to hear of a descent upon France on the part of England, assisted by Burgundy and Brittany. But time went on, and Charles was still engrossed with Liége. The miserable citizens, though crushed to the very dust, showed symptoms of again rising. A few towns in Normandy were indeed seized by the duke of Brittany, but Louis immediately marched his armies into the province and retook them without difficulty, and he then compelled the duke to separate himself from Charles and renounce all idea of taking Normandy from France. This important point conceded, Louis courted and caressed the duke of Brittany as if he was his dearest friend. He need no of an ally, for a body of the duke of Burgundy's troops, which had been sent to assist Brittany, were still at Caen, and an English army was only waiting the signal to cross the Channel. Still uneasy at his critical position, Louis moved from place to place, thinking and planning, whilst Charles, who had formed a great camp in the neighbourhood of the Somme, seemed to take pride in not moving a step. The king's impatience drove him nearly to desperation. Growing every day more suspicious, he even dreaded of his own men-at-arms, and issued orders that their lances should be carried in chariots, and should only be given to them in case of need.
One thing, however, was satisfactory. Charles was said to be furiously indignant with the duke of Brittany. Anger against a friend might dispose him to listen to an enemy. Louis argued probably from his own experience. Having been betrayed by all those in whom he had confided, he now found his chief support in Dammartin, an officer who was a reconciled enemy. But if the friendship of Charles was to be won, they must meet; they must hear and speak with each other. Louis trusted in his own cunning. Could he renew the old intimacy, it would surely be easy to lead the duke on to talk freely, and to draw from him all that it was important to know.

As to any peril in paying a visit to the duke at Peronne, Louis only laughed at the idea. In former days, when the treaty of the League for the Public Good had been under discussion, Charles had not hesitated to walk with the king without attendants between Paris and Charenton, and one day he went so far that he found himself within the French barriers. Why should Louis be afraid under similar circumstances?

A letter of invitation from the duke, sent, it has been supposed, at the instigation of the constable St. Pol, decided the question. It was accompanied by a passport, which expressly stated that Louis should go and return precisely as he chose. This promise seemed to put treachery out of the question, even if it had been possible to suspect a prince who piqued himself even boastingly upon being a knight of the olden days, scrupulously faithful to his word. It was the duke’s weak point, and Louis knew it well; and at the time of the baron’s league he had flattered Charles by saying, when they were negotiating for peace, ‘My brother, I see plainly that you are a gentleman, one of the family of France.’ And as a gentleman visiting a gentleman, the king set out for Peronne almost alone.

At the entrance of the town the duke came to meet him. The two princes embraced each other repeatedly, bareheaded. Smilingly they entered the town together, Louis resting his hand on the duke’s shoulder. The king went to the inn where he was to lodge, and where he dined, and then for the first time, it would seem, some fear was awakened, as he became aware that several of his deadly enemies had also been invited to Peronne. Amongst them was one man, the sire de Chateauneuf, who had been the king’s friend in former years, but who had betrayed his confidence, and for whom Louis had planned imprisonment in an iron cage.

It certainly was suspicious that the duke should have received such men; it savoured much of the bridge of Montereau. Louis began to think that it was unsafe to lodge in the town, and he sent to ask of the duke to receive him into the castle, an old and gloomy
fortress, but nevertheless the royal residence, where Charles himself would be responsible for the safety of his guest.

He was thus, by his own act as it were, in prison, and all that was needed was to shut the door. There is no reason to think, from the events which followed, that Charles was deliberately treacherous. The king would probably have been free to go as he came but for the tidings which, at this anxious moment, were brought from Liège, and reported with gross exaggeration. The citizens of Liège, it was said, were again in revolt, the bishop had been murdered with his clergy, his counsellors, and Humbercourt, the Burgundian envoy; and this in the presence of the ambassador of the king of France. The report was, however, true only as regarded the fact of insurrection.

Charles burst forth in a fit of uncontrollable anger. Terrible were his words, furious his threats. The gates of the castle were closed, and Louis found himself alone, a prisoner in one of the great towers in which formerly a count of Vermandois had murdered a king of France.¹

Yet he did not deem his position hopeless. He always carried about with him money for his little private negotiations, and he now gave to his guard a large sum for distribution amongst those who might be willing to help him. The guard, however, thought his case so desperate, and feared him therefore so little, that he kept the greater part of the money for himself. The duke, in the meantime, had somewhat recovered his excitement, and was able to reason more carefully. His first impulse had been to kill Louis and place the young duke of Berri on the throne; but, after a period of terrible agitation, lasting three days, and during which for one whole night Charles, without undressing, paced his room incessantly, he prepared for a quiet interview with his prisoner.

His demeanour, as he entered the presence of Louis, was humble, but his gestures and words were sharp, and his voice trembled with suppressed anger. 'Was the king,' he asked, 'willing to keep the treaty of peace which had been made between them?'

Louis, in answer, professed himself willing to abide in all things by the articles of the treaty of Conflans. The demands of the duke increased. He required for the duke of Berri Champagne and Brie, instead of Normandy. This also was granted, and Louis swore upon a sacred relic that his promises should be kept.

But there was one more requirement. It came in the form of a request. 'Will you,' said Charles, 'come with me to Liège and witness my revenge upon the citizens?' and Louis dared not refuse. He even wrote a letter to his general, Dammartin, directing him to remove his troops from the Burgundian border, and added, 'Believe,
for certain, that I have never undertaken any expedition as willingly as I do this one to Liége. As soon as it is over I shall leave the duke, for he is even more anxious for me to go than I am myself. The king’s messenger who took this letter was accompanied by one of the duke’s men, and was not allowed a moment’s opportunity for speaking to the general privately. Dammartin saw that Louis had acted entirely under compulsion, and returned a message to the duke, saying, that if the king were not sent back all his kingdom would go and fetch him.

Liége had no longer power to resist the duke’s will. Fortifications, money, artillery, soldiers, all were gone; only one hope remained, the name of the king of France. And when the report reached the city that Louis had turned against them, it was thought so incredible that the most absurd stories were invented to account for the indisputable fact that the duke and the king were travelling together. Amongst other rumours it was said that Louis was taking the duke to Aix-la-Chapelle, where Charles was to be made emperor. Insane in their fury and fear, the citizens of Liége went out to meet the Burgundians—4,000 against 40,000. They were, of course, defeated. Then followed the attack. The Burgundian army entered at the same time from the two extremities of the city, and met in the chief square. The town was given over to pillage, whilst the duke conducted Louis to the palace, where the king, with expressions of great satisfaction and extravagant praises of the courage of his good brother of Burgundy, proceeded to dine alone, the noise of the distracted city accompanying his repast.

After dinner the duke returned. He desired the king’s advice.

‘What,’ he said, ‘shall we do with Liége?’

‘My father,’ replied Louis, smiling, ‘had a great tree near his palace. The ravens made their nest in it. Their noise distracted him, and he ordered the nests to be destroyed. But the ravens rebuilt them. Again and again this took place. At last he had the tree rooted up, and after that he slept better.’

The advice was taken. Liége was set on fire; the inhabitants were—some drowned, some shot, some burnt; all who remained alive fled to the hills and the forests, where they were still pursued, and where the bitter winter’s cold completed the work of destruction.

Louis waited for four or five days after Liége was taken, then he said to the duke, ‘If you have nothing else to do I should be glad to go to Paris, and let the parliament know our mutual engagements. If you want me again do not spare me. Next summer, if you are willing, I will pay you a visit in Burgundy, and we can have a pleasant time together.’

The duke consented, murmuring at the same time a few words of excuse, ‘Would Louis read the treaty again? Was there any-
thing in it to which he objected? He was quite free to accept it or not; and a slight apology was added for having brought him to Liége. The king forgot, forgave, and accepted everything, and shortly after joyously rode away from Liége, doubtless marvelling that he had at last escaped without the loss of anything serious, saving, perhaps, his honour.

He made a show of not caring for what had occurred. It could scarcely have been more than show. In Paris young and old, men, women, and children, laughed at him, and even the parrots, jays, and magpies were heard to scream only one word, 'Perette,' a name with a double allusion to a favourite of the king's and to the town where he had been a prisoner.

Louis, however, did not suffer himself to be scoffed at with impu-

nity. The uncivil birds were taken into custody and brought before him. Special enquiry was made as to their attainments, and strict edicts were issued against all who should dare to turn their sovereign into ridicule.

Louis XI. had been betrayed into the imprudence of trusting himself to Charles at Peronne, by the belief that the duke of Burgundy could at any moment bring down upon him an English in-

vasion. The duke shared this belief. His marriage with Margaret of York was the seal of union between the two commercial countries. The duke of Burgundy's letters were received with as much respect in London as at Ghent. He himself spoke and wrote English, wore the Order of the Garter, as Edward did that of the Golden Fleece, and boasted himself to be more English than the English. It was

natural to suppose that an alliance based on such a firm foundation would last; and, secure in this condition, and having thoroughly hu-

miliated Louis, Charles had apparently nothing to fear, and was able to turn his attention to the enlargement of his territories and the extension of his influence in Germany. He had hoped to have been rendered still more secure of interruption from France by a private understanding with the duke of Berri, who had been promised the possession of the province of Champagne, closely adjoining Burgundy, and who, being his friend, would secure him against the French machinations. But when the matter was, as it was supposed, settled, the duke of Burgundy received information that Louis had changed his mind, and intended to give his brother Guienne and Aquitaine.

It was a pleasant exchange for a young prince. The sunny south, with Bordeaux for his capital, was far more attractive than the cold, dull north; but it was a grievous disappointment for the duke of Burgundy. His informant was the cardinal de Balne, the trusted minister and favourite of Louis. 'Insist upon Champagne,' wrote the minister to Charles. 'On no account give up the point. If you have the king's brother on your side, you have everything.'
POLITICAL CHANGES IN ENGLAND—BIRTH OF AN HEIR.

Louis XI.

The letter containing the advice was intercepted, and the cardinal, as the reward of his treachery, was imprisoned by Louis in a dungeon at Loches, in an iron cage eight feet square, of which he had once himself said that nothing was more sure if one wished to keep a firm hold of one's captive.

The duke of Berri became duke of Guérande (1469), and was induced for the time to forsake the alliance with Burgundy. This augured ill for Charles, but still more startling to him must have been the events which almost immediately afterwards took place in England. The great earl of Warwick openly forsook the house of York, and, crossing over to France, joined Margaret of Anjou, the wife of Henry VI., and became an avowed supporter of the Lancastrian party. Louis took the same side, for Margaret of Anjou was his kinswoman. For a brief period the Lancastrians were successful. Under the protection of French vessels, they passed over to England. Edward IV. escaped to Flanders, and Henry VI. was again acknowledged king. But a reaction soon followed. The duke of Burgundy, as the husband of Margaret of York, could not refuse to aid his brother-in-law. A large sum of money and fourteen vessels enabled Edward to return to England. Once more he was victorious. The earl of Warwick was killed at the battle of Barnet (1471). Margaret of Anjou was taken prisoner, and Henry died in the Tower, whether naturally or by foul means is uncertain.

The period which followed was one of great anxiety for Louis. He had, indeed, managed to conclude a truce with Burgundy, and so far secured himself in the north, but by his intrigues and absence of good faith he had rendered himself obnoxious to Aragon and Castile, Foix and Navarre in the south, whilst he could no longer reckon on the support of his brother the duke of Guérande, for the duchess had ceased to be the heir to the throne. A son had been born to Louis on the 30th of June, 1470, and the tie between the king and his brother being thus broken, the duke would probably no longer hesitate to avow his secret enmity. Two tempting proposals were made at this time open to him. Either he might marry the daughter of the count of Foix, in which case all the south of France would most likely join with him and undertake a kind of crusade against Louis; or he might marry the heiress of Burgundy, and ultimately unite under one monarchy Flanders in the north and Aquitaine in the south, and France and Louis XI. would then be simply stifled.

'I love that kingdom of France so well,' observed the duke of Burgundy, 'that instead of one king I would fain give it six.' And the common saying at the court of Guérande was, 'We will put so many greyhounds on the scent, that France shall not know where to flee.' At the very last moment, however, when everything seemed turning against Louis, the duke of Guérande, always delicate, and
who had been suffering from quartan ague for eight months, died on the 24th of May, 1472. Some thought he had been poisoned by the king's order, but the duke himself could have had no suspicion of any such crime, for the day before his death he craved the pardon of Louis and named him his heir. The duke of Burgundy, however, took advantage of the accusation, and after publishing a violent manifesto against the king of France, proclaimed a war of blood and fire. Entering Picardy, he took the little town of Nesle, burnt it, and massacred the greater part of the inhabitants. Those who escaped with their lives had their hands cut off. He then passed on to Beauvais. The fate of Nesle made the citizens desperate; even the women threw themselves into the breach, a young girl, named Jeanne la Hachette, especially distinguishing herself by seizing a banner from the hands of the besiegers; and the duke was at length obliged to raise the siege. Louis commemorated the event by instituting an annual procession, in which the women took precedence of the men.

The position of Charles was now difficult. The duke of Brittany had again promised to help him, but seemed in no haste to fulfil his engagement, for Louis was tampering with him, offering him money; and Charles, finding himself at length deserted, agreed to a truce of two years.

Prudent, calculating persons who watched the course of events, saw that the king of France was growing stronger, the duke of Burgundy weaker, and they acted accordingly. Philip de Comines, who had been bred up at the court of Burgundy, and was the duke's chamberlain, taking offence at some haughty treatment on the part of Charles, left his service and entered that of Louis. He spent the rest of his life at the French court, and there wrote his celebrated memoirs.

The hatred between Louis and Charles, however deadly, might perhaps have been mitigated but for the intrigues of the constable St. Pol. Though openly holding office under Louis, the constable still had a secret leaning towards Burgundy, whilst his personal interests suggested an alliance with England, so that under any circumstances he might have friends and a refuge at hand. Edward IV, of England was privately told that the English had only to appear and the constable would open to them the gates of St. Quentin, and, trusting to this promise, Edward prepared to re-assert his claim to the throne of France.

Through the 'ever-open door of Calais' he entered France, and was joined by his ally the duke of Burgundy. The English thought that their secret friend would provide accommodation for them on their route; but no, they were to encamp beneath the stars of heaven. Arrived at St. Quentin, they expected to be received with
processions and ringing of bells; but they heard only the report of
cannon, whilst two or three men were killed. In like manner
Charles of Burgundy had been led by St. Pol’s intrigues to believe
that the duke of Bourbon, who commanded the French forces,
would come over to his side; but when the Burgundians presented
themselves before the duke of Bourbon’s army, they were cut to pieces.

To the last moment Louis had been uncertain whether the Eng-
lish descent would really take place; all he knew was, that there
were traitors in his camp. His chief hope was in the age and indo-
lence of the English king, who had seen enough of war, and was no
longer capable of great physical exertion; and, as Edward’s weakest
point was the aggrandisement of his family, the crafty Louis resolved
to seize upon it.

An interview was arranged between the two monarchs. It took
place at Pequigny, near Amiens, August 29, 1475, the princes being
separated from each other by a solid wooden framework, and conver-
sing through a lattice. Louis proposed to Edward a marriage between
one of the king of England’s daughters and the little Dauphin. The
English princess was to receive at once 50,000 crowns a year, and
ultimately the revenue of the duchy of Guienne. The English
nobles were at the same time secretly offered large sums of money.
The temptation was great, and Edward and his lords yielded. The
English were treated hospitably by Louis, whose reception of them
formed a strong contrast to that of their former allies; and when the
duke of Burgundy, who had been for a short time absent on busi-
ness in Hainault, returned, he found to his dismay that all his plans were
overthrown. Fierce and rude were his words to the king of England.

‘It was not thus,’ he said, ‘that in former days the English kings
had gained fame and territory. For himself, he needed not their
assistance; he could manage his affairs without them. He required
only a truce of three months after they should have re-crossed the
Channel.’

The duke did, however, obtain a much longer truce. It was
granted for nine years, and during this time he hoped to be free to
carry on his projects against Lorraine and Switzerland. The dream
of his life was to reconstruct for himself the ancient kingdom of
Lorraine, such as it had existed in the time of Charlemagne. The
young duke René of Lorraine was therefore to be attacked. But
the Swiss, instigated by Louis, had on several occasions opposed
affronted him, and on them the direst vengeance was to be taken.

Louis, on his part, was bent on making use of his freedom for
foreign troubles to subdue finally his treacherous nobles. The chief
were the constable St. Pol, the count of Armagnac, and the duke
of Alençon. Louis wrote to St. Pol, saying that weighty questions
were pending in which such a head as his would be of the greatest
DEATH OF ST. POL—BATTLES OF GRANSON, MORAT, NANCY.

Louis XI.

advantage to him. Afterwards, in conversation with his attendants, he added that it was only the constable’s head which he desired; his body might remain where it was. The constable well understood the alarming irony, for he knew that the duke of Burgundy and the king of England had shown Louis letters which they had received from him. He sought the protection of the duke at Mons, but Charles, who had already begun his attack upon the Swiss, and at such a time feared to make the French king again his enemy, dared not shelter him. St. Pol was given up, and, after a hurried trial, beheaded at Paris on the Place de la Grève, on the 10th of December, 1475. His punishment was a great blow to the feudal nobles, for he belonged to the Luxembourg family, some of whom had been emperors of Germany, and he had married a sister of the queen of France, besides being otherwise connected with several of the royal houses of Europe.

The duke of Alençon and the count of Armagnac also suffered the vengeance of Louis for opposition to his authority, the former being imprisoned for life and the latter barbarously murdered in his wife’s presence.

Louis was now rapidly recovering the position he had lost, whilst Charles was as rapidly losing that which he had gained. His expedition against the Swiss was fraught with disasters. The mountaineers routed his disciplined forces, and Charles was defeated in the battles of Granson and Morat. His fortunes seemed desperate. Lorraine had indeed been taken by him, but the young duke René now ventured to reappear amongst his subjects, and regained possession of Nancy, the capital. There he was besieged by Charles. Louis lent his French gold to assist René, who collected an army of 30,000 men outside Nancy to relieve the city by attacking the duke.

The battle which followed was rendered fatal by treachery. Charles placed implicit confidence in Campobasso, an Italian ‘condottiere,’ or leader of the mercenary troops, and at the most critical moment of the battle Campobasso and his forces went over to the enemy.

Charles was not without a foreboding of his fall. On Sunday morning, the 5th of January, 1477, as he was preparing to set forth with his artillery to meet the enemy, the crest fall from his helmet. ‘It is a sign from God,’ he said, as he replaced it, and he mounted his black charger and rode silently in advance, in the midst of a heavy snow-storm. That evening the battle was over and lost, and Charles of Burgundy was missing. They sought him amongst the dead the whole of the following day. On Monday evening Campobasso brought to the duke of Lorraine a page who said that he had found the body of the duke of Burgundy, naked and frozen, lying amongst a heap of the slain nobles and common soldiers—all white with snow. It was difficult to recognise it. Wolves and dogs had already begun
their horrible work, and only by the most careful examination of the doctor and personal attendants was the fact of Charles of Burgundy's death made certain.

He was buried with all honours. Duke René of Lorraine, in mourning robes, sprinkled holy water on the body as it lay in state, and taking the cold hand of his noble enemy in his said, 'Fair cousin, may your soul rest in God. You have caused us many ills and much sorrow.'

Charles had been killed, as it seemed, almost by accident. The knight who attacked, without recognising him, is said to have afterwards died of grief. And if he was thus regretted by his enemies, how much more by his friends, who had known his generous nature before ambition had wrecked it! When the chapter of the Golden Fleece met for the first time at Bruges after the death of the duke, and saw his collar of the order laid on a cushion of black velvet, they burst into tears, reading on his escutcheon after the list of his titles that sad and awful word—Dead!

It is reported that at the very time of the battle of Nancy a priest, afterwards archbishop of Vienne, was celebrating mass before Louis XI. in the church of St. Martin at Tours. As he presented the Pyx to the king, he said to him these words: 'Sire, may God give you peace and repose. You have them now, if you will. All is over; your enemy is dead.' Louis was greatly surprised, and promised, if the fact were so, that he would convert the iron trellis work which surrounded the shrine into silver.

The day but one afterwards, when it was scarcely dawn, one of the king's favourites knocked at his door and told him that the priest had spoken truth, that Charles of Burgundy was indeed no more.

It was very difficult even for the cautious Louis to conceal his overwhelming satisfaction at the news, more especially from the eyes of his curious courtiers, who, as Philip de Comines tells us, watched him so carefully at dinner that one of them even omitted to eat half of his own portion.

One thing was evident; it must be for the interest of France to regain the provinces which Charles had taken. This object might have been easily attained if Louis could have married his little son to the young heiress of Burgundy, but he was promised to an English princess; and Elizabeth Woodville, wife of Edward IV., who already called her daughter madame la Dauphine, would be little disposed to allow a rupture of the engagement. And what was still more important, Mary of Burgundy herself was but ill-disposed to accept a husband only eight years old. She might have been more inclined to listen to her stepmother, Margaret of York, the dowager duchess of Burgundy, and to accept the duke of Clarence, Edward IV.'s brother; but Elizabeth Woodville desired a connection with
her own family, and proposed her brother, lord Rivers, as a fitting husband for the young duchess.

Between the different aims of the two elderly ladies the interests of Mary of Burgundy were sacrificed, and Louis XI had time to carry out his own selfish policy. He immediately set forth his claims. Abbeville, so he declared, ought to be his, in consideration of a stipulation made some thirty years before. Arras was his by confiscation, the late duke having in many ways injured him. Of Hainault and Flanders he said nothing, though his plans were formed. As to Burgundy, he merely proposed to take care of it as being the young duchess's guardian, a claim which rested on the ancient customs of France, and on the fact that he was Mary's nearest relation and godfather. The reply of the duchess to this last demand was short and simple. 'She did not see how it was that those who wished to take from her one portion of her dominions could offer to guard the other.' Louis must have anticipated the answer, but it did not trouble him.

Troops were sent to Picardy and Artois, and then, on pretence that Burgundy had reverted to France in default of a male heir, the chief towns of the duchy were seized before any plans for defence could be made, and six months after the death of Charles the Bold Louis was recognised by the States of Burgundy as their lawful sovereign.

Mary, in the meantime, was at Ghent, the centre of discontent and rebellion; yet the citizens professed to love and honour their young duchess, and to desire only the restoration of their just rights. Mary yielded to their demands by the advice of her stepmother and of three foreign counsellors—one, the sire de Ravestein, a German, and the others Hugonet and Humbertcourt, Frenchmen. She allowed the people of Ghent to choose their own magistrates and judge their own causes, and promised to do nothing without the sanction of the public assembly of the people. But, perplexed by their claims and alarmed by the advance and the usurpation of Louis, she immediately afterwards secretly despatched Humbertcourt and Hugonet with a letter to the French king, who was then at Péronne, to treat for a truce and make large offers. He might keep the provinces he had taken, he might even have Arras, only would he desist from further demands?

The negotiations were going on when deputies on the part of the people arrived from Ghent to treat with Louis. The king placed in their hands the letter he had just received from the duchess. In it Mary assured the French king that she would trust only his own ambassadors, and begged him to say nothing to any other persons who might be sent to him. Intensely irritated, the citizen deputies returned in haste to Ghent. Mary received them in a solemn
audience—her stepmother, the bishop of Liége, all her servants, around her. The deputies told their tale. She had given a promise to do nothing without consulting the people, and she had deliberately broken her word. Mary, much agitated, denied it. 'They could not,' she said, 'produce the letter of which they spoke.' 'Here it is,' was the rough reply, and the sturdy deputy drew the letter from his pocket and placed it before her. The duchess was overwhelmed with confusion, but her shame was quickly forgotten in terror at the violent outbreak which immediately followed. Hugonet and Humbecourt, who had long been unpopular, were seized and brought to a hasty trial at the Hôtel de Ville. Mary, in agony of mind, dressed herself in deep mourning, and wearing the little Flemish cap of the people, passed through the excited crowd and presented herself before the judges to pray for mercy on her faithful servants. The chief citizen present merely pointed to the dark masses of human beings who thronged the streets and answered, 'We must satisfy the people.'

Mary left them and hurried to the public market-place. She wept, she implored, appealing with clasped hands to one and the other. Opinions were divided. 'Let it be as she wills; they shall not die!' was the cry that rose from one party. 'They shall die!' was the fierce sentence of the other. The judges dreaded delay. They put the prisoners to the torture, but nothing new was confessed. The crime of which they were accused—that of having desired to keep Flanders in subjection to France—was, however, unpardonable, and they were condemned. Mary was told of the sentence, and again entreated for mercy, but she was met with the stern reply, 'Madam, you have sworn to do justice not only upon the poor, but the rich.' The execution took place on the 3rd of April, the Thursday in Holy Week, and on Good Friday a paper was brought to Mary which, in consideration of the sacredness of the day, she was required to sign, granting a pardon for all the offences which the poor people of Ghent might have committed against her, and adding that she had consented to the late sentence on the two counsellors.

The unhappy duchess was alone in her palace. They had taken from her her stepmother, her only friend. What could she do but sign, and what hope remained for her except marriage?

Only one prince was in any way acceptable to Mary. This was Maximilian, son of the emperor of Germany. He was younger than the duchess, being only eighteen. He could not speak French and Mary could not speak German. He understood nothing of business or government. He had neither lands nor money, and people named him Maximilian the Penniless. But he was handsome, brave, and noble-minded, and the marriage had been planned and agreed to by the late duke Charles. Ambassadors about this time came from
Germany to demand the hand of the duchess of Burgundy for their prince. They brought with them a letter written long before in Mary’s own hand, consenting to the marriage. They said also that a diamond had been given by her as a token of betrothal. Now they desired that she would fulfil her engagement. Mary, without asking counsel of anyone, replied coldly, ‘I wrote these letters by the will and command of my lord and father, and I gave the diamond. I acknowledge both.’ And upon this consent the marriage contract was concluded on the 27th of April, 1477, with the approval of the citizens of Ghent.

Louis XI. had now recovered not only Peronne and Abbeville, but Arras and Boulogne, and between Arras and Boulogne he could shut up the English in Calais. Boulogne was his peculiar delight. It was a place supposed to be specially protected by the Blessed Virgin, and Louis made her countess of Boulogne, and then, according to the feudal customs, did public homage to her, and received the town, as it was said, from her hands. His superstition was indeed his great support; without it he could scarcely have been able to bear up against the consciousness of the distrust he had inspired. Jacques d’Armagnac, duke of Nemours, whom he had imprisoned, like the cardinal de Balue, in an iron cage, being put to the torture, revealed to Louis that there was not a single person about him in whom he could safely confide. With this knowledge the king feared all his courtiers. Some he flattered; some, like the duke of Nemours, who was ultimately executed at Paris in 1477 on a charge of high treason, he removed out of his path.

He seemed destined to gain his ends. Maximilian of Austria after his marriage with Mary carried on a desultory struggle with him, but Louis ultimately gained the advantage. Provence fell into his hands after the death of the old king René, and the count of Maine, his nephew, who survived his uncle little more than a year; and in 1482 the sudden death of Mary of Burgundy, who was killed by a fall from her horse, so entirely altered the position of Maximilian that Louis was enabled to reunite the duchy of Burgundy and the crown of France.

Maximilian had been accepted by the Flemings only as Mary’s husband. When she was dead their interest as well as their sympathies led them to an alliance with France. Peace was proposed and concluded at Arras, and the conditions were all that Louis could most have desired. Margaret, the infant daughter of Maximilian and Mary, was affianced to the Dauphin Charles, and it was arranged that she should be sent to France to be educated. As her dowry Louis was to receive the counties of Artois, Franche Comté, Macon, and Auxerre, which really formed the duchy of Burgundy. In the treaty, indeed, no direct mention was made of the duchy, but it
was thus tacitly given up. Louis, on his part, surrendered all claim to French Flanders, and promised never again to countenance the rebellious burghers of Liège.

When the ambassadors who brought to Louis, at the castle of Plessis-les-Tours, the news of the completion of this most favourable treaty, the crown of all his hopes, they found the sovereign before whom all trembled living like a prisoner in his own palace. The castle itself was a fortress, surrounded by a broad ditch, in which were placed iron spikes. Foreign guards kept watch by night and day on the broad ramparts, and the sentinels had orders to shoot any person who should venture within their range after nightfall. Here Louis lived with his familiar associates—Oliver Daim, his barber; Tristan l'Hermite, the executioner; and Jacques Coittier, his physician, a man of brutal manners, who tyrannised over his sovereign by terror, and wrung from him enormous sums of money. The queen was dead, and the king's only visitors were his daughter Anne and her husband, the sire de Beaujeu, both of whom were carefully watched. His other daughter, Jeanne, who, though amiable in disposition, was unfortunately deformed and unprepossessing in appearance, had been married to Louis, duke of Orleans, very much against the duke's wishes, and neither of them visited Plessis.

The king had suffered from a slight stroke of apoplexy, and though he had recovered, he had become so thin and pale that he could scarcely have dared show himself to his subjects. He was still active in mind, but as regarded the body he could do little or nothing; only—the passion for hunting remaining—he went from room to room, with little dogs trained for the purpose, and caught mice. The Flemish ambassadors were received at Plessis-les-Tours in the evening, in a small room badly lighted. The king was seated in a corner, and his rich robes of crimson satin lined with furs could scarcely be distinguished in the darkness. Speaking with difficulty, for he could no longer pronounce the letter r, he apologised for not rising or taking off his cap, and then, after a few words, ordered a copy of the Holy Gospels to be brought, on which he was to take his oath. 'If I swear with the left hand,' he said, 'you must excuse me; the right is a little weak.' It was, in fact, paralysed, and supported by a string. Louis took care, however, to touch the book with his right elbow; no doubt thinking that if any part of the usual ceremony was altered it might afterwards be made a pretext for annulling the treaty.

Already it had brought him into a serious difficulty. The English princess, accustomed to call herself Dauphiness, was not inclined to abandon her position, or rather her friends were not inclined to abandon it for her. Edward IV. was indignant, so indignant that he threatened war; but his self-indulgent habits had undermined his
constitution, and before he could put his plans into execution he
died. Edward was the last enemy whom Louis had to dread on
earth, with one exception—Death, the foe from whom there is no
escape. And as the king, day by day, hour by hour, watched the
stealthy step approaching, his terror became more and more abject
and pitiable.

Live he would, and costly offerings were sent to the shrines of
the Blessed Virgin and the saints, in the hope that health might be
vouchsafed. A Spanish hermit, who was reputed to work miracles,
was also sent for, and Louis on his knees besought him to prolong
his life. At length, on the 25th of August, 1483, he experienced a
third stroke of apoplexy, which for a time took from him speech
and consciousness. Once more, indeed, he rallied, sent the sire de
Beaujeu with messages to his son at Amboise, and conversed with
his attendants on public affairs; but it was only for a few days, and
on the 30th of the month he expired, in the sixty-first year of his
age.

Few sovereigns have left behind them a more hateful character
than Louis XI. His cruelty and duplicity were united with the
most hypocritical superstition. The man who shut up his enemies
in cages, and addressed his prayers to a little leaden image of the
Blessed Virgin, which he wore in his cap, cannot fail to excite our
aversion. And yet, when we regard him as a king, it must be allowed
that many infinitely better men have been far worse rulers. He was
unjust himself, but he required justice towards one another from his
subjects, and even his selfish ambition worked for the ultimate good of
his country. To make his dominions one in laws and government
was essential for his personal interests, but the annexation of the
great provinces, which had hitherto been a constant source of civil
disturbance, brought peace at least to the centre of France, although
the means by which they were acquired cannot be too strongly con-
demned. There seems to have been a dawning even of something
better than ambition at the last. 'If I live some time longer,' he
said to Comines, as his life was drawing to a close, 'there shall be
only one weight, one measure, one law for the kingdom. All edicts
shall be written in French and kept in a book. We will have no
more lawyers cheating and pilfering; lawsuits shall be shortened.
There shall be good police in the country.' Comines adds that the
king saw the miseries of the common people, and desired to help
them; and we may hope that his chronicler spoke truth. Yet the
professions of a prince who, in the prospect of death, owned, as Louis
also did to Comines, that he rewarded or ruined men in order that
he might be talked of, and that his subjects might see he was not
yet dead, must awaken considerable distrust.

Only on one point can Louis XI. be praised without reservation.
CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHARLES VIII.

A.D. 1483-1488.

The death of Louis XI. seemed the destruction of the absolute sovereignty for which he had laboured. His son Charles was but thirteen years of age, physically weak and somewhat deformed, and mentally dull and ignorant. Princes, nobles, clergy, all were clamorous for their own interests. Who was to control them? But the influence of the dead monarch still haunted his subjects. There was probably no person who would not have turned pale if he had received a parchment signed Lois (Louis), and when it was known that the late king on his death-bed had confided the charge of his son to the princess Anne, commonly called the dame de Beaujeu, only one person dared to dispute her claim to be regent of the kingdom.

This was Louis, duke of Orleans, the first prince of the blood and heir presumptive to the crown, who had been educated at the court of Louis, and had married Jeanne, the younger sister of Anne. The question was settled by the States-General, which met at Tours in January 1484, and after long discussions the government was committed to the hands of a council, over which the king was to preside in person, the chief place, in the event of his absence, being assigned to the duke of Orleans. The States then proceeded to enter into various grievances, and to propose certain remedies, but their complaints received but little attention; and after voting a moderate subsidy the assembly broke up, once more leaving the royal authority to act without check.

Anne of Beaujeu, however, was not to be so easily set aside. She was a woman of remarkable talents and spirit, possessing much of her father's shrewdness, and also much of his unscrupulousness, and as the guardian of the young king's person she soon contrived to exercise such an influence over her brother that he spoke and acted solely by her dictation.
REBELLION OF LOUIS OF ORLEANS—THE DUCHESS JEANNE. 265

Charles was at this time regarded as the husband of the princess Margaret of Flanders, the daughter of Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy. Shortly before the death of Louis XI, the little bride had been sent to France, her betrothal had taken place publicly, and she had been left at the French court with the title of queen under the guardianship of Anne of Beaujeu and her husband. Any difficulty, therefore, regarding the marriage of so young a monarch as Charles appeared to be definitively settled. Anne, with her two young charges under her own eye, was able to give her full attention to her political position, and it was soon evident that the dame de Beaujeu was virtually the ruler of France. To the proud and ambitious Louis of Orleans the position which he was thus compelled to take became intolerable. At the risk of civil war he resolved to assert his power, and leaving the court of France he repaired to Brittany. The duke, like himself, was prepared to rebel, in the hope of becoming an independent sovereign instead of a vassal of France. The assistance of Maximilian of Germany and of Richard III. of England was also sought, and a declaration of war was then made with fair prospects of success. But the dame de Beaujeu was fully equal to the emergency. Aid from England was rendered impossible by support secretly given to the earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII.; the States-General of Flanders were urged to oppose the plans of Maximilian, whilst in France the young king was brought forward, dressed in gay armour, mounted on a horse, and placed at the head of the royal army, and the loyal enthusiasm of the people being thus roused, Anne prepared to meet the forces of the confederates. A great battle followed. The royalists were victorious. The duke of Orleans, who served as a volunteer in the Breton army, was taken prisoner. Anne's exultation was unbounded, but the young king was grieved. He entreated that the prisoners might be brought before him; but Anne, fearing the tenderness of his nature, resolved to prevent this. The long-neglected duchess Jeanne petitioned for an interview between her brother and her husband. Still the regent was inexorable, and Louis, after being carried from place to place, was finally imprisoned in a dark, low-roofed cell in the tower of Bourges, the only change in his life being his removal at night to an iron cage.

It was not till Louis was known to be ill in his prison that his wife, by her earnest entreaties, prevailed on the dame de Beaujeu to allow her to visit him. She saw him worn, wasted, lonely, and burst into a passion of tears. 'Ah, sir,' she exclaimed, 'how miserable is the condition in which I find you!'

Louis, roused from his suffering, turned away from her, saying, 'Madam, you have cause to hate me, but leave me in peace.'

It is a dark blot in the character of a prince whose after life proved him capable of many generous feelings. Knowing his own
coldness, he seems to have distrusted the sincerity of his wife's love. Again and again Jeanne entreated to be allowed to share his prison, but it was in vain; and at length, as her only consolation, she took up her residence in a convent at Bourges, and sold her jewels to furnish her husband with the necessaries which Anne of Beaujeu denied him. The duke of Brittany paid almost as heavy a penalty as the duke of Orleans for his attempt at independence. He was compelled to yield to terms which under other circumstances he would have rejected with scorn. He had no sons, and as regarded his two daughters, he left himself entirely in the hands of Anne of Beaujeu, pledging himself not to form any alliance for them without the consent of the French king, who, on his part, promised to treat the princesses as his nearest relatives, and afford them full protection. The assurance was most needful, for a few days after the treaty was signed Francis II., the last duke of Brittany, expired, September 1490, and his little daughter Anne, then only thirteen years of age, was left to face alone the perils of her high position.

There must have been much in the early training of Anne of Brittany to strengthen her naturally firm character, and teach her to understand political affairs, otherwise it would scarcely have been possible for her, at an age so young, to take the decided part in the chalking out of her own destiny which she did at the first meeting of her counsellors after her accession.

They desired her speedy marriage, and recommended the count d'Albret, whose cause had been often pleaded by his sister, the governess of the young duchess. Anne at once rejected the proposal. The count was a widower, aged, the father of twelve children. She had always disliked him, and rather than consent to be his wife she proposed to retire to a convent and take the veil.

The ministers were startled. Anne's eloquence was as remarkable as her resolution. But they were in a great difficulty. The French king, instructed by the dame de Beaujeu, had sent ambassadors requiring that the two princesses should be placed under his care. He intended, he said, to marry them to two sons of the house of Rohan. On this condition alone would he lay no claim to the duchy of Brittany for himself. The De Rohans were detested in Brittany; in the civil wars they had always taken part with France, and it was a common saying amongst the Bretons, 'He eats at the manger like a Rohan,' meaning by the manger the table of the king of France. The proposition of Charles was considered an insult.

Driven to extremity, Anne and her counsellors turned their thoughts to Maximilian, archduke of Austria and king of the Romans, the widowed husband of Mary of Burgundy. He was still in the prime of life, handsome, kind-hearted, brave—peniless indeed, for his father was one of the most penurious of mankind; but
the duchess of Brittany had possessions sufficient of her own, and it
would be wise to bestow her dominions with herself upon one so
capable of defending both. So the negotiations began. Messengers
were despatched to Maximilian to inform him that he had only to
land in Brittany in a manner befitting his rank and the Bretons
would receive him as the future husband of their young duchess.

The answer came back. Maximilian was 'honoured, delighted: he
would send a friend to conclude the engagement, but he could
not come himself.' His father allowed him no money. The excuse
was accepted, and when the representative, after considerable delay,
arrived, the ceremony of betrothal was gone through in the summer
of 1490, and Anne of Brittany assumed the title of queen of the
Romans. The expected bridegroom, however, never came, and the
marriage was a nullity.

The refusal of the duchess to accept the proposal of the king of
France produced its natural result. French troops invaded Brittany
and reduced Brest and several other important towns. But the little
duchess was not without hope of friends and assistance. On the
very first occasion when the question of her marriage had been
brought forward she had despatched a secret messenger to Henry VII.
of England, with letters, sealed by her own hand, begging for his
interference and support. She had a good right to expect that the
appeal would be listened to, for in bygone years Henry, when only
earl of Richmond, had found shelter and protection at the court of
the duke of Brittany. Maximilian also still held the position of her
affianced husband, whilst Ferdinand and Isabella, the powerful joint
sovereigns of Spain, were fully alive to the necessity of keeping the
power of France in check.

But friends must be proved by deeds, and when Anne of Brit-
tany put her promised supporters to the test she found them want-
ing. Henry VII. disliked spending money, and really cared more
for an alliance with France than with Brittany. He landed a few
troops in the duchy, but speedily recalled them. Maximilian could
do nothing, and Ferdinand and Isabella were too much engaged
in consolidating their own power in a newly-united country to be
prepared to enter into a war with a neighbouring nation. Aid
came at last, but from a totally unexpected quarter. The counsellors
of Charles VIII., and more especially his cousin the count
Dunois, had watched with keen interest and anxiety the efforts
made to save Brittany from the power of France. To secure them-
elves from present danger the young duchess and her ministers were
likely to risk future safety, and the hope dawned upon the French
government that by the marriage of their king with the heiress
of Brittany the important duchy, so long a thorn in the side of the
kings of France, might become an integral portion of their dominions.
The first person to be gained was Anne of Beaujeu, who, by the death of her husband’s eldest brother, had now become duchess of Bourbon. Dunois sought an interview with her at Nantes, which Charles had already taken possession of. Setting forth strongly the advantages to accrue from the marriage of Charles and Anne, he made the startling proposal that the marriage by proxy with the little Margaret of Flanders should be annulled, and the princess sent back to her father. He would himself undertake the negotiation on condition that Louis of Orleans should be set free, and thus an end be put to the plots formed by his friends. The regent hesitated; the duke of Orleans was her greatest enemy. His devoted wife was even then vainly entreating for him. Unnoticed and uncare for, Jeanne had followed the king to Nantes, remaining the greater part of the night in the streets, because no accommodation had been provided for her, and upon obtaining a private audience from Charles she had received, not the king’s consent, but only his sympathy. 'Alas, my foolish Jeanne,' said Charles, as he raised her from her knees; 'you ask for that which is against your own interest. God grant that you may never repent having gained your petition.'

But the politic arguments of Dunois prevailed where compassion had failed, and, to the infinite satisfaction of Charles, the regent yielded.

The young king instantly rode off with one of his followers, under pretence of a hunting party, and sending messengers to bring Louis to his presence, was the first to welcome his cousin on his return to freedom. In the conversation which ensued Louis asked pardon for his rebellion, whilst Charles spoke of the grief he had felt at his imprisonment, and entreated that he would not stand in the way of his suit to the duchess of Brittany. Louis gave his word, and the reconciliation was sealed, according to the custom of the times, by the two princes occupying the same bed.

The first step was taken, but much remained to be done. There were persons in the court of Brittany devoted to the French interests, and constantly did they remind their young mistress that Maximilian, her fiancéed husband, was powerless, and the anger of France above all things to be dreaded; and when it was thought that Anne’s mind was sufficiently poisoned, Dunois and several of the great Breton nobles appeared before Anne in a private audience, and made the definite proposal that she should consent to be queen of France. 'King Charles,' replied Anne, 'is an unjust prince, who wishes to despoil me of the inheritance of my father, whilst my solemn alliance with the king of the Romans has been approved by my counsellors and my people. I will not falsify my word, and rather than do so I will set forth to join the king of the Romans, since he cannot come to me.'
SECOND INVASION—MARRIAGE—CHARACTER OF CHARLES AND ANNE. 269

The noble but unsatisfactory answer produced the immediate invasion of Brittany by Charles. It was a strange mode of wooing, and Louis of Orleans could with difficulty conceal his disgust at the proposal that he should join the expedition. The young duchess was soon informed by her ladies that the king of France, at the head of an immense army, was within a short distance of her castle at Rennes, where she had taken up her abode. It was merely, however, a show of hostility; a deputation was sent to the duchess, and twelve persons on either side were appointed to examine into the respective claims of both parties to the duchy of Brittany.

The events which followed have never been clearly explained. The king of France insisted upon having the town of Rennes given into his hands, and guaranteed a safe-conduct to the duchess for her departure to Germany. He ordered his troops to retire, and ostensibly returned himself to Touraine. But it is said that he really went to Rennes, was introduced into the castle, and had a personal interview with Anne, and that three days afterwards he was secretly affianced to her.

Whatever may be the correctness of these details, all Europe was certainly startled when, fifteen days after the withdrawal of the French troops, it was known that the duchess of Brittany had taken her journey to France with Charles, and had actually been married to him in the castle of Langeais, on the banks of the Loire, December 16th, 1491.

A papal dispensation, granted after the marriage, states that the dispensation is granted only in case the duchess Anne shall not have been forcibly carried off. Evidently there was a report current at the time that the journey from Rennes to Langeais was not entirely voluntary, and the idea is greatly strengthened by the fact that after the birth of her first child Anne was obliged to put forth a public declaration that she had come freely to be the wife of the king of France.

Charles VIII., at the time of his marriage with Anne of Brittany, was eighteen years of age. Neither his health nor his appearance had improved since his childhood; but he had an amiable, though wilful, disposition, and a kindliness of manner which reconciled his subjects to the diminutive appearance of their little king—‘le petit roy,’ as he was familiarly called. Anne, who was about fourteen, is described as remarkably attractive, with a complexion of dazzling fairness, regular features, and a majestic carriage. Warm-hearted, generous, pure-minded, charitable, religious, she might indeed have been the model of a queen but for her great pride and the obstinacy which made her persist in maintaining her own opinions, whatever difficulties they might occasion to the state.

She had no cause to regret her French marriage. Charles did
everything in his power to show her honour and make her happy. After two months spent in fêtes at the château of Plessis, the queen-duchess, as Anne insisted upon being called, was crowned at St. Denis. The duke of Orleans, who would fain himself have been her husband, held the crown—too heavy with jewels for Anne to wear—over her head, while the duchess of Bourbon stood by the throne close to the man whom she deemed her deadly enemy, and whose freedom she had been compelled to grant at the sacrifice of all her cherished schemes of vengeance.

The marriage articles were very remarkable. Anne ceded all her rights to Brittany, unless Charles should die before her without leaving children. In that case the duchy was to revert to her, on the condition that she should marry no other person than the future king of France, if he wished it. Should an obstacle exist, or if the king should be already married, she pledged herself to marry no one but the heir-presumptive. It is thought that the duke of Orleans had the dictation of these articles, and after events gave him a remarkable interest in them.

The first weeks of married life must have seemed bright and hopeful to Anne of Brittany, but there were clouds looming in the distance. Maximilian of Germany, indignant at the affront put upon his child, threatened war, and was only appeased by the cession of the counties which had been ceded to France as the princess Margaret's dowry. Henry VII. of England, under pretence of assisting Maximilian, besieged Boulogne, and only withdrew on the payment of an enormous sum of money; and Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain seized the opportunity of these embarrassments to demand the two provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne, which had been pledged to Louis XI. for money advanced by him.

The territories were restored freely; no demand was made for the sums for which they had been mortgaged. Charles had other interests at heart. He was dreaming of Italy, of the recovery of that kingdom of Naples which had been bestowed by the Pope on Charles of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis, and which had ever since been an inheritance of evil to all who laid claim to it.

It had now passed into the hands of a branch of the house of Aragon, having been conquered some years before (1458) by Alfonso, king of Aragon, commonly called the Magnanimous. He had left it to his illegitimate son Ferdinand, a cousin of Ferdinand the Catholic, but the Anjou family still asserted their right to it, and Charles VIII., as their representative, burned with an eager desire to recover it.

Though physically weak, Charles was adventurous, and, whilst neglecting the government of his own country, abandoned himself to visions of military glory. He would conquer Naples, and then pro-
ceed to expel the Turks from Constantinople, and, renewing the crusades, re-establish the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The dream might have remained a dream but for a singular concurrence of circumstances, which enabled him to attempt its realisation.

The duchy of Milan was at that time governed by Ludovico Sforza, or, as he is often called, Ludovico il Moro (the Moor), who professed to act as regent for his nephew Gian Galeazzo Sforza. Ludovico, ambitious, wily, clever, had, however, no thought of yielding up his power to a sickly idiot, and Galeazzo was little better. Even if he had ever intended it, he would have been prevented by the influence of his wife. The proud and beautiful Beatrice d’Este, once seated upon the throne of Milan, was bent upon keeping possession of it. Yet it could not be held without a struggle. Galeazzo was an imbecile, who was kept in imprisonment on the plea of security, but he had married Isabella, the daughter of Ferdinand of Naples, and Isabella was as proud and ambitious as Beatrice. She carried her complaints to her father, and Ludovico was summoned to relinquish his throne.

The regent of Milan felt himself secure. Florence lay between himself and Naples, and the lord of Florence, Lorenzo the Magnificent, the head of the great Medici family, was his ally. But Lorenzo died, and his son Pietro, a man scarcely superior to Galeazzo in intellect, broke the old alliance, threatened Ludovico, and led him at last to summon the king of France to his aid. Charles was invited to make good his title to Naples, and Ludovico promised to support him with all the resources at his command.

The brilliant French court was at that time kept up reckless of expense, but there was no money for the conquest of a kingdom, and the duchess of Bourbon and her husband saw with infinite regret that Charles was bent upon the expedition. ‘I do not say,’ observes Comines, ‘that the king was not wise enough for his age, but he was only just out of his egg-shell, and had neither sense, money, nor anything else necessary.’ This was the opinion of one who looked on coldly. Charles saw only that his visions of glory might now be converted into a reality. His first child had just been born, October 10th, 1492. There had been a grand christening at Plessis, where the saintly St. Francis de Paul stood godfather to the little prince Charles Roland. But the king was insensible to the attractions of domestic happiness, and, to the surprise of his friends, as well as his subjects, now announced his intention of accompanying his army into Italy. Anne went with him to Grenoble, where she remained for six days, and then turned back to France, to begin a struggle for power with the overbearing duchess of Bourbon, who was practically left ruler of the kingdom, since her husband had
been appointed regent during the king’s absence, and he obeyed her in all things.

Charles crossed the Alps on the 2nd of September, 1494, with an army consisting of more than 50,000 men. At Asti he was received by Ludovico Sforza, who conducted him to the Tuscan frontier, where the first temptation to turn aside from the course he had planned presented itself. Galeazzo Sforza was in his neighbourhood, and the king of France, who had no personal enmity against the duke, paid him a visit. The duchess Isabella, forgetting that the object of the French king was to dethrone her father, threw herself on her knees before him and entreated his protection for her husband.

Charles made no promises, but he was visibly moved, and Ludovico saw from that hour that in heart the king of France was against him. In his secret distrust and disappointment Ludovico took his affairs entirely into his own hands, and upon the death of Galeazzo, which occurred almost immediately after the interview with Charles, he caused himself to be proclaimed duke of Milan in the place of the infant heir.

Charles marched on to Pisa. Surrounded by his officers, he repaired to the famous cathedral. On the threshold a man threw himself before him, held him by the knees, and began a frantic oration. He gave the tragical history of Pisa, once a flourishing city, now destroyed by the Florentines, her commerce ruined, her people mere slaves to the haughty Medici family, the lords of Tuscany. At length, after the sufferings of a century, there was hope. Liberty was at hand.

Charles turned aside and entered the church, but his followers remained to listen. One of them, Rabot, a counsellor of Dauphiné, followed the king. 'It is a piteous tale, sire. Never have people been so badly treated as these. You will surely grant their requests?'

'I desire nothing better,' was the thoughtless reply; and Rabot turned back to the square, in which crowds had gathered. 'Children! the king of France is willing to restore your privileges, France for ever! Liberty for ever!' shouted the mob, and, rushing to the bridge over the Arno, they threw down the column on which stood the great lion of Tuscany, the symbol of their humiliation.

Those few words had rendered the French king in the sight of the people the supporter of their cause against that of their lords. They were, indeed, a menace of conflict throughout Italy. Followed by the applause of the Pisans, Charles proceeded to Florence. An insurrection had lately taken place there. Pietro de' Medici had fled, and power was in the hands of the people, directed by Savonarola, a monk, but a reformer, clear-sighted, disinterested, ardent,
devoted to his country and the restoration of the purity of religion, which had sunk to the lowest condition under the infamous Pope Alexander VI. (Borgia). Savonarola came, at the head of the Florentine envoys, to meet the French king. "Minister of justice, servant of the great God!" he exclaimed, as he entered the royal presence, "at length thou art come. For four years have I foretold of thee, though I knew thee not by name. We welcome thee as sent by Heaven to abase the proud, to exalt the humble, to renew the world. Nevertheless, O most Christian king! hearken to my words and let them be graven on thy heart. Be not thou the occasion of greater sin. Be the protector of the innocent, the guardian of the cloister. Be merciful, as thy Saviour is merciful. If there are sinners in Florence, so also are there righteous men. Pardon, for Christ has pardoned."

The king replied to the address vaguely. He would not say how or upon what conditions he would enter Florence. But he was trusted. The Florentines thronged around him with acclamations, and the clergy sang hymns, as with all the pomp of war he traversed the streets to take possession of the palace of the Medici.

Then came the all-important question to the Florentines, what was his precise position? Did he come to rule them in his own right, or was he only the representative of the hated Medici? Charles knew well enough what he desired himself—to march as quickly as possible to Naples. He cared nothing for the Florentines and their politics, but he wanted money. He assumed the tone of a conqueror, and insisted on the payment of an enormous sum. "If such are your demands," exclaimed the chief magistrate, the gonfalonier Capponi, "sound your trumpets, and we will ring our bells."

Charles was alarmed; he reduced his demands, and, on the payment of 120,000 florins, he made an alliance with the Florentines and departed for Rome.

At the time when Charles VIII. entered Italy Pope Alexander VI. had but recently been raised to the pontificate. He was a man of about sixty, very rich and very profligate, a persecutor of heretics, and an ally of sultan Bajazet, the Turk. Popular tradition says that he sent a message to Charles advising him not to come to Rome, as plague and famine were already there, and the arrival of the French would certainly bring the Turks into Italy. To which Charles is reported to have replied that "he did not fear the plague, for death would be the end of his pilgrimage. Neither did he fear famine, for he brought with him provisions in plenty. And as for the Turk, he desired nothing better than to fight him, and would with that view gladly meet him half-way." And so on the 31st of December, 1494, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the French army defiled, almost into night, through the narrow streets of Rome. They were lighted by torches as it grew dark. At their head, to the sound
of the drum, came the Swiss and German troops, gigantic men, carrying sharp lances and heavy battle-axes. The dark-complexioned, fiery Gascons, to the number of 6,000, followed; and behind them came the cavalry, splendid horses, with their tails shortened, according to the French custom, but looking monstrous in the eyes of the Italians. The Scotch guard—300 archers and 200 knights, covered with purple and gold—marched on foot immediately behind the king; and the procession was completed by the artillery—the great guns not, as in Italy, drawn by oxen, but each by six horses. The least imposing object in the whole army was undoubtedly the young king, with his small figure and large head, and weak, though kindly, expression of countenance. Cardinals, generals, and nobles surrounded him, but the true originators of the whole scene were two of Charles's favourites—De Visc, his seneschal, and Brignonet, a merchant, who for ten years had filled his head with vain dreams of glory in Italy, so that when he was only fourteen years of age he begged that he might have a picture of Rome.

The Pope had taken refuge in the castle of St. Angelo. After the first moment of terror, he recovered his dignity, and sent a message to the king that he was ready to receive his oath of obedience. Charles merely replied, 'I must first hear mass at St. Peter's; then I must dine; after that I will see the Pope.'

But the king was not prepared to quarrel with the Pope. He required three favours of him: first, the investiture of the kingdom of Naples; second, permission to hear mass, although he and his queen were excommunicated; and, third, the delivery into his hands of Zizim, or Gem, the brother of the Turkish sultan Bajazet. Zizim had been dethroned by Bajazet, and had been sent for security to Pope Alexander.

Permission to hear mass was granted. As for the investiture of Naples, the Pope eluded the demand, and conferred on the king instead the golden rose, a special gift to sovereigns who were defenders of the church. With regard to Zizim, the Turkish prince was consulted as to his wishes, and cautiously replied, 'I am not treated as sultan. What can it signify to a prisoner whether he shall go or stay?' After the lapse of three days, he was ostensibly given up to Charles. It is supposed that at this time poison had been administered to him with the connivance, if not at the suggestion, of the Pope, for when the unfortunate prince was taken to Capua by the French he was so weak that he could not read a letter from his mother; and he died at Naples, thanking God that the king of France could not make use of him as an excuse for attacking the Mahometan empire.

The Pope's fears had been for a moment calmed by friendly

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1 The practice of giving the golden rose still continues. Isabella II, queen of Spain, received it shortly before she was dethroned in 1869.
assurances, but he was not satisfied at heart. Being invited to dine with Charles, he heard cannon fired in his own honour, and, in terror lest it should be a signal to take him prisoner, he fled without his dinner. The familiarity of the French nobles also startled him, for on the slightest pretext they entered his room and seated themselves with the cardinals; whilst the respect of the soldiers terrified him, for they crowded in such numbers to kiss his feet that they nearly overthrew him. It must have been a rejoicing day for him and for many when at length Charles quitted Rome, carrying with him Cesar Borgia, the Pope’s infamous son, as a hostage.

In January 1495 the French were on the confines of the Neapolitan territory. Ferdinand of Naples was now dead, and his son and successor, Alfonso II., was so terrified at the advance of the enemy, that when they drew near the capital he abdicated in favour of his son, Ferdinand II., and escaped to Sicily, where he shut himself up in a monastery, fasted rigorously, and died within the year.

After Alfonso was gone, an insurrection broke out in Naples, which the unfortunate Ferdinand II. was quite unable to quell. He also hastily left the city, and the following day, February 22nd, 1495, Charles VIII. entered it in triumph. The Neapolitans generally hailed him as a deliverer from the Spanish sovereigns, but he was unable to satisfy the demands of the nobles, each of whom expected to receive some personal favour. Charles could only say that he should make no changes, and the result was universal disappointment. On the 12th of May he amused himself by a magnificent coronation, when he appeared wearing the mantle of the Greek emperors and the crown of the kings of Jerusalem; and having thus satisfied his vanity, he made arrangements for carrying his troops back to France.

There was no time to be lost. He had not advanced so far into Italy without rousing enemies who were prepared to dispute his return. The Venetian Republic, Ferdinand the Catholic, king of Spain, and Maximilian, emperor of Germany, had formed a league with Ludovico Sforza, who was now more than ever the enemy of France, for Charles had refused to acknowledge him as duke of Milan, and had even allowed Louis of Orleans to claim the duchy in right of his mother, Valentina Visconti, whose family had been dispossessed by the Sforzas. The Venetians had from the first been opposed to the invasion of Charles. The king of Spain was about to claim Naples for himself, as having more right to it than Alfonso and his son, who were descended from an illegitimate branch of the Aragon family, and Maximilian burned to revenge the insult shown to his daughter by the marriage of Charles with Anne of Brittany.

1 The sovereigns of Naples and Sicily had vague claims both to the Greek empire and the kingdom of Jerusalem.
Charles was as eager to leave Naples as he had been to conquer it. As for the government of his newly-acquired territory, he trusted it almost to chance, for the persons to whom he confided it were wholly inexperienced; and the viceroy of Naples, Gilbert de Montpensier, especially, though a brave knight, was so inveterately self-indulgent that he never rose till noon.

Caring little for what might follow his departure, Charles at length set out on his homeward journey, his forces dwindling away as he went on. The Pope fled from Rome at his approach, leaving the cardinals to receive him as best they might. At Siena he was joined by Philip de Comines, who had been sent to Venice as his ambassador, and Charles asked Comines jokingly if he did not think these republicans would send to meet him. To which Comines replied, 'Oh, yes, sire; the seigneurie said to me, when I took my leave, that your majesty would find on your route 40,000 men belonging not only to them, but to the duke of Milan.'

Florence was in a state of revolution, and Charles dared not enter the city, but Savonarola again appeared before him, not, however, to welcome him, but to threaten him with the wrath of God for the misery of which his undisciplined troops had been the cause. The admonition was disregarded, and the French king continued his journey, occasionally lingering in the great towns, where his soldiers committed every kind of excess, till he reached Fornovo, a village on the farther side of the Apennines. Here the confederate army was awaiting him. The king had expected help from a force under Louis of Orleans, who had some time previous entered Italy and laid claim to Milan. But Louis had turned aside to seize the town of Novara in the Milanese for himself, and at the very time when Charles most needed his aid he was shut up in Novara, which was closely blockaded by Ludovico Sforza.

Charles, therefore, had no one but himself to depend upon; 9,000 men to oppose 40,000 was a fearful disproportion. Everything, indeed, was against the French; a swollen torrent was in their way, for a storm burst over them in the night, and the inhabitants of the district so distrusted them that when provisions were brought to the camp, the soldiers, fearing they were poisoned, would not touch them until they had been tasted.

The hour of extremity brought out all the finer qualities of the adventurous though feeble king. 'On Monday morning,' says Philip de Comines, 'the king called me to him. I found him completely armed, and mounted on the finest charger I have ever beheld in my time. It was called Savoy ... He appeared to me then in every way unlike himself. He was generally timid in speech and manner; for he had been brought up in great fear and with mean persons; but on this horse he looked tall, his face was animated, his
colour bright; his words were bold and free. It seemed, indeed, that the words of brother Hieronymo (Savonarola) were true—that God would lead him by the hand, that he had much trouble before him, but that God would lead him to honour."

The events of the battle which followed (6th of July, 1495) were contrary to all human expectation. The French made great blunders, yet they gained the day. They scarcely made any use of their excellent artillery, and they managed to separate their forces so that the enemy were able to throw themselves into their midst, whilst the Venetian soldiers, the Stradiots, with their light lances poniarded the horses of the cavalry, and made their way even to the French camp. But this last exploit was the ruin of the confederates. They began to pillage; discipline was lost; and the French, profiting by the confusion, made fearful havoc; 3,500 Italians are said to have fallen. Charles fought gallantly in the foremost rank. His dress alone would have rendered him remarkable, for he wore a splendid embroidered armour-coat of white and violet, strewn with crosses of Jerusalem in gold and precious stones of great value; but so little care was taken to protect him that three times he was left alone and attacked by groups of knights, and was saved only by the strength and the fury of his noble black charger, who fought for his master with teeth and hoofs.

After all was over, the king and his party were fain to lodge in a little farm-house; no quarters were assigned for the troops. 'For my own part,' says Comines, 'I slept in a vineyard, glad to get there, without a cloak to cover me, for I had lent mine to the king in the morning, and my people were far enough off, and it was too late to look after them. Those who could find anything to eat had their supper. I saw the king in his chamber, where there were several wounded.'

The remainder of the retreat, though less perilous, was full of difficulty, but Charles arrived safely at Lyons on the 9th of November, 1495. The clergy met him at his entrance. The streets were lined with tapestry; devices were everywhere to be seen alluding to the knightly deeds of the returned heroes; and at the palace of the archbishop of Lyons stood Anne of Brittany and the duchess of Bourbon ready to greet the successful king. Fêtes and revelry were the order of the day, and the king and his wife entered into them with all the excitement of youth.

But the conquest over which so much rejoicing was made was in the meantime rapidly assuming a doubtful aspect. Ferdinand, the ex-king of Naples, had made every effort to regain his crown, and was supported by the forces of his cousin Ferdinand, the Catholic, under the command of Gonsalvo de Cordova, commonly called the Great Captain, who proved himself to be the most distinguished
commander of his age. In one battle, indeed (the first which he fought in Italy), Gonzalvo was defeated, but victory followed him ever afterwards, and the fickle Neapolitans, won by his success, rose against the French, drove the viceroy, Gilbert de Montpensier, from the city, and restored Ferdinand; and after some struggle the viceroy was compelled to return to France, with but a mere fragment of the noble army which had so proudly entered Italy.

The news of these disasters, or at least of a portion of them, reached Charles in the midst of the festivities at Lyons. They must have been a grievous disappointment, for he had flattered himself that his Italian affairs would surely prosper. Before leaving Italy he had concluded a permanent peace with Ludovico Sforza, so that he had nothing to dread from Milan, whilst he had fully reckoned upon the ability of his generals and the timidity and incapacity of Ferdinand for the security of Naples. But the appearance of the Great Captain on the scene had changed the whole aspect of affairs. Italy was now rapidly eluding the French grasp, and the consciousness of this fact must have felt all the more keenly from the recent triumph. Two months had scarcely elapsed after the king’s arrival at Lyons when a domestic sorrow was added to his public anxiety. The little Dauphin, a child of four years of age, precocious in intellect and fascinating in manner, was taken dangerously ill at Amboise, where he had been left when Anne went to welcome her husband at Lyons. He died after a few days’ illness. Anne was struck to the ground by the blow, and Charles tried to comfort her; but he did not understand a mother’s grief. Change of scene, he thought, would do her good, and he caused her to visit new places, and urged her to take part in festivities. Louis of Orleans offered her a fête at Blois, and, following out a fancy of the king’s, the duke appeared before her with several other young noblemen, and danced for her amusement; and Anne looked on, knowing that the handsome prince just thirty years of age, so courtly and joyous and popular, was the direct heir to the throne. Monseigneur he was now called; only a few weeks before that had been the title of the little Dauphin. The duke showed but little sympathy for the sorrowful queen, and Anne’s spirit was roused. She spoke of him harshly to the king, and when they left Blois it was with the understanding that his absence from court would be acceptable. He accordingly removed to Blois, and there employed himself in arranging his father’s manuscript poems, and in collecting a magnificent library, which included ultimately the library of the famous Italian poet Petrarch, and that of the Sforzas of Milan.

Nothing now interposed to prevent Charles from interesting himself in the happiness of his people except his own indolence and love of pleasure. Theatrical performances were the delight both of
the king and the Parisians. The gay young men formed themselves into companies for the performance of various pieces, in which the principal persons of the day were turned into ridicule. One company consisted of young lawyers, and another in which the chief citizens of Paris took part was called 'Les Enfants sans Souci' (the children free from care), and was under the direction of a chief called the Prince of Fools. The king was captivated by these follies, but the nobler portion of the French people had very different objects at heart. The calamities endured by the army in Italy had roused the feelings of the nation, and they would willingly have seen the war renewed. Charles, in obedience to the general wish, after a time fitted out an expedition against Ludovico Sforza, and a fruitless attack was made upon Genoa in 1497; but it was a spasmodic effort, and peace was soon again concluded.

The king cared, indeed, more for enlarging and beautifying his stately castle of Amboise, in imitation of the buildings he had admired in Italy, than for recovering the authority he had lost in that country. Workmen, painters, architects, and masons from Italy were sent for, and a wonderful tower was constructed which could be ascended by a regiment of horse, whilst great improvements were also made in the town. By degrees Charles seemed to awaken also to the necessity of improvement in more important matters. He attended to the complaints of the poor, made a great reduction in the taxes, and prepared to keep his expenditure within due bounds. Everything promised well for the future, and the vigorous mind of Anne of Brittany must have rejoiced at this development in a right direction of the energy which had long lain dormant.

In the spring of 1498 she was with him at Amboise. They were spending a short time there inspecting the buildings. The place was in great confusion, and when making their way to a court in the castle where a game of tennis ball was going on, they were obliged to pass through a low, dark corridor, dirty and dilapidated. At the entrance was a little arch with a projecting corner. The king, engaged in conversation, did not notice the corner, and struck his head against it so violently that he was for a time stunned by the blow. He recovered, however, and went on to the court, where he remained for some time, interested in the game, and talking cheerfully with the persons assembled. It was afterwards remembered that he said to one of them in the course of conversation that he hoped never again to commit a wilful sin. About two o'clock the games were over. The king and queen returned by the way they went, but they had scarcely entered the dark corridor when Charles fell to the ground senseless. The previous blow had produced apoplexy. The queen called in terror for assistance. A wretched mattress was brought, and the king was laid upon it, but no one dared attempt to move
280 DEATH OF CHARLES—ACCESSION OF LOUIS XII.—FUNERAL.

Louis XII.

him from the corridor; and at nine o'clock at night Anne of Brit-
tany heard with consternation that her husband was dead.

't Thus,' says Comines, 'departed from this world so powerful and
so great a king in a place so miserable. He who possessed such
beautiful homes, and was building one so splendid, yet could find
only this poor chamber in his last great need.'

Charles VIII. died on the 7th of April, 1498. The grief for his
loss was universal. Whatever had been his follies and mistakes,
he had latterly endeavoured to redeem them by attending to his
duties, and he had won all hearts by his affability and gentleness.
Two of his servants—a butler and an archer—died from the shock
of hearing of his death.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LOUIS XII.

A.D. 1498-1515.

The proud position which had been so long tempting the ambition
of Louis of Orleans was now his; but it was given him accompanied
by a warning which even a man less thoughtful than himself could
scarcely have failed to recognise, and when he entered the chamber
where, according to custom, the body of the late king was lying in
state, he burst into tears, and, kneeling by the bier, remained for
some time in silent prayer.

Louis XII. was no ordinary man. He possessed talent, energy,
tact, and judgment, and though his actions cannot always bear a
strict scrutiny, some excuse may be found in the principles of the
age, which tolerated much that now would awaken grave censure.
His first thought was for the unhappy queen, whose position as well
as affection had received so overwhelming a shock. For ten days
and nights Anne gave full vent to her grief, neither eating nor
sleeping, but lying on the floor of her chamber, weeping incessantly.
It was not till the messages of respect sent by Louis had assured her
of his real sympathy that she was induced to rise and take nourish-
ment. Her one desire then was to do honour to her husband's
memory. Louis encouraged her to give the necessary directions for
the funeral ceremonies. 'All things were done more expensively
than had ever been done for any king,' says Comines. 'A service was
begun for him which ceased not day nor night. Neither did anyone,
either of those nearest to him or his chamberlains, or any of his
officers, move from the body; and this service and this company continued until it was placed in the earth, which was not for the space of a month.' Then, following the natural inclination which led her to live amongst her own people, Anne repaired to her native city of Nantes, intending from thenceforth to devote herself to the good of her Breton subjects, and with apparently no thought of returning to Paris. But events were otherwise decreed. In the contract of marriage between Charles and Anne it had been stipulated that in the event of the king's death his widow should espouse the next heir to the crown who was unmarried. This heir was now a child, Francois of Valois, the son of the comte d'Angoulême, first cousin to Louis. He was no fit husband for Anne. Louis himself might have proposed to the queen, but he was married. Those were days, however, in which marriage was a very slight barrier to the wishes of persons sufficiently powerful and wealthy to obtain a papal dispensation, and the character of Pope Alexander VI. afforded no reason to fear that he would be inexorable if only a sufficient inducement for consenting to the divorce of Louis and Jeanne could be given him.

The Pope's ambition was centred in his two illegitimate children, Caesar and Lucretia Borgia, both infamous for their vices. Lucretia he had married to an illegitimate son of Alphonso II. of Naples. Now Alphonso was dead, his son Frederick had succeeded him, and the Pope would fain have received Frederick's daughter as the wife of Caesar Borgia. The king of Naples interposed difficulties, and the Pope and his son turned for support to Louis. The princess Charlotte of Naples had been brought up at the court of France. This in itself was a sufficient reason for seeking an alliance; but Louis was also about to interfere again in the affairs of Italy. He had already despatched letters to the princes of Italy renewing his claims to Milan in right of his grandmother Valentina Visconti, and laying claim also to the throne of Naples. No time, therefore, was to be lost, and two nuncios were despatched to Paris with cordial congratulations to Louis on his accession.

They were received with the utmost civility. The French king would, they were assured, do his utmost to uphold the interests of Alexander and his son, but it must be upon three conditions. The Pope must assist Louis in his views on Milan; he must annul the marriage with Jeanne, and permit the king to marry Anne of Brittany; and he must give a cardinal's hat to George d'Amboise, archbishop of Rouen.

The last was a condition which no one need have hesitated to make, for the character of George d'Amboise, the king's attached friend, stood high in the estimation of all men. It was the special merit of Louis that he knew how to distinguish and reward persons
of worth and talent. And he had no mean suspicions. 'It does not become the king of France to resent the injuries of the duke of Orleans,' was his answer to the magistrates of Orleans, when they sent to ask his pardon for any offences committed against him whilst he was a prisoner in the city. The same noble spirit showed itself throughout his life in all his private relations, his conduct to his unhappy wife being the one fatal exception.

The divorce was now all but certain. The Pope privately assured Louis that he would throw no obstacles in the way of his wishes, and Louis in return sent an ambassador to Rome to bring back Cæsar Borgia, who was to be created duke of Valentinois with a large revenue.

Cæsar Borgia made an absurdly magnificent entry into Chinchon, where the king went to meet him, and the king looked out at a window and privately scoffed at him as he passed, but he could not venture openly to show his contempt for his guest, for Cæsar Borgia brought with him a paper more valuable than any jewels—the papal bull which made the marriage of Louis with Anne of Brittany possible.

It was a terrible injustice to the meek and saintly Jeanne. She had long given up all hope of gaining her husband's affections, but she could not for her conscience sake repudiate her rights. When the decree annulling the marriage was communicated to her she made one request, that she might see her husband again. 'I trust, sire,' she said when they met, 'that you will be happier with another than you have been with me; and I entreat your pardon for having caused you so much uneasiness.' Louis is reported to have burst into tears, and to have replied that he was not worthy to live with so holy a woman.

Jeanne took her mournful way to Bourges, which she had chosen for her retreat. There stood the great tower in which she had visited her husband when he was a prisoner. 'Alas!' she exclaimed, as she gazed upon it, 'he was then captive, and now I am free.' From that time she devoted herself to religious exercises and to the establishment of an order of nuns, which has since spread through France. The dress of the superiors of the Annunciades, with its rich crimson and blue bordering, marks, even to this hour, the costume worn in the days of the unhappy Jeanne d'Orléans.

It is said that when Louis XII. came in person to make his proposals for the hand of Anne of Brittany the young queen was greatly surprised. Yet this is scarcely probable. Her ladies had been instructed to sound her on the subject of a marriage with Louis, and she herself had been heard to say that it only depended on her own will to be still the queen of France. But her consent could only be won upon certain conditions. She required first to be fully assured that
riage with Jeanne was legally null. She insisted also upon the privileges of her Breton subjects, and retaining the estate of the duchy, with the title belonging to it, for her second daughter in the event of her having children; and, as a further on, she insisted that the marriage should take place at Nantes, the king should remain some time with her in her own and not require her to return to France before it was her sure to do so. Louis agreed, and so far all seemed smooth, French nation generally were indignant at the repudiation of and when the act dissolving the marriage was read by the de Luxembourg, on a day so terrifically dark and stormy that necessary to light torches in the hall, they deemed it a sign ngeance of Heaven, and as the cardinal and priests departed place shouted after them, 'There go Caiphas, Anne, and all who have condemned the holy queen, and taken the crown head.' the outcry was useless, and on the 6th of January, 1499, Britanny, in the midst of her own subjects, and surrounded nobles, was united to Louis XII. in the cathedral of with all the state and splendour for which the age was whole year passed before either of them revisited France. they deemed it wise to avoid braving the popular opinion. expiration of the year Louis took his wife to Blois, his residence, and there began the scheme of salutary reforms by known as the 'Ordinance of Blois,' which rendered his beneficial to the country. A parliamentary tribunal was ed to rectify abuses, the pay of the troops was regulated, ery people were protected from the oppressions of the soldi the taxes most burdensome to them were taken off. The gn, indeed, gave the brightest hope of peace and prosperity, uns of ambition haunted the king, and, in the month of in support of his claims to the duchy of Milan, a French as sent across the Alps. twenty days after Ludovico Sforza was a fugitive at the court emperor Maximilian, and the Milanese was in the possession of al of the French king. Both the Venetians and the Pope in their aid to this conquest. The Pope had not, indeed, ob he wished when he sent his son to France, for the young of Naples had indignantly rejected the marriage, saying that not accept for her husband the son of a priest, infamous by, and still more so by his wicked actions. But another victim found, the daughter of the king of Navarre. Her father in bribed to consent by the payment of a large sum of money by the Pope; and thus Louis had attached to his interests the
two most powerful yet most unworthy personages in Christendom, Alexander VI. and his son.

The news of the successes in Italy were brought to the king at Lyons. He had gone thither with the intention of ultimately joining the Italian army. Now, impatient to be present on the scene of his conquests, he set out for Italy, made his entrance into Milan, exercised the rights of a sovereign, and then returned to France. But he had scarcely left Milan before an insurrection broke out. The French general and viceroy, Trivulzio, was driven away, and Ludovico Sforza again took possession of his capital. The triumph of the unfortunate duke was, however, only momentary. The next news that reached France was, that the French were once more masters of Milan, and that Ludovico il Moro was a prisoner, and about to be brought to France.

In the grim old castle of Loches in Touraine there is still to be seen a vaulted chamber, some thirty or forty steps below the level of the castle, the only light being that admitted from a narrow window, crossed by three thick iron bars, and pierced in a wall eight feet thick. Here the once powerful duke of Milan was imprisoned every night, being compelled to sleep in an iron cage. He had doubtless been guilty of many crimes, but hopeless captivity under circumstances of such abject wretchedness could scarcely fail to awaken pity even for the greatest offender; and it is strange to learn that Louis and Anne resided often at Loches, and held tournaments and feasts, the rejoicing sounds of which must have reached their prisoner in his dungeon and added tenfold bitterness to his feelings. It is said, however, that after a time the severity of the duke of Milan's captivity was lessened, and he was removed to a better apartment.

And now had arrived the time for Louis to carry out his ultimate project, the recovery of Naples. Frederick, the uncle of Ferdinand, was the acknowledged king of Naples, but both France and Spain were secretly prepared to dispute his right. Ferdinand the Catholic, though professing to support the illegitimate branch of his family in Italy, never for a moment forgot that the throne was his according to the rules of hereditary succession. Crafty and treacherous, he allowed his general to profess himself on the side of Frederick, whilst, in conjunction with Louis of France, he planned to dispossess the king of Naples and divide his dominions (A.D. 1500). The alliance was so secret that it was not till the Pope had issued a bull depriving Frederick of his dominions, and transferring them, as a fief of the Holy See, to the sovereigns of France and Spain, that the unfortunate king was aware of the dangers which threatened him. Under the changed circumstances, Gonsalvo de Cordova was called upon to act no longer as an ally, but an enemy. But the general's noble spirit revolted against the command, even while he thought himself compelled to obey it.
resigned the grants which had been made him by Frederick in reparation of his former services, and requested to be released from his obligations of fealty. Frederick acceded to the latter portion of his request, but insisted on his retaining his possessions, declaring that they were but an inadequate compensation for the benefits which Gonsalvo had rendered him. Frederick now ceded all his sovereign rights at Naples to the French, and was then allowed to depart with his family for France, where Louis gave him the county of Maine and a comfortable pension. He lived in obscurity for three years, and died in 1504.

The excuse made by Louis and Ferdinand for the treachery of which they had been guilty was, that Frederick of Naples was a friend of the Turk. The affair then became a matter of so-called religion, and Anne of Brittany herself looked upon it as a pious work, and gave money from her private fortune to support the armament.

Cesar Borgia also took part in the triumph of France as a French captain. He entered Rome under the mingled banners of France and the Pope, and caused himself to be declared duke of Romagna. Great fêtes followed. Lucretia Borgia, with two hundred ladies, her attendants, was invited to share in them. At one of the entertainments six unhappy men under sentence of death were brought into the court of the palace, beneath the Pope's balcony, and, in the presence of Alexander and of the beautiful Lucretia, Cesar, splendidly dressed, amused himself by shooting at them with arrows, their fears, cries, and contortions forming the amusement of the company.

Such a state of things could not last. Italy lived in terror. But before any definite conspiracy could be formed, illness and death removed the tyrants out of the way. The Pope and his son coveted the wealth of the cardinal Orsini, and in order to get possession of it resolved to poison him. They invited themselves to sup with the cardinal at his country house, and brought with them a present of rich wine, poisoned. Immediately on their arrival, being very thirsty, they asked for wine. The Pope's servants were out of the way, and the cardinal's servants brought the poisoned wine by mistake. Alexander drank heartily of it, was seized with convulsions, and died in the course of a few hours (A.D. 1502). Cesar, who had drunk more sparingly, escaped with his life, but he never recovered his health and strength.

In the meantime, Ferdinand the Catholic and Louis, having dispossessed Frederick of Naples, quarrelled about the partition of his dominions, and were soon at open war. Gonsalvo de Cordova took possession of Naples, whilst the French troops which were sent by Louis to reinforce his army were detained at Rome by cardinal d'Amboise, who was anxious to make use of them to overawe the
cardinals and compel them to elect him Pope. But he failed in his object. The choice of the cardinals fell on an Italian known as Julius II., an ambitious, turbulent man, far more fitted to be a general than a Pope. The French then passed on to Naples, and found that the loss of so much time had been fatal to the expedition. La Trémouille, their leader, became ill from malaria, and was obliged to resign his command to the marquis of Mantua, a general greatly his inferior. The battle of the Garigliano, fought against Gonsalvo and the Spaniards on the 27th of December, 1503, amidst torrents of rain and in a marshy country, proved to be one of the most fatal disasters which ever befell the French; and, notwithstanding the exploits of the chevalier Bayard, the famous La Palisse, Louis d'Arp, and other brave French knights, the French were finally obliged entirely to evacuate Italy.

The disappointment of his hopes caused Louis a very dangerous illness; but, on his recovery, a new scheme suggested itself to him for the attainment of his cherished object. Like many of the most important political plans which the world has known, it was arranged under the protection of a public festivity.

The young and handsome archduke, Philip of Austria, the son of the emperor Maximilian, and his wife Juana, afterwards unhappily known as 'la Loca,' the Insane, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, were to visit the king and queen of France at Blois, for the betrothal of their son and heir Charles, then about four years of age, to the little French princess Claude, who was only a few months old. The engagement had been brought about by Anne. She is asserted to have planned it, from personal enmity against Louis of Savoy (the mother of Francis of Angoulême), who would naturally have expected her son, as heir-presumptive, to be the husband of Claude. Three women, grave, quiet, and domestic, were, in fact, permitted at this time to decide the destinies of Europe.

Margaret of Flanders, the rejected bride of the late king of France, sat by the bed of her little nephew Charles, who had been given into her charge, and, as she sang to the child the verses she had herself composed, and worked at the emperor Maximilian's shirts, she had leisure to ponder on the boy's future, and to consider the schemes which Anne of Brittany devised at her spinning-wheel; whilst Louis of Savoy, clever, thoughtful, and determined, lived apart in her house at Angoulême, where still is to be seen her room, with the modest inscription, 'Libris et libris,' keeping herself in readiness at the right moment to interfere for the interests of her own son.

The affections of Anne of Brittany were centred in the little Claude, who, as the wife of Charles, would share the most splendid inheritance in Europe, including Germany, Flanders, and Spain.

The chroniclers of the time are amusing in their account of the
meeting of the princes at Blois. It was nearly night, they tell us, when Philip and Juana reached the town, and, with a train of gentlemen and ladies, and a long suite of horses and waggons, wended their way, by the light of torches of yellow wax fixed against the walls, up the steep street leading to the castle.

From the press of spectators the archduke and his wife were separated; and Philip arrived first, and was conducted by 400 archers through a range of apartments to a tapestried saloon, where he found the king seated by the chimney. Near him stood the young comte d’Angoulême and the cardinal d’Amboise. As the archduke entered, the grand master of the ceremonies, M. de Brienne, taking off his cap, said, ‘Sire, here is monsieur l’Archiduc;’ to which Louis replied, smiling, ‘There is a handsome prince.’ Philip made three low reverences. The king rose to meet him, and they embraced, the archduke remaining uncovered, though the king begged him to replace his hat.

The archduchess now arrived. The king advanced to the threshold to meet her, so that she had only time to make two very low curseys. Louis, bareheaded, kissed her, led her the length of the chamber, and introduced her to the comte d’Angoulême, whom she kissed. Then he said, ‘Madame, I know that you ladies desire nothing better than to be alone together. Go, I pray, and see the queen, and leave us men to ourselves.’

Juana retired, being taken to the apartment of queen Anne, who received her with great warmth. The duchess of Bourbon was by the side of the queen, and Louisa of Savoy was also present, with the duchess of Orléans. Juana kissed them all, but she omitted the ladies of honour, who were ranged along the sides of the chamber, for, as madame de Bourbon observed, they were so many she would never have done. Juana then retired to her own chamber, but solitude was not to be permitted. A deputation waited upon her: six little pages, bearing golden chandeliers; madame de Bourbon, with a golden box of sweetmeats; madame d’Angoulême, with another full of napkins; and madame de Nevers, with a golden box full of knives and forks, which had golden handles. Other presents of sweetmeats and comfits were also brought, one of the comfits being described as marvellously fine, of silver gilt, and so long that it reached the ground. At the end of the procession came the queen’s apothecary, who, however, appears to have only stood at the door, whilst the bonbons were placed on buffets and on the bed.

The archduke had a more substantial repast. He supped with the king and two of the chief nobles. Louis, however, took only bread and water himself, as he was keeping a fast.

For five days the Austrian guests remained at Blois, and whilst grand fêtes occupied the public attention, Louis and Philip drew up
a compact—one of the most unfair in the political history of Europe—by which Germany, France, Spain, and the Pope engaged to unite in depriving the republic of Venice of her territories in northern Italy. The duchy of Milan was to be recognised as belonging to the French crown on the payment of a large sum of money to the emperor (A.D. 1504).

The archduke and his Spanish wife took leave of the French court with every demonstration of friendship, but the plans on which so much thought had been bestowed were destined to meet with an unforeseen check.

The first difficulty was the marriage. The French hated the Germans, and the friends of the young comte d’Angoulême were indignant that he should be deprived of the bride who seemed naturally marked out for him. The murmurs were loud and universal, and raised especially against the queen, who, it was well known, had planned the marriage. Louis was greatly distressed; his health and spirits gave way; he became seriously ill, and when he thought himself dying, listened to the wishes of his people, and, at the suggestion of cardinal d’Amboise, made a will by which Claude was to be given in marriage to Francis of Angoulême.

The States-General were summoned on the king’s recovery, and when Louis appeared before them on the 10th of May, 1506, they saluted him with the title of Father of his people, and he made a public declaration that the marriage of Claude and Francis had been decided on. No time was lost in arranging the betrothal, which took place at Plessis. Cardinal d’Amboise officiated.

Louisa of Savoy exultingly entered the event in her journal.

‘This year, 1507, the 22nd of May, at Plessis-les-Tours, at two o’clock in the afternoon, the marriage by promise was confirmed between my son and madame Claude, now queen of France.’

Ferdinand of Spain took no offence at the breach of the former marriage engagement. He hated his son-in-law the archduke of Austria, and saw no reason to take up his quarrels. On the contrary, he desired a closer alliance with France, and, being now a widower, he proposed to marry Germaine de Foix, the niece of Louis, and the French king agreed to cede in favour of the young princess all his claims upon Naples.

New plans and a new war were inevitable. The European nations soon learnt that a league, celebrated as the League of Cambrai, had been set on foot. Its object was the same as that of the Treaty of Blois, which had never been carried into effect. Venice was to be humbled. The wealth, power, and grandeur of the republic had excited general envy. Even Maximilian, the rejected and the penniless, urged by his sister, could not resist the temptation of joining in
the attack. He allowed Margaret to sign the treaty for him, whilst cardinal d'Amboise signed for Louis, December 10, 1508.

It was a terrible blunder for all concerned. Margaret was in reality the mortal enemy of France, which had originated the sorrows of her life. Since her first betrothal to Charles VIII she had been twice married, first to the son of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, who died; then to Philibert of Savoy, whom she loved with all the intensity of her disposition, and who also died. From that moment her nature seemed changed. She built a magnificent church over her husband's tomb, and, burying in it the joys of her past life, became in heart a man, guiding the politics of Europe, though ostensibly bent upon the home duties of a woman. She made sweetmeats for her father whilst forming the League of Cambrai, and in this league it must have been evident to all concerned she could have had no thought of the aggrandisement of France.

It was to be a war for the church, so it was said, and the Venetians themselves for some time thought that the forces of Europe were gathering for a crusade against the Turk. When that excuse could no longer be made it was stated that Venice had despoiled the Pope of several provinces, which were to be recovered. This probably seemed to Margaret an easy task. The Pope would be contented with the restoration of two or three towns, and then the Papal states, Austria, and Spain might all turn their arms against France. Louis was destined to be the sacrifice, but he walked into the snare with his eyes open. He crossed the Alps at the head of his army, in the beginning of April 1509. The Venetians met him, and were defeated at Agnadello. Louis, contrary to his natural clemency, marched on, marking his course by desolation and severity. Grieved it is to read of the sufferings inflicted on the innocent population. A universal hatred was roused against these barbarous invaders. Town after town fell into the hands of Louis; and, having recovered and enlarged his coveted duchy of Milan, he recrossed the Alps, and left the Spaniards, the Pope, and the Germans to carry on the war.

The result was that which had been evidently foreseen by the politic Margaret. After satisfying each his own particular covetousness, by humbling Venice and demanding certain portions of her territory, Pope Julius, Ferdinand the Catholic, and the emperor Maximilian made peace with the republic, and with one consent secretly joined with her in a scheme for driving the French from Italy.

The ostensible leader of this confederacy was Julius II, an old man, bent and furrowed, who looked at least eighty, but whose passion was war, and who had even himself fought on occasion and led the papal troops to the assault of a besieged town. By the summer of 1510 his plans were sufficiently matured, and the French
king was informed of his danger by the sudden dismissal of his ambassador from Rome.

The position of Louis was far from enviable. His health was giving way, his trusted counsellor, cardinal d'Amboise, was dead; his wife, whose strength of character far surpassed his own, was devoted to the Pope, as being the head of the church, and was the intimate friend of the scheming Margaret of Flanders.

His first movements betrayed his weakness. When the war with Julius began, and the French commander obtained a victory near Bologna, instead of following it up Louis forbade his troops to enter the papal territory, and contented himself with referring his quarrel with the Pope to the decision of a church council (chiefly consisting of French bishops), which met first at Pisa, but was afterwards transferred to Milan.

Julius cared little for councils, and immediately announced to the world that Louis was an enemy of the church, and that an alliance, known as the 'Holy League,' had been formed between himself and Ferdinand the Catholic. The ostensible object of this league was the support of the Roman See—its real object was the overthrow of the French king.

Louis was roused to energy by his peril. Yet his first step was scarcely calculated to inspire confidence. He placed his new army under the command of a youth—only twenty-three years of age—Gaston de Foix, a nobleman of Navarre, his nephew. Brought up in the south, accustomed from infancy to the rocks and precipices of the Pyrenees, the young general led his forces across the Alps with a rapidity which was startling. Storm and tempest, frost and snow, were indifferent to him. He made one prodigious effort, passed the Spanish army, who knew nothing of his approach, and poured down upon Brescia, which had just declared itself Venetian. The town was taken, and 15,000 persons were killed. Cruelty is the one great stain on the character of Gaston de Foix.

So far the French had been successful; but England was now preparing to mingle in the fray. Henry VIII. had just ascended the throne, and thought to distinguish himself by war. He had sent troops to assist Spain, and a descent upon the north of France was anticipated. Louis XII. wrote to Gaston that it was not a question of safety for Italy, but for France itself. A battle must be fought—a great battle—and it must be a victory, or all would be lost. An agent of the emperor Maximilian wrote from Blois to Margaret of Flanders that since France was France never had the French felt themselves in such peril. The emperor himself was threatening to forsake them. On the eve of Good Friday 1512 a letter arrived from Maximilian to Jacob, the leader of the German 'lanzknechts' who accompanied the French army. The German
captains were ordered, on pain of death, immediately to quit the French camp. Jacob took the letter to the chevalier Bayard, to whom he was devoted, though he never talked to him, for he knew only two French words—*Bon-jour, monsieur*. An interpreter explained the difficulty. *You are bound to the king of France,* said Bayard. *He is rich, and will know how to recompense you. Put the letter in your pocket and show it to no one.* Jacob obeyed, and the Germans remained with the French. The warning had, however, been given. Doubtless other letters would soon arrive, and no time was to be lost. The French troops were before Ravenna. The order was given to take it by assault. Six times the attempt was made and failed; then the French drew back.

The Spaniards were entrenched within a strong camp surrounded by deep ditches, leaving only a small passage for the cavalry. In order to attack them it was necessary to get between the camp and the city; a little river, which in the spring was a torrent, was in the way. Gaston de Foix, as he was walking in the morning dawn of Easter Sunday, on the 11th of April, 1512, met a party of Spaniards, and said to them, *Gentlemen, I am about to cross the stream, and I swear before God that I will not recross it till the victory is either yours or mine.* And he kept his oath.

The battle took place on that same day. Gaston de Foix went into it richly and heavily armed; but his right arm was bare to the elbow, for he had vowed to bathe it in the blood of the Spaniards, the hereditary enemies of his family. He spoke of this vow to his friends with that strange mixture of ferocity and tenderness which marked the period. *He had made this vow for the love of his fair lady,* he said, and he was about to sustain her honour. Gaston fought with incredible bravery, but it was difficult to encounter the Spaniards, who were armed with short swords, and dexterously gliding amongst the ranks of the French, prevented them from using their long lances.

In the midst of the battle Dumolard, the friend of Bayard, wishing to honour the fidelity of the German leader Jacob, ordered wine to be brought, and seating himself, with Jacob by his side, they drank together. At that moment, whilst the glasses were still in their hands, the same bullet carried off both their heads.

Victory ultimately was declared to be with the French, but the Spaniards retreated in good order, and the loss of Gaston de Foix, who perished at the close of the battle, was sufficient to outweigh any immediate advantage to Louis. His death was mainly due to his fiery impatience. A strong band of fugitive Spaniards met the chevalier Bayard with a few followers in a narrow lane, and were about to be attacked, when one of the Spaniards came forward and said, *My lord, you have too few men to attack us, and you have*
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Louis XII.

... gained the day. Let that suffice. If we escape it is by God's favour.' Bayard let them pass, but they were again encountered by Gaston de Foix, who waited for no remonstrance, but spurred his horse forward to attack them. The Spaniards deliberately took aim at him, and he fell to the ground and died, pierced by sword-thrusts, fifteen being aimed at his face. The Pope heard the news of the loss of the battle of Ravenna and fled to the castle of St. Angelo. The shops in Rome were closed, and the citizens from the summit of the walls looked out for an army—which never came.

The emperor Maximilian now joined the league, and the brave French general, La Palisse, who succeeded Ga-ton de Foix, was unable to make head against it. 20,000 Swiss hired by the emperor descended suddenly upon the Milanese. Maximilian Sforza, the son of Ludovico, was proclaimed sovereign of the duchy, and before a few months had passed the Holy League had obtained its object, and once more the French were beyond the Alps.

Julius II. had triumphed, but death soon followed. He expired on the 21st of February, 1513, and Leo X., one of the famous Medici family, was chosen as his successor. Then once more war broke out in distracted Italy. It was a new league—Louis XII. and the Venetians against Maximilian Sforza, who was expelled by his own subjects. At the same time Ferdinand the Catholic and Henry VIII. appeared on the scene, Ferdinand threatening France on the Spanish frontier, and Henry landing with 20,000 men at Calais. In a battle fought between the English and the French on the 16th of August, 1513, the flight of the French was so precipitate that the engagement has received the name of the Battle of the Spurs. But the campaign ended suddenly; Henry VIII. quarrelled with Maximilian and returned to England.

Louis XII. was by this time heartily weary of war. The only ally on whom he could depend was James IV., king of Scotland, and in the summer of the same year in which the Battle of the Spurs was fought James was killed in the disastrous engagement between the Scotch and English at Flodden Field. The French king's domestic sorrows pressed heavily upon him. His queen had long been ill, but no one imagined that her malady was of a fatal character. On the 4th of February, 1514, she was able to receive a messenger from the emperor Maximilian, and to send back to him a cordial assurance of her continued affection for the house of Burgundy, and on the 9th she was dead.

Louis was deeply grieved. He had respected and rested upon his wife, in some respects perhaps too much for his own good and the prosperity of the nation, for Anne was undoubtedly so far biased in favour of Maximilian and the house of Austria as to be comparatively blind to other interests. When she was dead peace
Louis XII.

became more than ever a necessity, and Louis entered into negotiations with the Pope. Leo made certain conditions, one of which was that Maximilian Sforza should be acknowledged as duke of Milan. This being agreed to, he undertook to make terms between the contending parties.

Henry VIII, at first held back, but personal interest at length induced him to sign a treaty, one of the main articles of which was that Louis, now a man of middle age, broken in health and spirits, should become the husband of the young English princess Mary.

The marriage took place immediately, and was accompanied by great festivities. The king, whose habits had lately been very simple, who dined early and went to bed at sunset, was unable to bear the fatigue, and excitement, and late hours which his bride delighted in. His health failed rapidly. He lingered during the autumn, and died on the 1st of January, 1515.

The title of ‘Father of his People’ bestowed on Louis XII. was in many respects well merited. He was upon the whole just, prudent, and generous; he reduced the taxes and enforced integrity in the management of the public revenue, and—a still more important benefit to after generations—he caused to be collected and printed the customs which had become laws. The effects of this ‘Code Contumier,’ as it was called, were of vast importance. The people could now no longer be oppressed by new and unheard-of demands. Even if the custom was bad it was at least published, known—everyone could read and discuss it, and there could be little doubt that in time the common feeling of mankind would rise against it and it would be done away with.

Agriculture, trade, and everything which marks the prosperity of a nation flourished under Louis XII., and the country might have prospered even yet more if the king could have restrained his ambition. But the same spirit which induced him to sacrifice the unhappy Jeanne in the prospect of a brilliant marriage with Anne of Brittany led him to renounce the hope of being what he might have been—the wisest, best-loved of French monarchs—for the vanity of military glory and the gratification of an insatiable desire for foreign territories. Undoubtedly he is to be admired as a ruler, but he would have been a better king if he had been a better man.

The period at which Louis lived is often called that of the Renaissance, or of the re-establishment and improvement of the arts. Some of the most striking public buildings in France date from this time. The architectural style known as the Renaissance is indeed open to objection, as containing a mixture of Grecian and Gothic which is not according to strict rule; but, although the details may be found fault with, the effect is on the whole imposing.
CHAPTER XXX.

FRANCIS I.

A.D. 1515–1547.

Francis I., the successor of Louis XII., was the first cousin once removed of the late king. Both were lineally descended from the duke of Orleans, who had been assassinated by Jean Sans Peur, Francis being the representative of the duke's younger son. Nature and circumstances had done much to fit him for his high position. Dignified, graceful, and handsome, an accomplished gentleman, a courteous sovereign, fascinating in peace, brave even to recklessness in war, he needed only one thing, principle, to make him the model of a king. But Francis had no principle. He was a selfish, ambitious schemer for his own interest, and his brilliant, profligate reign marks an epoch of misery for his people. Something may, perhaps, be said in his excuse from his education. His mother, Louisa of Savoy, a widow at the age of eighteen, had concentrated upon him all the affections of her passionate nature. She had planned, laboured, done evil, for his advancement; and what she sowed she ultimately reaped. His tutor, the son of a man connected with the romantic court of René of Anjou, had delighted him from his infancy with tales of self-indulgent love and mock chivalry; whilst as he grew up to manhood the stories of the knights and nobles who took part in the Italian wars kindled in his breast a vain thirst for military glory. But the person who exercised the greatest influence upon his life was his sister Marguerite, only two years older than himself, but from her strong character his superior by ten years. Marguerite's hopes, her pride and ambition, were, like her mother's, fixed upon Francis; and the very qualities which excited her anxiety were also the fuel for her admiration. He was her hero, and he was conscious of it; and the dangerous worship thus bestowed upon him in his own family was by degrees offered by the nation at large.

The marriage with Claude of Brittany had added to his popularity. The dread of the nation was least Brittany should become an appanage of the house of Austria. Now there was no more fear, and Francis and Claude were welcomed as the instruments by which the glory of France had been achieved.

Italy, like France, hailed with joy the accession of the young king. Maximilian Sforza, duke of Milan, had called in the Swiss to his aid against the Spaniards. Swiss and Spanish troops devastated the country, and in the extremity of their distress the unhappy
I.

Invasion of Italy—French Commanders.

Ilanese turned privately to Francis. Even if he should renew the
enchant claim on the duchy he would save them from their present
tolerable burden. Venice shared the feeling of Milan, and Flo-
cence, oppressed by the Medici, silent and still, bided her time for
vengeance. Francis had but to make his preparations, and the road
campaign lay open before him. 'I will go—be very sure of that,'
is his secret message to the people of Milan; 'and I will conquer
perish.'

It was in the month of July 1515 that he assembled his army
60,000 men in Dauphigny for the invasion of Lombardy and the
port of the Milanese. To oppose him 20,000 Swiss occupied the
ness of Mont Cenis, then considered the only practicable entrance
to Italy. But of this obstacle the French were not fully aware till
by reached Lyons. There Trivulzio, who was in command (for
king had not yet joined the army), was compelled to contemplate
a necessity of crossing—if they crossed at all—by some other
route. Couriers were sent out to explore the mountains, and brought
a report that the rugged gorges of Monte Viso might be at-
tended. The army advanced in that direction. Rocks were blown
out or pierced through, and bridges built over the deep ravines; the
heavy cannon were dragged over by horses, the smaller artillery
ripped on the backs of mules; and at length, after incredible hard-
tips, the French army found itself on the Italian side of the Alps.

But Francis had by this time joined his army in person, having
him mother regent during his absence. His troops had advanced,
ough not without opposition, to Marignano, about ten miles from
ilan, but behind him were the armies of Spain and the Pope.
fore him were the Swiss. The Venetians were the only Italians
his side.

The commander of the French army might be said to be every-
and no one. The king—only twenty-one years of age—was the
imal head, and under him was the constable De Bourbon, who
is just five-and-twenty. La Trémoïlle and Trivulzio were, indeed,
led leaders, but their views with regard to war were looked upon
antiquated. The king had with him a noble force of cavalry and
bravest knights of France, and in an open plain they might have
wonders, but their present position was on a narrow causeway,
ich did not allow more than twenty men to charge in front, whilst
the right and left were ditches and marshes.

The army of Sforza was composed chiefly of Swiss and Ger-
ans, the former so eager to surprise the enemy that they put off
air shoes, in order that the tramp of the soldiers might be less
distantly heard, and that they might be better able to jump the ditches
and cross the marshes.

And the French were surprised, though warning had been given
three times. The constable De Bourbon was about to sit down to dinner, and the king was trying on a suit of German armour, when news was brought that the enemy were close at hand. Francis seized with delight the hand of the Venetian general, who happened to be with him, and entreated him without delay to return and collect his troops, and prepared to ride forth himself to battle.

From four in the afternoon till midnight the conflict raged without any decisive result. In the flickering light of the moon there were many strange accidents and mistakes. The king was about to ride into the midst of a body of 8,000 men, believing them his own, but they were Swiss. 'Six hundred spears were pointed at me,' he said afterwards himself, 'and proved to me who they were.' Three hundred knights and some light troops gathered round him, and he retired, whilst the constable De Bourbon rallied the infantry, which for the first time were found to be more important than the cavalry, and dispersed the enemy.

There was a pause in the battle, but it was not ended. Friends and foes mingled together lay down for a short repose. Francis rested himself on a gun-carriage, and refreshed himself with a draught of water—not untainted with blood—which a soldier brought him in his helmet.

When the morning broke it was seen that the able French generals La Trémouille, Trivulzio, La Palisse, and others had employed the night to great advantage in placing their troops in a better position; and though the Swiss advanced again bravely they were overpowered by the cavalry. Men and horses fell upon them, and their lances could with difficulty pierce the perfect armour of their opponents. At length, about ten o'clock in the morning, a cry was heard, 'Marco! Marco!' the war-cry of Venice. Alviano, with the Venetian forces, was at hand, and the Swiss saw themselves overwhelmed. They had lost half their forces, for no less than 14,000 men were left on this terrible battle-field. Yet the remainder took their way towards Milan with such proud coolness that they would not even give up the cannon captured from the French, but dragged them along without the aid of horses, till from utter weariness they were obliged to leave them in the ditches by the roadside.

Trivulzio, who had been in eighteen pitched battles, declared that they were all children's play in comparison with the battle of Marignano, which he called a combat of giants; and Francis, who had borne his part in it with unequalled bravery, marked his sense of the importance of the victory by receiving knighthood on the field of battle, at his own request, from the honoured hands of the chevalier Bayard.

The immediate result of the battle of Marignano was the fall of Milan. Maximilian Sforza, who had for some days been besieged in
be castle of Pietro Navarro, willingly surrendered on the 4th of October. 'Thank God!' he said, as he found himself released from his cares of government; 'at length I am free from the brutality of the Swiss, the dishonesty of the emperor, and the perfidy of the Spaniards.' Francis offered him a liberal pension, and he retired to live peaceably in France, whilst the king took possession of his city.

The news of the victory of Marignano reached the Pope the day after the battle. It was communicated by the Venetian ambassador, who carefully watched its effects. Leo X. turned pale. He had promised neutrality, and had broken it; and, forgetting that curious eyes were bent upon him, he clasped his hands and exclaimed, 'What will become of us?' The price he was immediately to pay was the surrender of two provinces, Parma and Placentia, and the recognition of Francis as sovereign of Milan. Some more delicate questions regarding the respective rights of the Pope and the king of France were reserved for a personal interview at Bologna. In the meantime Francis, recognising the value of the Swiss and their importance as allies, entered into an engagement with them known as the Perpetual Peace, which lasted without interruption from that time till the overthrow of the royal dynasty of France at the revolution.

Francis returned to Paris, and shortly after the concordat, or agreement, which had been entered into with the Pope in reference to the Gallican Church was made known. The king had acquired the right of presentation to all bishoprics and other ecclesiastical dignities; whilst he had surrendered to the Pope the 'annates,' or firstfruits, being one year's revenue of every benefice to which he presented.

The royal power was very greatly increased by this arrangement, and the French people saw in it an attack upon their liberties, and in many ways tried to elude it. They were compelled at length to submit to the royal authority, but it was never without murmur and protest.

It was on his return to France after the battle of Marignano that Francis heard of the death of Ferdinand the Catholic, of Spain, and the accession of his grandson Charles. The affairs of Europe were now in the hands of sovereigns who were scarcely more than youths. Henry VIII. of England was four-and-twenty, Francis I. two-and-twenty, Charles of Spain sixteen, whilst the little king Louis of Hungary was only ten. The Pope himself was young compared with other Popes—he was nine-and-thirty. Energetic action might naturally be expected from princes so vigorous, but Charles was slow in his movements. A sickly, cold-mannered, yet singularly intelligent boy, brought up under the guardianship of his aunt Margaret, the
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Francis I.

governess of the Netherlands, he had been early taught to look at the affairs of government as his profession. Piles of despatches and state papers were placed before him as he sat by the side of his tutor, Adrian of Utrecht, in the hall of the palace of Malines; and he was required to make himself master of their contents, and to prepare a report for the council. Even in the night, if need were, this duty of reading despatches was imposed upon him. He was a ruler from his boyhood, and the vision of a vast monarchy was ever before his eyes; and when at the age of sixteen he found himself lord not only of Austria and Flanders, but also of the fairest kingdoms of Southern Europe, it was no vain dream that his ambitious hopes were soon to be realised.

But for the present he needed peace, for the affairs of Italy were unsettled, and Spain had only recently been moulded into one kingdom; and notwithstanding the wise government of the great prime minister, Cardinal Ximenes, insurrection and revolution might be expected. The Turks, moreover, were making their way in Europe. It was not a moment for a war amongst Christian princes, and the first transaction between Charles and Francis was the arrangement of a treaty of peace, signed at Noyon on the 13th of August, 1516, which put an end to the destructive contest occasioned by the League of Cambray.

Peace under their young and brilliant monarch must have been singularly acceptable to the French. The court was a living romance. Expeditions along the banks of the Loire from castle to castle, from forest to forest, grand hunting parties, and splendid banquets, these were for a time the order of the day. Then, on a sudden, all was changed. The envoys of the king of Spain knew where to find the king of France. He rose very late, and his mother, Louisa of Savoy—who in authority was almost a joint sovereign—rose late also. The envoys came to the 'lever,' when courtiers and ambassadors were usually admitted to be present whilst the king dressed, but Francis was still asleep. They came later, and he was gone out on a distant riding excursion far into the forest. The evening was given up to gaiety; business must be put off till to-morrow. But the morrow arrived, and the whole court had departed; and the unfortunate envoys could only find some stray servants, who informed them probably that the king intended to sleep that night ten leagues off.

Such a wandering monarch ought to have been well acquainted with his kingdom, but it was not so. Francis was, in fact, a slave to his court. The very day after his accession he imposed a heavy tax on his subjects, so that he might make a present to some of his favourites.

The court of Charles in Spain was not less oppressive from the
Schemes of Francis—election of Charles to be Emperor.

Avarice of his Flemish counsellors, at the head of whom was the sieur de Chievres, one of the famous family of Croye. It was not lawful to take the gold coin introduced after the discovery of America out of the country—it was deemed too rare and valuable. The beautiful ducats of Ferdinand and Isabella were especially esteemed. The Flemings, however, carried them off unscrupulously. At last there remained so few of the ducats that when a Spaniard saw one he put his hand to his cap and said reverently, 'Heaven preserve you, double-headed ducat, since M. de Chievres has not yet discovered you.'

During the three years that Charles remained in Spain the efforts of his counsellors were directed to keeping friends with France. They amused the king with the idea that Charles would marry a French princess; and Charles, who was sixteen, wrote 'My dear father' to a young man of four and twenty. Francis was not deceived, but he was content to let matters rest so long as he received a pension of 100,000 crowns on the pretext of this marriage. His future course seemed marked out. The advance of the Turks was startling, and all eyes were directed to Francis as the champion of Christendom. But in order to be this he must be emperor. He must dispossess the house of Austria, which for nearly a century had received this elective dignity. If the word of the king is to be believed, he desired the empire for this one only reason, that he might overcome the Turks. When the English ambassador, Thomas Boleyn, asked whether he would go against them in person he exclaimed, 'If I am elected I shall in three years either be dead or in Constantinople.'

In the month of January 1519 the death of the aged emperor Maximilian took place. Francis at once announced himself a candidate for the empire in opposition to Charles. Recklessly prodigal at all times, he made use of the most lavish bribes in the hope of influencing the election. 'I will spend three millions of crowns to gain my object,' so he wrote to his ambassadors at the German diet. But when the day of election came the hopes of the French king were disappointed. His rival, henceforth to be known as Charles the Fifth, was declared successor to the empire.

Up to this time Francis had professed the most friendly feeling towards Charles. 'We are,' he remarked, 'two suitors to the same mistress. The more fortunate will gain her, but the other must remain contented.' When, however, the event of the election was made known his feeling was intensely bitter, and the disappointment seems to have laid the foundation of a personal hatred to Charles, which lasted through his whole life.

In such a state of mind it was not difficult to find occasion for war. Several points were open to dispute. The little sovereignty
of Navarre, on the borders of France and Spain, was claimed by both countries.

The duchy of Milan was, according to Charles, a fief of the German empire; according to Francis, his own inheritance in right of his grandmother, Valentina Visconti.

Burgundy was claimed by the emperor, as having been taken from his grandmother, Mary of Burgundy, by the crafty policy of Louis XI. Francis asserted that Louis XI. had only taken back that which was his own, since the duchy of Burgundy was unquestionably in former days a French fief.

The rivals were nearly equally matched, and the advantage would, it was evident, be with him who should win England to his side. The probabilities were on the side of Charles. England was in feeling essentially anti-French, whilst its commerce was directed towards Bruges and Antwerp; and the growing industry of the country had even been discouraged by the preference given to the manufactures of Flanders.

Francis did not despair. But one thing seemed to him necessary—the support of cardinal Wolsey, the all-powerful minister of Henry VIII.

Charles was equally impressed with the necessity of winning Wolsey to his side, and he sent over to him from Spain a large sum of money. Wolsey's ambition, however, was greater than his covetousness. He desired the Popedom. Leo X. was, indeed, younger than himself, but his constitution was impaired, and Wolsey fully believed that he should live to see him buried. In the meantime he desired an interview with each monarch separately before making his decision between them.

No sooner was Charles elected emperor than it was settled that Henry VIII. and Francis should meet, but before the arrangements could be made the wily Charles, without invitation, had landed in England, held a confidential intercourse with Henry and Wolsey, and gained the hearts of both by his flatteries and gifts.

Francis, when he met the English monarch, according to appointment, on a spot between the towns of Arders and Guineas—since known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold—had lost the advantage of making the first impression, and could only hope by gallantry and cordiality to lessen the effect of his rival's shrewdness.

When the interview was first proposed, fearing to be effaced by the wealth of England, he enquired of Wolsey, through the English ambassador, 'whether his brother of England would not think it desirable to forbid his followers any show of splendid tents? He would on his part willingly issue a similar order.' But Wolsey hoped to crush the French by the display of English riches, and insisted that the meeting should be a fête, and Francis blushed for
FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

having dreamed of economy. The meeting became, in fact, a simple rivalry of extravagance, and houses and lands in France were sold and mortgaged for the purchase of velvet, satins, cloth of gold, jewels, and above all chains of gold such as the English wore.

Yet it was not a creditable show, at least on the part of France. Distinguished amongst all the ladies who crowded the court was madame de Chateaubriand, avowedly the king's favourite, whilst the queen, Claude, the sickly daughter of Louis XII., sat apart in lonely dignity. Only the proud queen mother, Louisa of Savoy, could dispute the palm with the favourite. Louisa had her party, as Francis had his, and the court favoured her, for she was still handsome and attractive—so attractive, indeed, that she had dreamed it might be possible to gain the affections of the young constable De Bourbon. The constable, however, cared for riches rather than for love. He had sought and obtained the hand of Susanne, the little duchess of Bourbon, who was the richest heiress of France, and his power was now immense; but the queen mother's love was destined in a very few years to bring untold evil upon him and upon Normandy.

On the 7th of June, 1520, Francis set off from Ardres, Henry from Guines, and at the same moment the two princes appeared on the opposite heights commanding the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Their respective followers remained on the hills. The sovereigns descended into the plain. Francis was on horseback. The constable De Bourbon carried the sword of France before him. Henry saw this from afar, and he also came forward with the sword of England. The two kings met and embraced. The keen eye of Henry glanced at the splendid figure of the constable, whom he well knew by report, and as he conversed with Francis he said, 'If I had such a subject, his head should not long remain upon his shoulders.'

A royal banquet was prepared. The English offered to the French wines and refreshments, and Henry discussed with the lawyers a treaty of intimate alliance. The title of king of France still assumed by the English monarchs was referred to, and Henry courteously put it aside, saying, 'The title is a falsity.'

The next day the lists were prepared. At each end were trees of cloth of gold with leaves of green silk, from which hung the escutcheons of the brother monarchs. Around were huge scaffoldings for the ladies and the nobles, and scattered at intervals along the valley were pavilions, or rather temporary palaces, fitted up with incredible luxury, the most precious stuffs being employed for ceiling and walls. The marvel of all was the English palace, a kind of glass Windsor, receiving and sending back by a hundred windows the dazzling sunlight.

The tournament began, and Francis displayed all his grace, Henry
all his strength. The blows of the latter were so vigorous that he stunned the unfortunate knight who encountered him, and gave such shocks to his own horse that the poor animal died the same night.

On a subsequent day the English displayed their national skill in archery, and Henry was in the ascendant. Wrestling, however, was his 'forte.' As it began he seized the French king by the collar. But Francis released himself by his adroitness, and, forgetting what would have been politic, threw the English monarch to the ground. The attendants, making a great mistake, rushed in, separated the wrestlers, and entreated Henry not to take his revenge, and he complied, but a sense of bitter humiliation and enmity rankled in his breast.

Francis had made great efforts to ensure cordiality; he had even visited Henry unexpectedly in his tent before the English king had risen, wishing thus to show his confidence, and Henry had welcomed him, and given him a rich gold chain; whilst Francis in return offered to act as his valet, and proceeded to warm Henry’s shirt. But these were merely surface civilities. The sovereigns parted coldly. Henry could not forget that in every case in which he had attempted to eclipse Francis he had failed. Not only had he been overthrown in wrestling, but when he wished to display his handsome figure and proposed for amusement to exchange coats with the French king, he found he was growing so stout that Francis’s coat could scarcely be fastened without bursting. Moreover, his glass palace, of which he was so proud, was blown down by the wind—a misfortune which was a fit emblem of his disappointment in the whole affair. Full of vexation, he went direct from Ardres to Gravelines, where the emperor awaited a second interview. There was no rivalry here. Charles was a little plain man, dressed in black, who, being several years younger than Henry, thought it no humiliation to treat him with respectful deference. He was, besides, quite willing to pay court to Wolsey, and the cardinal was easily won over. In the concclave which was to elect a future Pope, an Austrian prince who possessed both Naples and the north of Italy, and thus held Rome in his grasp, would certainly have more influence than a monarch who was powerful only on the further side of the Alps. After the interview at Gravelines there could be no doubt as to which side the English king would take in case of a dispute between Charles and Francis. He had, in fact, given his word to conclude no engagement hostile to the imperial interests.

The storm which had so long been brooding burst forth in 1521. Henry d’Albret, having been dispossessed of his little kingdom of Navarre by Ferdinand the Catholic, resolved to make an effort for the recovery of his throne, and called upon Francis to assist him. A French army crossed the Pyrenees, but was driven back unsuc-
DAWN OF THE REFORMATION—TREACHERY OF THE QUEEN MOTHER. 363

necessful; at the same time hostilities began in the Milanese, where marshal Lautrec, the French governor, had made himself obnoxious by his exactions.

It was a time of trouble throughout Europe. Already the strife had begun which was to split the Church of Rome to its centre. The abuses of the papal system had roused the indignation of Luther in Germany, and the doctrines of the Reformation were spreading throughout Christendom. The teaching of Luther had been publicly condemned by the French theologians, but the Reformers were protected by Briconet, bishop of Meaux, and by his influence the mind of Marguerite, the sister of Francis, became strongly imbued with the new doctrines.

Graceful, clever, enthusiastic, and impulsive, Marguerite was destined to become one of the leading spirits of the great Reformative movement. One feeling alone interfered with her devotion to religion, and that was her admiration for her brother, who, in a device chosen by herself, she designated as the sun, on which she, the sunflower, was always turning to gaze.

Francis was wholly unworthy of her. He gave his affection, such as it was, to degraded favourites, and at the time when the Italian war burst out the person who reigned supreme at his court was madame de Chateaubriand, the sister of marshal Lautrec.

The queen mother bent all her energies to destroy this influence, and, in order to effect her purpose, determined to bring disgrace upon Lautrec, even at the risk of the honour of her country. The money collected for the maintenance of the war was, unknown to Francis, given into her hands by the officer appointed to collect it, and, instead of forwarding it to Lautrec, she retained it. Lautrec, unable to pay his Swiss mercenaries, could no longer reckon on a force capable of resisting those of the emperor and the Pope, who had now entered into an intimate alliance. He was defeated with great loss at the end of April 1522; the Milanese was abandoned to Charles, and a month afterwards Francis received at Lyons a declaration of war from Henry VIII., who was upon the point of invading France. In the meantime Lautrec arrived at Lyons. The queen mother strove to prevent an interview between him and the king, but the constable De Bourbon, who was then at the court, was determined upon effecting it. He was by this time a widower, and Louisa of Savoy had again made an effort to win his love. The constable had haughtily rejected her, and they were in consequence more than ever enemies. To tell the king of his mother’s treachery in withholding the supplies would, as the constable supposed, ensure the downfall of her influence, and, taking Lautrec by the hand, he forced his way into the royal presence, and brought the marshal face to face with the king.
'Who has lost the Milanese?' exclaimed Francis, furiously.
'You, sir,' replied Lautrec. An explanation followed, and the king, utterly overwhelmed, could only exclaim, 'Oh, my mother! who would have believed it of her?'

Yet the early feeling of respect could not at once be lost, and, on the interposition of Marguerite, the queen mother was outwardly restored to her son's favour. She had now, however, another injury treasured up to rankle in her breast against the constable De Bourbon, and, with the intense enmity of a woman whose self-respect has been wounded, she vowed to effect his ruin.

The way was quickly opened. Francis had already begun to feel irritated by the display of the constable's wealth and dignity. Having undertaken the office of godfather to his child, the king saw himself waited upon in the constable's hôtel by 500 gentlemen, splendidly dressed in velvet. Such a body of men might easily become a force, and therefore a danger to the sovereign, and in his anxiety to lessen his subject's power Francis thought of suppressing some of the many lucrative offices which had been conferred upon him by the vain love of the queen mother. In the end, however, he did what was much more offensive: he took away the peculiar privilege of the constables of France, that of leading the army. From that time Charles de Bourbon, as it would seem, dreamt of treachery. Negotiations were entered into with the emperor, through the medium of a lady of the Croye family and of Margaret of Austria; but they might never have assumed a tangible form but for the folly and mad revenge of the queen mother.

On the 12th of August, 1522, a suit was commenced in the courts of law by Louise of Savoy, as claimant of the vast estates which the constable possessed in right of his wife, Susanne de Bourbon.

There was a specious pretext of right. Susanne was only fourteen when she married, and gave over to her husband the wealth of which Louise of Savoy, as the niece of the last duke of Bourbon, would otherwise have been the lawful inheritor. The claim of the constable himself was slight, as he was descended from a younger branch of the family. The person who was at first most overwhelmed by the news of the suit was an old lady, once all-powerful in France—Anne of Beaujeu, the daughter of Louis XI. The constable Charles de Bourbon had been brought up under her care, and all her interests were centred in him. The claim now made against him for his destruction was her death-blow, and she expired in the month of November.

This event hastened the progress of events. The possessions of Anne of Beaujeu were generally considered to belong to the Bourbon patrimony, but some of the fiefs were her own, and were now claimed...
by the crown. The constable saw in this the first step to the seizure of all his territories. Without delay he sent a message to Madrid asking for the daughter of the emperor in marriage, and demanding the invasion of France by the imperial and English forces.

A step so dangerous had not been taken without forethought. Great discontent reigned in France in consequence of the king’s profligacy and extravagance, and many of the nobles would, it was probable, take part with the constable if he were to come forward as the saviour of his country. Queen Claude also was his friend, and it was in her presence that the final rupture with the king took place. She was dining one day alone, when Charles de Bourbon entered unexpectedly, and she begged him to sit down with her. During dinner the king appeared, and the constable was about to rise. ‘No, monseigneur,’ replied Francis, addressing him by a title due to the princes of the royal family; ‘remain seated. Is it true, then? Are you about to be married?’ ‘No, sire.’ ‘I know it—I am sure of it,’ persisted Francis. ‘I am aware of your secret dealings with the emperor. Remember what I say.’ ‘Sire,’ exclaimed the constable, ‘you threaten. I have not deserved to be treated thus.’ And dinner was no sooner over than he left the court, and with him went many of the chief nobles of France. As yet, however, there was no declared breach, for Bourbon’s pretext for departure was that of exterminating the banditti of the northern provinces. But by the middle of August an agreement with Spain and England was concluded and acted upon. An English army, in concert with the Flemings, disembarked at Calais, and the Spaniards entered France.

The conduct of Francis is surprising. In the prospect of the invasion his thoughts turned to Italy, and he summoned his nobles to meet him there.

The royal suite travelled slowly, and had only reached Nivernais when the king received the following startling letter:—‘One of the greatest personages of the realm, and of the blood royal, has a design not only to give up the country to its enemies, but also upon the king’s life.’ So wrote Louise of Savoy.

Francis, who had with him only a small force, immediately made his way to Moulins, where the duke of Bourbon was, according to report, lying ill; and, placing his own soldiers at the gates of the duke’s palace, announced his intention of spending the night there.

Then followed an interview. The pretended invalid dared not again deny that he had entered into negotiations with the emperor, but he said that he had only waited to see the king to tell him all. Francis spoke kindly, and forgivingly assured the constable that he intended to take him with him into Italy, and give him the command of the vanguard, as at Marignano. Bourbon asked for the delay
of a few days. He was too ill, he said, to bear the motion of a litter. And the king departed, leaving behind one of his squires, who might give him news of the duke's health.

But the constable objected to the guardianship of the squire, and when, after a few days, he began his journey, he sent him to rejoin the king. Francis ordered the man back, and the duke then paused on his way, and announced that he was again very ill, and, indeed, dying. Cries and groans awoke the squire in the middle of the night. He rose quickly and rushed off with the doleful tidings to the king. But no sooner was he gone than the duke jumped out of bed, mounted his horse, and rode off at full gallop to his castle of Chaulette. There the irrepressible squire, a second time sent back by the king, again awaited him. The constable, in towering wrath, threatened to hang him from the battlements, and at length, too thankful to be allowed to escape with his life, the poor man departed.

Then the constable made his final escape. In the middle of the night, exchanging his dress for that of a servant, and reversing his horse's shoes, so that he might not be tracked, he fled towards the south, and, after many narrow escapes, reached Italy and openly joined the emperor.

Francis was still in the greatest danger in the north, but the dissensions between Wolsey and his master were advantageous to him. Henry would have been contented to take Boulogne, whilst Wolsey, in the interests of the emperor, desired to have the strong fortresses on the Somme. Wolsey no doubt believed in the emperor's support of his secret views, but he must have been discredited when, on the death of Pope Adrian VI., which took place in the month of September 1523, Charles suffered an illegitimate member of the Medici family to be made Pope, under the name of Clement VII. The election was irregular, but that fact only rendered the Pope more dependent on the emperor who supported him.

The news reached Wolsey in the depth of a most inclement winter, so severe, indeed, that many of the soldiers were frozen to death. Still they advanced towards Paris. Wolsey allowed them to pillage, and they burnt what they could not carry away. When within eleven leagues of the capital, however, the order was given to retreat. 'It is too cold,' wrote Wolsey to the emperor; 'neither man nor beast can stand against the frost. Your own Germans, who came from the Rhine, are all dispersed.' And so the northern campaign ended on the part of the English.

In the meantime little had been done in Italy. Six months passed in delay on both sides. As regarded Charles de Bourbon, Francis put a price on his head, and then, being softened by a visit from the constable's sister, the duchess of Lorraine, promised to
The spring the Imperialists were reinforced by 6,000 French and Bourbon then took the offensive and compelled the general, Bonnivet, a man without talent or principle, to a desperate struggle took place on the banks of the Sesia. He was wounded, and obliged to yield his command to the Bayard. The gallant knight resisted for some time the of a superior force, and thus secured the retreat of his across the Alps. But he was himself mortally wounded by a ball. As he felt the blow, he cried out, 'O God! I am and, taking hold of his sword, kissed the cruciform hilt, ex-

'Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam. At his own request he was placed at the foot of a tree, his ed towards the foe. The constable De Bourbon rode up in sit. He paused at the sight of Bayard, and expressed his regret. 'Monseigneur, I need no pity,' replied Bayard; e death of a man of honour; but I pity you, for you are against your king, your country, and your oath.' The is now came by, and Pescura, their general, ordered Bayard en to a pavilion and laid on a camp bed. A priest was to him, and he made his devout confession, praying that ould be pleased to pass over the faults he had committed, and him His abundant clemency instead of His rigorous justice; the conclusion of this prayer the knight 'sans peur et sans ' yielded up his soul to God, April 30, 1524.

De Bourbon was, indeed, more to be pitied than Bayard. He was casting the bitter fruits of his treachery. The emperor, as recompense of his services, placed him under the command y, viceroy of Naples, and Lannoy made him act in concert ferocious Spanish general Antonio de Leyva, and the intridiad leader, the marquis Pescura, both of whom would finked his destruction. Bourbon's ultimate object was to gain King of Provence! that was what he hoped to be, if he be king of France. The emperor gave permission for the of France, and in the month of August the constable, hav-aced several smaller towns in Provence, laid siege to Mar- He expected to receive deputations and propositions from habitants, but he encountered only bulllets. The army is drew near, and retreat seemed the only safety. An was tried, but it failed, and then hurriedly and without mules and asses, making their way as best they could the Corniche, and on one occasion marching forty miles in one Imperialist forces, with the constable De Bourbon at their back into Italy.
The invasion and the retreat were the salvation of Francis. From a king distrusted and disliked he became the defender of the nation. His nobles flocked around him, and in the enthusiasm of the moment he ordered an immediate descent into Italy. Milan was reached without opposition. Francis stopped his soldiers at the gates; the inhabitants had sided with both parties, but Francis was not the less merciful to them. Not till the next day were the troops allowed to enter, in good order, and commanded by the much-respected general La Trémouille.

The moral effect of the taking of Milan was great. Venice, the Pope, and the lesser states of Italy now took part with Francis; and in order to establish himself in his conquest he had only to disperse the scattered remains of the Imperial army. The strongest force was at Pavia, which the king determined to besiege, whilst he sent a band of 10,000 men towards the south to rally to his side any doubtful allies.

But the energy which had brought the French king thus far seemed now to forsake him. For four months he remained before Pavia, residing chiefly at the Villa Mirabella, belonging to the duke of Milan. The siege went on slowly, but Francis seemed well content. His Italian villa was all that he needed. Within were marble statues and ornaments of porphyry and alabaster, many-coloured Venetian glass, the richest furniture of silk and damask, soft beds and Flemish carpets; without were broad terraces and gardens and fountains, with a distance of open pastures and sunny villages, set in the frame of the snowy Alps, which glittered in the far horizon.

The artistic but solish Francis luxuriating in this loveliness, which even winter could not destroy, took no heed to the fact that his army was melting away even in his very presence. Men were dying of cold and hunger. The nobles even came to the king's kitchen for shelter, but Francis was insensible to their needs. He heard that four bodies of his troops had been surprised and defeated, and he was not awakened from his dream. He was told that the Swiss were advancing upon him by thousands, and he did not recall to mind that he had sent 10,000 men to the south.

His enemies were a great contrast. The marquis Pescara kept up the spirits of the common soldiers, and though he had nothing to offer them, paid them with good words, and when these failed he persuaded the officers to part with any little money they had. The constable had at the same time been busy even in Germany. His rage at the loss of Provence seemed to have given him wings. He collected money, and by every means, fair or unfair, hired fresh troops, bribed the soldiers in the pay of Francis, and enlisted them on the side of the emperor.

Francis was at last alarmed, and collecting his forces formed
fortified camp, protected by the walls of the park of Mirabella. But on the night of the 23rd of February Pescara sent some masons, who in an hour threw down a large portion of the wall, and the Imperialist troops then advanced close to the French camp. The foremost ranks, being under a shower of French bullets, were beginning to draw back, when Francis, thinking victory sure, threw himself upon them, unfortunately at the same time placing himself in such a position that his own cannon could not be fired without striking him.

Pescara made his own body of Spanish troops press forward. A fierce struggle ensued. The king and his great nobles sustained it gallantly, but it proved a slaughter of the first generals of France. La Trémouille, La Palisse, and Bonnivet were killed. The king, wounded in two places, his face covered with blood, and his horse severely injured, sought to gain the bridge and escape. But the horse sank, and Francis fell under him. Two Spaniards had already plundered and were on the point of killing him, when a group of Frenchmen rode up. One of them recognised the king, and entreated him to yield to the constable. Francis refused. Lamoy was summoned, and giving his own sword to Francis, he knelt and received that of his royal prisoner in exchange. That evening, when the king’s wounds were dressed, and he was able to partake of refreshments, the constable De Bourbon appeared before him with offers of service. The king, it is said, received him courteously; but forgiveness could scarcely have been expected. Francis had seemingly lost everything; 8,000 of his bravest subjects had perished on that fatal day, and his own future lay dark before him. He was conducted to a castle near Milan, and there wrote to his mother a lengthy letter, which has been condensed by historians into the famous laconic message, ‘All is lost save honour.’ But the chivalrous words were belied by his humiliating appeal to the emperor to restore to freedom a king who would then be for ever his slave.

Francis was no hero in his captivity. It is said that he even looked for aid from the Mahometan sultan, whom it had been the dream of his youth to conquer. Some thoughts of repentance for the sins of his past life seem to have been awakened in him. He fasted so strictly that when his sister Marguerite heard of it she wrote earnestly urging him not thus to try his health, but rather to read the epistles of St. Paul, a copy of which she sent him. There was a superstitious feeling connected with the present. A holy hermit had said that if the king would read St. Paul he would be set free.

The queen mother took more active measures for her son’s freedom. She opened communication with Henry of England, with Venice, Florence, and even with the sultan, and by August 1525 a league was formed between England, the Pope, the Venetians, and
Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan, having for its object the deliverance of Italy from the emperor and the liberation of France.

Charles, in the meantime, had received the news of his success with apparent calmness and humility; but in negotiating he was exorbitant. He required the cession of Burgundy and of the northern provinces of France for himself, Provence as a kingdom for the constable De Bourbon, and the restoration to Henry VIII. of the French provinces formerly possessed by England. Lastly, he demanded that Francis should furnish 20,000 men and join a war against the Turks.

The conditions were wholly incompatible with the honour of the French king, and Francis was in despair. If he could see Charles he thought he might obtain more favourable terms, and he expressed his wish to be taken to Madrid. Lamoy furthered and carried out the plan of removal. But the change was a miserable one. In Italy Francis had looked out from between the bars of his prison upon the smiling plains of Lombardy and the changing lights and shades which played upon the distant Alps. In Madrid he was placed in one of the towers of the fortifications, in a small chamber having but one window, and from it he saw only the dreary waste bordering the miserable little stream of the Mansanares, whilst below was a precipice of 100 feet, with two battalions of guards keeping watch night and day at the foot.

Francis had written poetry in Italy; he wrote none in Spain. The dry, burning air of Castile and the clouds of hot dust which poured in through his window affected his health. He entreated his mother to visit him. She could not leave France, but she sent her daughter.

Marguerite set off with only a vague promise of safety from Charles, which might at any moment be retracted. A long and weary journey it was, in the hottest months of the year, over the sandy plains of the north of Spain; but her love for her brother overcame all sense of fatigue. 'Believe me,' she wrote to him, 'to do you service nothing would be too hard. Were I called upon to die, and let my ashes be scattered to the winds, it would be to me repose, honour, and consolation.'

Her appearance at Madrid brought renewed health and hope to Francis, more especially when the terms of release began to be once more discussed. Marguerite apparently flattered herself that if she could see the emperor she should obtain her brother's freedom upon honourable conditions. But Charles would not meet her. She fixed a time at which to be at a certain convent, but she waited for hours and he never came. As the days wore on Francis, in his misery, began to think of abdication. 'The Dauphin should be crowned,' so he informed the emperor. 'For himself, he only wished to know where he was to spend the remainder of his captive life.'
The position of Charles was not free from embarrassment. The Low Countries were in rebellion. England was prepared to take part with France, and the Turks were advancing into Hungary. The Spaniards themselves pitied Francis, and the perfidy of Charles de Bourbon was so hateful to them that when the constable came to Spain about this time and the emperor begged one of his nobles to show him hospitality, the Spaniard replied, 'I cannot refuse my house for the service of your majesty, but I shall be prepared to burn it down the next day.'

At length the disappointed Marguerite returned to France with the king's abdication in her possession, and Francis was again left to his solitary meditations and the dreary view of the sandy wastes around his prison. Then he took a step for himself.

A treaty was drawn up. He was to give up Italy and Burgundy, to re-establish the constable De Bourbon, to abandon his allies, and to attend Charles in state when he went to be crowned at Rome; and, his queen Claude being dead, he was to marry the emperor's sister Eleanor, the widowed queen of Portugal. The negotiations went on for three months. The emperor introduced Francis to his proposed future wife, a good-hearted, dark-complexioned woman, with the thick lips of the Austrian family, and whilst the king was still surrounded by his guards made her dance a Moorish saraband before him; and Francis played the lover, and talked seriously of the treaty; and then, on the morning of the 14th of January, 1526, when it was to be signed and sealed in the presence of Charles and his ministers, made a secret protestation before a notary that he was about to take an oath which he had no intention of keeping.

With this secret reservation he pledged himself also to return to captivity if he found it impossible to keep his engagements, and even gave what seemed a practical proof of his sincerity by delivering up his two sons as hostages. He was set free, and the exchange took place in the middle of the frontier river Bidassoa. The king jumped into his own boat, made his two children take his place, and once safe on French soil, mounted an Arab horse which was awaiting him, and exclaiming 'I am again a king!' rode off at full speed to Bayonne. The emperor's envoys were already there. They begged him to ratify the treaty. Francis smiled and talked, and excused himself. His conclusion was, 'I must consult my people.'

The meaning of this was but too evident. He would acknowledge no ties, political or moral. Pleasure was again his one object. Marguerite retired from his court and married Jean d'Albret, the dis-inherited king of Navarre. She took up her residence at Pau, and became the centre of attraction to the Reformers throughout Christendom; and Francis, devoting himself to a worthless favourite, the duchesse d'Etampes, found amusement in building the magnificent
castle of Chambord, in the neighbourhood of Blois. The vast building, with its towers and turrets and chimneys hidden under the appearance of eastern minarets, still stands in the middle of a noble park, a monument of the taste and the lavish expenditure of Francis, whilst the singular arrangement of the interior, the isolated chambers and winding staircases being so formed that two persons may ascend and descend at the same time without seeing each other, marks the king’s determination to follow his own inclinations without observation. His whole attention was, in fact, given to the construction of the castle of Chambord. From Tours to Blois he went backwards and forwards, incessantly watching the process of the building. Only now and then he was compelled to turn aside and give some thought to Italy. For it was in Italy that the consequences of this perfidy of Francis were most deeply to be felt.

When the king stated to the Spanish envoy that his Burgundian subjects would not allow him to alienate the duchy, and that he could not therefore keep his engagement, the emperor required him, as he valued his honour, to surrender himself once more a prisoner. Francis took not the slightest notice of the appeal, but quickly formed an alliance with the Pope, the Venetians, and the duke of Milan; and having received from Clement VII a dispensation from all agreements, left Charles to take what measures might best suit him for revenge. It was soon evident what these would be. In July 1526 the Imperial troops, under the constable De Bourbon, entered Lombardy, and drove Francesco Sforza from his dominions, and being afterwards reinforced by a body of German Lutheran soldiers, who were clamorous against the Pope, set forth for Rome in the bitter winter of January 1527.

On the 5th of May the army, swelled by a horde of adventurers and bandits, arrived under the walls, and the constable sent a mocking message to Pope Clement demanding permission to traverse the city on his way to Naples. The Pope, alarmed, collected his forces, armed his servants and the servants of the cardinals and prelates, and required even painters and artists (as we are told by the famous sculptor Benvenuto Cellini) to aid in the defence of the city. But resistance was folly. The following morning a fog favoured the assault, and it began. The Germans advanced slowly. The constable seized a ladder and mounted. The next moment he was struck by a musket shot and fell back mortally wounded. He would fain have concealed so great a misfortune from his soldiers. Cover me, he said to one of his followers who stood by his side watching him. The man threw his cloak over him, and at the foot of the walls of Rome the constable De Bourbon expired.

His army revenged his death by storming the fortifications. The sack of the city which followed is one of the most terrible events re-
corded in history. The Pope fled from the Vatican by a long high corridor communicating with the castle of St. Angelo, in which he took refuge. From the corridor he could look down upon the horrible butchery below. Escape was impossible. The Germans were masters of the city, and he was a close prisoner. For seven months Rome was a scene of bloodshed and destruction, while the Reformers rejoiced in the degradation of the head of the Roman Catholic Church; and the emperor, though he hypocritically ordered public prayers to be offered for the Pope's deliverance, refused to speak the word which would effect it.

France and England, however, roused themselves for the liberation of Clement. A French army, under Lautrec, was despatched to Italy, and its successes induced the emperor to set the Pope free. But the indiscretion of Francis neutralised the advantages thus gained. Lautrec had received most efficient aid from Andrea Doria, a great Genoese admiral, and Doria petitioned that, as a recompense, certain commercial privileges which had been taken from his native city whilst subject to France should be restored. The request was not only refused, but, at the instigation of some of the king's corrupt favourites, orders were given to put Doria under arrest. The Genoese admiral being warned, immediately passed over with his whole army to the service of the emperor. Lautrec, who was blockading Naples, found himself in consequence unable to maintain his position, for provisions were conveyed into the city by sea. A terrible and fatal pestilence also broke out; Lautrec was attacked by it and died. The marquis de Saluces, who succeeded him, was compelled to capitulate, and when the French army retreated at length from Italy scarcely 5,000 survived out of an army of 30,000.

Doria returned to Genoa, expelled the French, and restored the republican form of government, of which he himself became the head.

The events of this war had occupied eight years from its commencement. At the end of that time the French, dispirited and exhausted, longed for peace, and the emperor, threatened both by the German Protestants and the Turks, was prepared to enter into negotiations. The terms were promptly arranged by the two ladies who had for so many years influenced the affairs of Europe—Marguerite of Austria, regent of the Netherlands, and Louisa of Savoy, the queen mother of Francis—who met at the Imperial city of Cambrai.

Louisa of Savoy had one great object at heart—the release of her grandsons, who were hostages in Spain. Both were ill, the elder especially, and even Lannoy had said to the king that the air of Spain did not suit the Dauphin, and that it would be well to treat with the emperor. Marguerite made use of this anxiety to gain the greatest possible concessions from France. 'As for Milan (which for the time was restored to Francesco Sforza), 'it was not worth while.'
she said, 'for relations to quarrel about it. It might be given ultimately as a dowry to an Austrian princess, who might marry a French prince.' She proposed that Francis should keep Burgundy if he would pay two millions of crowns, but the French claims to Italy were entirely to be surrendered, Florence and Venice being left to make the best agreement they could for themselves.

Upon these terms the princes were to be restored, and at the same time Francis was to celebrate his marriage with Eleanora of Portugal.

The Peace of Cambrai—the Ladies' Peace, as it is often called—was signed in August 1529, and Francis, who saw that he had now no real supporter but the Pope, soon after agreed to a marriage (destined in after years to work woe for Europe) between Henry, his second son, and Catherine de' Medici, daughter of the late duke of Urbino and a relative of Pope Clement. Catherine was only fourteen when the marriage was solemnised at Marseilles, on the 28th of October, 1533.

Francis flattered himself that this alliance was to bring him great advantages, but the Pope died the following year, and Paul III, his successor, was by no means inclined to join France against the emperor.

After the Peace of Cambrai France might have hoped for an interval of repose, but in those troubled times of religious controversy and persecution repose was not to be had. The king and his mother were, like Marguerite of Navarre, naturally tolerant; but the spread of the new doctrines was becoming so rapid, and the enmity of the heads of the Roman Catholic Church so intense, that Francis, as a matter of policy, was induced to adopt severe measures.

In June 1534 the universal topic of interest was the insurrection of the sect of Anabaptists at Munster, who with their wild doctrines threatened to overthrow all established authority. On the 18th of October of the same year the king, being at Blois, saw, as he left his room in the morning, a placard against the mass affixed to his door similar to that which had been put forth by the Anabaptists and their leader, John of Leyden; and he was told that there were members of the same sect in Paris who intended to massacre the Roman Catholics and burn down the Louvre. Francis had already tried persecution, for, at the instigation of cardinal Duprat, Berquin, a learned translator of some of Luther's treatises, had been burnt in the Place de la Grève. The same terrible punishment was now again resorted to. Six miserable victims were burnt publicly, and with a refinement of cruelty which rendered their death lingering. The persecution continued for several months, until the king, foreseeing a fresh quarrel with the emperor, and wishing to gain the friendship of the Lutheran princes of Germany, thought it wise to
relent, and published a manifesto full of professions of clemency. He even wrote to the German princes in approbation of the profession of faith called the Confession of Augsburg, but he was never able to recover the ground he had lost with them by his acts of cruelty.

It was about this time that Francis began to enlarge and beautify the palace of Fontainebleau. The picturesque scenery of the forest, the inequalities of the ground, the huge grey rocks peering from amongst the splendid trees, with the flowing river forming the peaceful boundary of the domain, touched his artistic imagination. He devoted himself to Fontainebleau as he had to Chambord. But he desired to make it Italian, and thus to recall the dreams of his youth. He fitted up the galleries and arcades in the style of the villas of Lombardy, and adorned them with the works of the great painters of the day. The sack of Rome had been the downfall of arts for Italy; artists and sculptors were dispersed; and many sought and found shelter and occupation in France. The king's delight in Italy and Italian art had, indeed, always shown itself. When the famous Leonardo da Vinci, at the age of eighty, appeared at the court, he set the fashion in dress, and the king and courtiers trimmed their hair and beards, and ordered their coats to be cut after the model of the great painter. That was when Francis was comparatively young; now he was growing old; but his enjoyment of art was keener even than before. In his lavish recklessness he once said to Benvenuto Cellini, 'I will stifle thee with gold,' whilst to Rosso, the painter who ornamented Fontainebleau, he gave in joke an ecclesiastical office, which the poor painter never enjoyed, for, on occasion of some misfortune, he committed suicide.

It might have been well for himself and his people if the king had never again roused himself from dreams of art to those of ambition; but the slumbering feelings of ill-will against the emperor, which manifested themselves only occasionally during the five years following the Peace of Cambrai, burst forth in 1535 in consequence of an outrage committed by Charles in the arrest of a confidential agent of Francis who was residing at the court of Francesco Sforza at Milan. Without a shadow of right Francis took the first step towards war by laying claim to the duchy of Savoy, and pouring his troops into it. The death of Francesco Sforza, almost at the same moment, gave him the opportunity to demand Milan for the duke of Orleans. The reply of the emperor was, that he would grant Milan to the French king's third son, the duke of Angonîème, but that the French troops must immediately evacuate Savoy and Piedmont. These terms were rejected.

A singular display of mingled chivalry and insult was made by Charles before hostilities began. On the 5th of April, 1535, having
gone through his public devotions at Rome in St. Peter’s, he returned with the Pope to the Vatican, and, in the midst of a great assembly of German and Italian princes, cardinals, and ambassadors, made a harangue—partly extempore, partly from written notes. It was a kind of lawyer’s pleading against Francis. At its conclusion he offered the French king a choice of three things—either peace, with Milan for the duke of Angoulême; or war; or that they should decide their differences by single combat, the vanquished being bound to support the Pope against the Turks and the heretics. As the pledge and prize of the contest Charles was to offer Milan and Francis Burgundy.

The proposal touched the pride of Francis to the quick. War was the natural choice, and in the month of July the emperor, full of confidence, invaded Provence at the head of 50,000 men. So little did he esteem the French troops that he said, in speaking of them, ‘If I were in the king’s place, and had nothing better to depend upon, I should simply come with clasped hands and a cord around my neck and give myself up.’ But he had not calculated upon any means of defence save that of warfare. The constable Montmorency was sent by Francis to Provence with orders to lay waste the country, so as to give no footing to the enemy. The unhappy peasants sought safety in the great towns; by degrees these also were abandoned, and everything was burnt and destroyed. Montmorency shut himself up in an entrenched camp, in the certainty that his enemies would die of hunger. The emperor endeavoured to bring supplies for his army by sea, but the starving population still lingering in the neighbourhood threw themselves upon the provisions and devoured them. Charles found himself at length compelled to retreat. By the time he reached the frontier his forces, wasted by famine and pestilence, were completely disorganised, and he set sail for Spain in a spirit very different from the proud confidence with which he had undertaken the expedition. It was about this time that Francis lost his eldest son, who died so suddenly that a charge of having procured his death by poison was absurdly brought against the emperor. The Dauphin’s death was really occasioned by drinking immoderately of iced water after heating himself at a game of tennis.

The young king of Scotland, James V., was the only person who had shown any willingness to aid Francis at the time of this invasion. He was prepared to bring a considerable force into France, but contrary winds prevented their landing. Francis showed his gratitude by giving him his daughter Magdelaine in marriage. She lived, however, a very short time. James afterwards married Mary of Lorraine, daughter of the duke of Guise. By the exertions of A.D. 1538 Pope Paul III. a truce for ten years was brought about in 1538
between Francis and the emperor. Up to that time hostilities had been carried on in a desultory manner. When the truce was settled the emperor retained the duchy of Milan, and Francis kept Savoy and the greater part of Piedmont.

Soon afterwards the two sovereigns agreed to have a personal interview at Aigues Mortes in Provence.

The proposal had been made by Charles partly at the instigation of his sister Mary, now the regent of the Netherlands, who seems to have dreaded lest Charles should engage single-handed in a contest with the Turks. 'It was impossible,' she said, 'to trust the king of France. Nevertheless, if it could be, if the emperor could only see Francis and discuss with him the critical questions which concerned them both—but,' she added, 'your safety is of such vast importance that I dare not advise it.'

The result of the interview was the entire conversion of Francis to the Roman Catholic cause. The unstable monarch who had hitherto said one thing in the morning and another in the evening was at last fixed in the principles to which he adhered till his death. Charles bought him over to his side by the bond fide offer of the duchy of Milan for his second son, who was to marry a niece of the emperor, whilst Francis, on his part, solemnly and publicly engaged to support the emperor against the Turks.

The king was now anxious to show in every way his loyal adherence to the emperor, and when, in 1539, on the occasion of a revolt in Ghent, the burgheers offered to place themselves under his sovereignty, he at once communicated the fact to Charles, proposing to him at the same time, if he should think it necessary to visit the Netherlands, to pass through France as the easiest route. Charles accepted the offer gladly, and arrived at Paris on the 1st of January, 1540. The duchesse d'Etampes and the young duke of Orleans would fain have persuaded the king to keep him a prisoner until Milan had actually been given up, and the court jester placed the emperor's name at the head of his list of fools for having been rash enough to venture into France. The list was shown to Francis, who asked, 'What if I should allow him to depart freely?' 'In that case,' replied the jester, 'I should erase the emperor's name and put yours in its place.' In spite of this threat Francis acted as a man of honour. The emperor pursued his journey in safety, and, in return for this courtesy and good faith, no sooner found himself in his own dominions than he repudiated all his engagements.

Francis was at this time ill and suffering, and had fallen into a kind of lethargic indifference to public affairs, which left him at the mercy of intriguing courtiers and disreputable favourites; but the intelligence that he had been duped roused him to energy. To show his anger he arranged the marriage of his niece (though entirely
against the will of his mother) with the duke of Cleves, the most bitter enemy of Charles.

A violent scene ensued at the wedding. The child, who was about twelve years old, and not at all strong and well, did not choose to walk. The king said to the constable Montmorency, 'Take her up and carry her;' and the constable, wishing to pacify the king, whom he had lately in many ways offended, took up the little princess before all the court and carried her whither he was directed.

The constable did not regain his position by this obedience; he was disgraced, and the king's favour was bestowed upon the cardinal of Tournon and the cardinal of Lorraine, two members of the rising family of Guise. Desperately fanatical, these prelates strongly encouraged persecution, and Francis, in his new-formed zeal for the Roman Catholic Church, allowed the most grievous horrors to be perpetrated, especially against the Vaudois—a simple, loyal population of the towns and villages near Avignon. 3,000 of these unhappy people were butchered and 700 condemned to the galleys for life.

The crowning act of the political misdeeds of Francis was caused by the perfidy of the emperor, who bestowed the duchy of Milan on the archduke Philip of Austria. Francis then declared war against him, and formed an alliance with the Turkish sultan Solymar. This was in 1542, and the following year Europe saw with horror the flag of France side by side with the crescent of the infidel. The famous Algerine corsair Barbarossa joined the fleet of Francis, besieged and sacked Nice, wintered in Toulon, and carried off Christian slaves from the coasts of Italy to Constantinople.

It was but a doubtful counterpoise to the shame of such an alliance that the French, under the comte d'Enghien, gained a brilliant victory over the emperor at Cerisoles on the 14th of April, 1544, for the condition of affairs in the north was such as to render the condition of Francis most perilous.

The English, now in alliance with the emperor, were again in France, and the forces of Henry VIII. were besieging Boulogne. Charles, who was always reading the historian Philip de Comines, knew well the famous saying of Louis XI., that in taking Paris France would be taken. He entered France about the same time that Henry landed at Calais, and moved towards the capital; but slowly and heavily, as became a monarch who had by this time lost his youthful ardour, who ate much and was a prey to gout. He had reached Crépy, within three leagues of Paris, when he heard that the English had taken Boulogne. This was rather more than Charles wished for. It might after all be wiser to make peace with France, which, in its present condition, could do him no harm, than to work for the advantage of England, and he made up his mind.
to propose terms of agreement. Milan was still promised to the duke of Orleans, on his marriage either with the daughter or the niece of the emperor, and Savoy was at the same time to be given up to France. A stringent article binding France to put down the Reformers was the most important point of the treaty which was signed at Crépy on the 18th of September, 1544. Henry VIII., however, declined to be included in it, and the French, in consequence, made a descent on the isle of Wight in the following year (1545), but peace was finally arranged on the condition that Boulogne should be restored within eight years for a payment of two millions of crowns.

The death of the duke of Orleans in this same year again reopened the vexed question of Milan. The duke died, it is said, of the plague, which he caught by boastfully taking up his lodging in an infected house, on the plea that the disease had never been fatal to a 'son of France.' Francis was not, however, in a condition to enter upon a new contest with the emperor. His intellect had become clouded and his temper soured by painful illness, the consequence of his self-indulgent life, and he was reduced to the condition of a mere puppet in the hands of the Dauphin and Diana of Poitiers (the Dauphin's favourite), and of the family of the Guises, who already took upon themselves to rule everything.

The duchesse d'Etampes still exercised influence over Francis, but her power in the court was rapidly diminishing. The Dauphin even went so far one day as to tell his special friends what offices they were to hold on his accession. One was to be chamberlain, another constable of France, and a third was to have the command of the artillery. One of the court jesters happened to be present. He immediately ran to the king, exclaiming, 'Heaven protect thee, Francis de Valois! Thou art no longer king!' Francis started. 'It is true,' continued the jester. 'I have heard it all. The constable of France will be here soon to issue his commands. He or thou must be a dead man.' From that day the unhappy monarch took especial care to guard himself from his son's friends, who were quite capable of poisoning him.

Such was the bitterness of the last days of Francis I. The overflowing drop in his cup of sorrow must have been the thought of leaving the throne of France to the weak Dauphin.

He would fain have given to Henry the benefit of his own experience, and his parting counsels were that the ambition of the Guises should be curbed and the constable Montmorency excluded from power.

Francis expired at the castle of Rambouillet on the 31st of March, 1547, in the fifty-third year of his age and the thirty-third of his reign. At the moment of his dying agony Diana of Poitiers and the duke of Guise laughed and mocked, exclaiming, 'He is going at
last, the fine fellow!" and the Dauphin when attending the splendid funeral—the most magnificent that had ever been seen in France—spoke of his own happiness as just about to begin.

Francis I. is generally considered one of the greatest of French monarchs, and there are two points of view in which he may be regarded as not unworthy of the fame he has acquired. By his long struggle with the emperor Charles V. he no doubt secured the independence of his country, and increased its territory and resources, and by his liberal encouragement of literature and art he merits the gratitude not only of France, but of the civilized world. The famous Greek scholar Budé or Budeus; Scaliger, the critic; Robert Stephens, the printer; Rabelais, the satirist; and Clement Marot, the Calvinist poet, were all patronised by him. The painters Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Sarto, and Salvati; and the sculptors Benvenuto Cellini and Jean Goujon received every encouragement from his generosity; whilst the public buildings erected by him are splendid specimens of the Renaissance style, in which the peculiarities of Greek and Gothic architecture are mingled.

But the example of an evil life more than neutralised the public benefits which Francis conferred upon his country. To him belongs the miserable distinction of having been the first French monarch to corrupt his people by making vice so attractive by its splendour as to lead them to overlook its degradation.

The Roman Catholic order of the Jesuits was founded in Spain in the reign of Francis I. by Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish officer, who having been severely wounded in an engagement between the French and Spaniards in Navarre, resolved, on his recovery after a lingering illness, to devote himself to the interests of the church, and with the permission of Paul III. formed a society devoted to the work of conversion and to education. The Jesuits have since so mixed themselves up with political intrigues that they have been looked upon with suspicion by nearly all the governments of Europe.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HENRY II.

A.D. 1547–1559.

Henry II. was in the twenty-ninth year of his age when he ascended the throne of France. He had neither the talents nor the personal attractions of his father. He was tall, indeed, and well-
proportioned, and distinguished for his skill in athletic exercises, but his stooping figure and dark Spanish face recalled the days of his captivity in Madrid. It seemed as if he had then lost the brightness of his youth, and had never been able to recover it. He looked like a man who might be easily led, and he was led—more than led, he was absolutely governed by Diana of Poitiers, a proud, selfish, worthless woman, but possessing so much tact and cleverness, and at the age of five-and-forty retaining so much of the attraction of youth, that her influence extended over the whole court.

Even the young queen Catherine was the slave of Diana, though only from the cunning policy which was so marked a feature in her character. She feared the haughty favourite, and therefore made her her friend.

Diana had, however, rivals to her power in the Guises and the constable Montmorency. Henry gave all his confidence to those who had taken part with him when Dauphin, and if talent alone could have availed for the support of the throne and the good of the country, he could scarcely have made a wiser choice. But the ambition of the Guises was as great as their mental and personal gifts, and the misery of France for many succeeding years may be traced to the blind confidence of Henry in the persons against whom the sagacity of his father had so earnestly warned him.

The family of Guise was one of high distinction. Claude, the first duke, a distinguished soldier, was the fifth son of René II., duke of Lorraine. He married a daughter of the house of Bourbon, and left seven sons, the eldest of whom, Francis, succeeded him in his title and was duke of Guise when Henry II. came to the throne. Charles, the second son, became ultimately cardinal of Lorraine, whilst the eldest daughter, Mary, had, as has already been stated, married James V. of Scotland, and now, her husband being dead, held the chief power in the country during the minority of her daughter, Mary Stuart.

Thus royally connected, the duke of Guise and his brothers might possibly have dreamed of sovereignty even if they had had no direct pretension to it, but there was an ancient and most perplexing claim handed down to them from the duke of Lorraine, which they were not prepared to yield without an effort. The family of Lorraine were descended from the royal house of Anjou, which had established itself on the throne of Naples. The Angevine dynasty had, indeed, been overthrown by the kings of Aragon, but the claim still remained, and the duke of Guise was only waiting for the fitting moment publicly to put it forth. Francis of Guise was an able soldier and commander, apparently frank and open-hearted, yet he was also a cautious, farseeing politician. His
brother was shrewd and learned, winning in manner, and possessing a wonderful power of dissimulation. With such qualifications, it was scarcely doubtful that the Guises, under such a prince as Henry, would become the actual rulers of the kingdom.

The office held by the constable Montmorency gave him, indeed, vast influence; but the constable was inferior to the Guises in ability; and although he professed a certain strictness of principle, his sincerity was doubted, and he was wanting in the courtesy which won over so many to the side of the princes of Lorraine. They were supplanting him even in the eyes of Diana of Poitiers, for they were joining with her to amuse and occupy the weak king. They began by planning fêtes, taking Henry from palace to palace, and leading with him the lives of wandering knights, as they rode through parks and forests, and under triumphal arches; and at length they entirely engrossed his attention in the erection of a kind of rustic palace for Diana at Anet, near Evreux, which, with its rooms and corridors painted by Goujon, its terraces and copes, its trim garden and rustic arches, and the lovely little chapel crowning and consecrating the whole, was a place for perfect enjoyment, if not for entire forgetfulness.

Doubtless, by his selfish indolence, Henry saved himself from much care, for to have been the ruler of France at that time could have been no easy task. The revenue was rapidly decreasing, and to have imposed new taxes would have been the signal for insurrection. Only by selling the public offices could the government be supplied with funds, and the king have money for his pleasures. Yet Diana and the Guises, in their thirst for power, hesitated not to pursue this mad course, and the fancies and whims of Francis I., compared with the reckless expenditure of his successor, were but as the follies of a youth when contrasted with the desperate hardihood of a bold adventurer.

The ultimate object of the Guises was never forgotten in the midst of this seeming frivolity. With power and allies, Naples might be theirs. But to obtain a footing in Naples involved a quarrel with the emperor, a risk too great so long as England was his ally. The weak point of England was its liability to assault from Scotland, and it was through Scotland that the Guises were able to work out their plan. Their sister—the Scottish queen dowager—was devoted to their interests, and through her instrumentality a marriage was arranged between the young Mary Stuart and the Dauphin Francis, and Mary was sent to France to be educated. The marriage was highly objectionable to the English, who had especially desired that England and Scotland should be united by a marriage between Mary and their young king Edward VI., and who now could only look forward to the direct annexation of
Scotland to France, and that at no very distant period. A quarrel between England and France was the result, and Mary was no sooner safely landed in France than the Guises sent troops to besiege Boulogne, which England had held since its seizure by Henry VIII. The English were too weak to defend the place, and were glad to relinquish it for a sum far short of the two millions of crowns which had been originally stipulated. Peace was proclaimed on the 24th of March, 1550, and the French king made his entry into Boulogne, to the universal joy of his people.

Safe in the possession of Scotland and the humiliation of England, the Guises turned their attention more directly to the emperor. Charles V. had at this time reached the summit of his prosperity. The Protestant princes of Germany, who had leagued against him, had lately been defeated at Mühlberg. Frederick, the elector of Saxony, and the landgrave of Hesse were his prisoners, and he had been able to impose on his subjects a code of laws regarding religion, known as the Interim, and which was intended to be a compromise between Romanism and Protestantism; everything, in fact, seemed to conspire to render him both politically and religiously the lord of Europe, and the darling object of his heart was to hand down this power to his son, Philip. But the possession of such a position was in itself a danger to a man of Charles's character. His imperious will brooked no opposition. If he conquered his enemies, he also alienated his friends. He had given Saxony to the elector Frederick's son-in-law, Maurice, but, disgusted by the emperor's tyranny, Maurice treacherously turned against him. In October 1551, whilst still at the head of the Imperial forces, he signed a treaty of alliance with Henry II. of France, the professed object of which on his part was to resist the attempts of the emperor to make the German princes his mere slaves; and Henry, urged on by the Guises, undertook to aid Maurice, and the Protestant princes who supported him, by seizing the district called the Trois Évêchés, or three bishoprics, comprising the towns of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, which had originally formed part of France.

In January 1552 the levies for the war were made throughout the kingdom. The excitement of the people was great. As the drums summoning to enlistment beat in the great towns, the young men rushed away from their parents, and the artisans from their shops, in order to join the army, so great was the general desire to undertake a foreign expedition. The nobles also flocked to the king's standard, professing themselves anxious to save Germany and punish Charles; and Henry exclaimed, 'Protector of the empire! and why not emperor?' Metz, Verdun, and Toul were taken without difficulty, but by this time the elector Maurice found himself able to dictate a peace to the emperor, which secured equality to
the two forms of faith until a general council should be summoned.

A treaty was signed at Passau on August 2, 1552. Henry and the Guises were not, however, prepared to join in it. The three cities were to be kept at any cost, and the war between France and Germany continued.

The defence of Metz was entrusted to the duke of Guise, and the garrison was reinforced by brave officers, nobles of rank, and even princes of the blood royal. In October the siege began. Two months of battering and cannonading produced but little effect. The defenders harassed their enemy by repeated sorties, and at length Charles withdrew his army, observing bitterly that 'Fortune, like the rest of her sex, favoured the young and neglected those who were advanced in years.' Two more years of fruitless warfare went by, and at last, weary with disappointment and constant physical suffering, Charles, in January 1556, gave up his dominions (and with them his cares) to his son Philip and his brother Ferdinand; retiring himself to the monastery of St. Juste. Philip had the Netherlands, Spain, and the Indies, and Ferdinand—with the concurrence of the princes of Germany—became emperor.

But still the war with France continued, and with increased hope for France, as Pope Paul IV. entered into a league with Henry against Philip. Paul IV. was a man of violent temper, and, in consequence of family disputes, so irritated against Charles V. and his son, that he was like a madman whenever plans connected with them were brought forward. 'There shall be no peace, no peace!' he exclaimed on one occasion to the French ambassadors. 'Speak to me of it, and your heads shall answer for it. Heads! I could cut off a hundred such as yours, and the king would not care about it.' And so he continued raving till he was out of breath.

An old and angry Pope was likely to die at any moment. If a French army were in Italy, the cardinal of Lorraine might fairly reckon upon being elected Pope, and his brother, the duke of Guise, might as certainly become king of Naples. The league with the Pope being concluded, Guise crossed the Alps, marched direct to Rome, and from thence entered the Neapolitan territory, to attack the Spanish viceroy, the duke of Alva. Civitella was besieged unsuccessfully. Guise retreated to Rome, pursued by the duke of Alva, and was just awakened to the consciousness that he had undertaken a fruitless expedition, when important despatches from France recalled him to his own country.

'You have done little for the king, less for the church, and nothing for your own honour,' said the Pope to him when he bade him farewell. And Guise departed, leaving the duke of Alva to make friends with Paul by humbling himself to ask his pardon.

The French had failed in Italy, and they had been in danger in
their own land. The army of Philip II, under the duke of Savoy, had invaded Piard from Flanders (1557), and had advanced as far as St. Quentin. Admiral Coligny, the nephew of the constable Montmorency, undertook to defend the town. Coligny, who was then about forty years of age, was a man of proved courage, prudent, thoughtful, and sincere. He acted whilst Guise talked. On one occasion Guise, in the presence of the king, was relating a brilliant exploit achieved by Coligny, and which he himself had arrived too late to share, though he gathered its fruits. 'We did this!' he said. The admiral turned to him and asked, 'Where were you?' and from that moment the duke and the admiral were enemies.

The defence of St. Quentin was necessary for the safety of France, and Coligny did not hesitate, though the houses commanding the most were in the hands of the Spaniards, and two openings in the walls had actually been stopped up with osier twigs and bales of wool. Dandelot, Coligny's brother, contrived to join him, but brought a very small reinforcement. On the 10th of August, however, Montmorency appeared before St. Quentin, prepared to compel the Spaniards to raise the siege. The portraits of the constable Montmorency, showing his large square head and ordinary self-satisfied expression of countenance, would alone be evidence that, although a plodding minister, he was a third-rate general, and would infallibly be beaten. His first attack was partially successful, but the Spaniards turned upon him, and a complete defeat was the result. The constable himself, with marshal St. André and the duc de Longueville, were amongst the captives. Coligny stood fighting in the breach with three followers, when a Spaniard came up and took him also.

'Is my son at Paris?' exclaimed Charles V., when in his retreat at St. Juste he heard of the victory of St. Quentin. But Philip was not at Paris, neither did he arrive there. He was delighted with the victory, and planned the gloomy palace of the Escorial to be built near Madrid in the form of a gridiron, in commemoration of the battle fought on the festival of St. Lawrence; but instead of hastening to the capital, the Spaniards, in their prudence, set to work to fortify the few towns of Picardy which fell into their hands. And in the meantime the duke of Guise arrived from Italy, was made lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and received orders to attack Calais.

On the 1st of January, 1558, a rapid march brought a body of 800 French soldiers, headed by Guise, before the walls of the English town; on the 4th of January the cannonading began; on the 5th, the citadel was taken; and on the 8th, lord Wentworth, the governor of the city, capitulated; and Calais, after being lost to France for 210 years, was restored.
TREATY OF CATEAU CAMBRESIS—MARY STUART’S MARRIAGE.

Henry II.

The duke of Guise, when he returned to Paris, carried everything before him. The people were devoted to him, and the Roman Catholics looked to him as the main support of their cause. Only one family were hateful to him—the Châtillons—including Montmorency, Coligny, and Dandelo. To the latter he had a singular aversion. ‘Dandelo,’ as he said to the king, ‘did not go to mass.’ His presence would be the ruin of everything if he were to continue with the army.

Guise was the master, and Dandelo was deprived of his position as colonel of infantry.

The difficulties of France were now lessening. Mary of England, heartbroken at the loss of Calais, was dead, and Philip was prepared to negotiate a peace. In February 1559 the French and Spanish ministers met at Cateau Cambresis, and in the following April a treaty was signed. Philip demanded Italy, Piedmont, Savoy, and 189 towns in various parts of Europe, and only consented to restore his conquests in the north of France, and allow the French to retain the district of the Trois Évêchés, Metz, Toul, and Verdun. ‘Sire,’ said Guise, bitterly, to Henry II., ‘you give in one day what could not have been taken from you in thirty years of reverses.’ Marriage arrangements also formed part of the treaty. Elizabeth de Valois, Henry’s daughter, was given to Philip II. as his third wife, though she had been previously betrothed to Philip’s son, Don Carlos, and Marguerite, Henry’s sister, was affianced to the duke of Savoy. The union of Philip and Elizabeth led to an increase of Spanish influence, and in consequence to religious persecution in France. At Cateau Cambresis, Henry proposed to William of Orange, who was one of the Spanish envoys, a plan for extirpating heresy by wholesale murder. The prince, known as ‘the Silent,’ brooded with horror over the suggestion, and the result was ultimately the rebellion of the Netherlands.

Shortly before the marriage of Philip and Elizabeth the ambition of the Guises was fully gratified by the union of the Dauphin with their niece Mary, the young queen of Scots. With her exquisite beauty, grace, and talent, Mary was the star of the French court. Even the cunning of Catherine de’ Medici and the imperious will of Diana of Poitiers had been compelled to yield to her; but her position was not actually secured till her marriage, which took place on the 24th of April, 1558. Then, in obedience to her uncle, she signed an agreement which gave Scotland to Henry II. in the event of her death. At the same time she adopted the arms of England, rendering her cousin Elizabeth her implacable and deadly enemy. It might have seemed that the Guises had now reached a point where there could be none to fear. But the old rivalry between the Châtillon family existed still. Dandelo had escaped from captivity. The constable Montmorency had been set free and was again at
court, and his influence was reviving. To counteract it the cardinal de Guise renewed the accusation of impiety against Dandelot, the constable's nephew. Dandelot was summoned before the king. The complaints were brought forward. He did not go to mass, he had allowed a heretic to preach before him, he had sent heretical books to his brother, admiral Coligny, and he had joined a procession in singing the metrical psalms of Clement Marot, the poet of the Reformers.

The proud soldier replied precisely as the cardinal had hoped. 'His sword and his life were the king's, but his soul was God's;' and Henry threw a plate at his head, which hit the Dauphin. Dandelot was arrested, his offices were taken from him, and he was compelled to hear mass. This was but a small specimen of the general persecution. Yet the Reformed doctrines flourished wonderfully. The acknowledged head of the party was Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, in right of his wife, Jeanne d'Albret, the daughter of the fascinating Marguerite de Valois, sister of Francis I. Antoine's brother Louis, prince de Condé, had also been converted by his wife, and the two Châtillon brothers—admiral Coligny and the sire Dandelot—were now avowed supporters of the Reformation. The French Roman Catholic court viewed the spread of the new doctrines with great disquietude. A plan for a special tribunal which was to enquire into religious offences was resisted by the parliaments in Paris and the provinces, and Henry then urged on a system of persecution which drove the Protestants to seek the protection of the German princes of the Reformed faith.

Henry's share in these events was, however, destined to be suddenly cut short. On the 27th of June, three days after the wedding of the Dauphin and Mary Stuart, and whilst the brilliant fêtes which accompanied it were still going on, a grand tournament was held in front of the Bastille. The king, whose one talent lay in military and athletic exercises, appeared in the lists and broke several lances with the lords of his court. At the end of the day a sudden fancy seized him to try his skill against Montgomery, one of the officers of the Scottish guard. Montgomery refused, but the king insisted. An unusual accident occurred. The archer's lance broke against the king's helmet, and a splinter entered Henry's eye and penetrated to the brain. The king was in great danger, but the course of political events could not be arrested, and at night two marriages took place in the chapel of the Tournelle, immediately adjoining the chamber of the monarch who was dying in agony. Elizabeth de Valois was espoused to Philip II., whose proxy was the duke of Alva, and Marguerite, Henry's sister, became the wife of the duke of Savoy. The king languished for eleven days in terrible suffering, and expired on the 10th of July, 1559, in the forty-first year of his age.
The Reformers looked upon the event as a judgment from God. An unknown hand dared to cover the king’s body with a piece of tapestry, representing St. Paul cast to the ground on his way to Damascus, when the voice from Heaven exclaimed, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’

CHAPTER XXXII.

FRANCIS II.

A.D. 1559-1560.

It was the custom of French etiquette that a widowed queen should remain forty days in a darkened chamber, but this was impossible for Catherine de' Medici. Henry was no sooner dead than she took the young king, Francis II., to the Louvre, with his wife, Mary Stuart, and established herself there under the protection of the duke of Guise. The constable De Montmorency was compelled by his official duties to remain at the Tournelle, where Henry had died, and watch over the royal corpse.

In a few days two distinct parties were formed. The greater number of the nobles sided with the constable. The partisans of the Guises were everywhere.

Montmorency had latterly quarrelled with Catherine de' Medici, and amongst the princes of the blood royal could rely only upon Antoine of Navarre and Louis, prince de Condé. He sent for them to Paris in all haste, and with them marched through the streets to the Louvre, accompanied by the members of his family and an in-terminable file of nobles. The Châtillons were a splendid race in appearance, but no one amongst them could compete in keenness of intellect with the refined, courteous cardinal de Guise, or the thoughtful, determined, though somewhat plebeian-looking duke.

The young king received the constable in the presence of his scheming mother, and his fascinating wife, Mary, educated by constant intercourse with men as well as books, was a politician at ten years old, and at fifteen governed the court; whilst Francis, a plain, sickly little monarch—a child at sixteen—could only behave to his great noble according to the lesson he had been taught. He took the seal of office which, as a matter of form, the constable offered him; and, having taken it, kept it, though acknowledging Montmorency's service, and expressing a wish to give him repose in his old age.
the constable was in fact honourably dismissed, and the Guises at this time reigned supreme.

yet their position was not enviable. The condition of the public finances was such as only an assembly of the States-General which would propose a system of general taxation could remedy. But the States-General would be certain to put an end to the power of the Guises. Importunate creditors were, indeed, dealt with summarily, the cardinal affixed to the gates of Fontainebleau, 'All persons owing money will be hung;'' but this could not continue, and the Guises in their perplexity humbled themselves to seek aid from it.

The need was pressing. Antoine of Navarre, with his Gascons, assuredly be in Paris before twenty days had passed, and convoked the States-General, and made himself lieutenant-general, regent—king, in fact, in the name of the helpless Francis. ut Antoine was indolent; he travelled slowly and he did not vaguely know his own mind. He made promises to the Protestants but he also negotiated with the Spaniards, and whilst he was irately journeying towards Paris, the queen mother was writing a touching letter to Philip II., conjuring him to have pity upon internal anxieties, and to take the little king under his protect.

before Philip's answer was received Antoine of Navarre arrived. Guises had, however, prepared for him an awkward reception, contrived that his trunks should be left in the middle of the road at the gate of St. Germain. He had no lodging till one of the nobles d'orléans offered to receive him; and when he afterwards went into Paris it was at night and in disguise, for he could not tell who were his friends. None was in manner, and the Châtillons did not dare go him.

Philip's letter, when it came, was read to Antoine in a state room. 40,000 Spaniards were, if necessary, to be sent to France to support the queen mother and the Guises. From that moment one of Navarre sank into insignificance, and was content humbly low the Guises.

Philip II. was the terror of Europe. He was a persecutor by tradition, and upon principle. The Guises followed his example from Spain, though the condition of the Netherlands, about to break out in a general insurrection, might well have given them cause to revise the wisdom of their measures.

In August 1559, about a month or two after the accession of Philip II., the cardinal of Lorraine took his first measures for the extirpation of the heretics. Spies were employed to discover the names of those tainted with the new doctrines. A tailor named Renard, a who had recanted again and again, was induced to turn informer. The police watched and burst in upon the Huguenots at
their meetings. They were seized, imprisoned, fined or banished. Their houses were pillaged, their children left to starve. Numbers of miserable little creatures might be seen gathering up the refuse thrown into the road, because no one dared to give them a mouthful of bread. Self-protection was impossible. It was forbidden to carry arms. If a traveller was seen with a pistol the cry was raised 'Traitor! Incendiary!' and the peasants were enjoined to sound the tocsin or alarm bell in the village, and to hasten to seize him.

A reaction was inevitable. But who would be the leader? Antoine of Navarre was despised, Montmorency was suffering from a ruinous lawsuit instigated by the Guises. Condé alone could be reckoned upon, and Condé accordingly became the head of a conspiracy to seize the king, imprison the princes of Lorraine, summon the States-General, and place the government in the hands of the Bourbon princes—the king of Navarre and his brother.

The people hated the Guises and dreaded the persecutions, but they were loyal. They could only be induced to take part in the plot by being somewhat deceived as to its purpose. La Renaudie, a gentleman of Perigord, was commissioned to traverse the country and endeavour to persuade all persons to ally themselves with Condé, who was called the Dumb Captain, and join in presenting a petition of grievances to the king; but there was no suggestion of insurrection.

The duke of Guise and his brother knew perfectly well what was going on. La Renaudie, when at Paris, had lodged in the Faubourg St. Germain, in the house of a lawyer, from whom it was impossible to hide the plot. Becoming frightened, the lawyer betrayed it to the duke’s secretary, and Guise carried off the king to the strong castle of Amboise.

If La Renaudie had acted at once on his own responsibility, he might easily have followed out his plans, but he was hampered by a council, and compelled to wait first for one person, then for another, and above all for instructions from Condé, the Dumb Captain. The Guises determined to send for the three Coligny brothers, who had kept aloof from Condé’s plot. Their presence in the castle would show that the insurrection was not encouraged by them. The queen mother wrote herself to say that the king desired to confer with them on urgent foreign affairs, and the admiral, Dandelot, and the cardinal obeyed the summons. They were received with flattery and caresses, and asked what was to be done with the insurgents. 'Grant them amnesty and liberty,' was the reply. The Guises demurred. They said it would awaken the indignation of the opposite party, and all that could be obtained by the intercession of the Châtillons was a spurious pardon, from which the Huguenot ministers, who had conspired on account of religion, were excepted. The Châtillons were obliged to put their names to this act, as members of the king’s council.
Condé was travelling slowly between Orleans and Blois, when a
lieutenant of the Guise party happened to meet him, and thought-
lessly told him that everything was discovered, but that the affair
was not deemed of much importance. The prince, wishing to show
that he was not afraid, went at once to Amboise.

Thus deserted, La Renaudie’s position was desperate. He was
six leagues from Amboise, and knowing perfectly that the Guises
had with them not more than five or six hundred men, whilst he
could himself find in the town of Amboise at least a hundred sup-
porters, he determined not to yield without striking a blow. The
castle was attacked, the insurgents were repulsed, and La Renaudie
was slain in a skirmish.

But the conspiracy was not at an end. The men who had dared
so much were not thus easily to be overcome. Their numbers in-
creased, they filled the woods around the castle, they sent threaten-

ing messages to the king, declaring that their own wish was to be
rid of the obnoxious Guises. The duke of Guise was savage. He
prosaw that he must one day perish by the hands of enemies so
solvent. ‘I will at least avenge my own death,’ he exclaimed. ‘I
can play double or quits, and so many shall die that they shall have
all cause to remember it.’ ‘Wait, at least,’ remonstrated the chancel-
elor Ollivier; ‘let the leaders be taken.’ But Guise would not
cave. He caused royal letters to be issued conferring upon himself
the office of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, with power to sen-
ence to death without enquiry. The decree was stated to be by
order of the council; but Guise had not deemed to consult it.

Then began the terrible punishments. Executions took place
without trial and without witnesses. For a whole month the
butchery was continued. The prisoners were tortured first, then
hung, beheaded, or drowned in the Loire. The streets of Amboise
ran with blood. The river was covered with floating corpses.
The chancellor Ollivier, a man of moderate principles and enlighten-
ed mind, questioned the victims, found them innocent of anything like
insolalty to the king, yet had not the courage to lift his hand to
save them. Bitter remorse was, however, awakened by the execu-
tion of the baron de Castelnaun, who had once been his friend.

‘Where was it you learnt to be so wise?’ said Ollivier to
Castelnaun, when the latter was brought before him. ‘I learnt it
from you,’ was the reply, ‘when, in former years, you told me
to go to Geneva, and I saw you weeping over your own weak-
ness in permitting the massacre of the Vaudois, and heard you
say that you were cast out of the favour of God.’ On the
scaffold Castelnaun dipped his hands in the blood of those who
suffered with him, and raising them to Heaven called for the ven-
geance of God upon the judge who had condemned them. The
words were repeated to Ollivier, and from that moment a despairing melancholy took possession of him, and a few days after he died miserably. But the executions so terrible to some were made a source of amusement to others. Women and children were taken after supper to see them, and the king's little brothers became so used to them that they learnt to laugh at the sight. The young king himself was greatly overcome by the horrible spectacles which surrounded him. 'He wept, and asked constantly, 'Alas, what have I done to make my people hate me?' but he was consoled by hearing that the people accused only the Guises. His will was, however, too feeble for resistance. He was a puppet in the hands of his mother and his wife. Catherine, indeed, was disinclined to carry matters to extremity; but Mary Stuart, who had been brought up by the cardinal of Lorraine, seems to have felt only with him.

The Guises were soon aware that the duplicity of the queen mother was more injurious to their interests than open insurrection; and Mary Stuart was taught by them to keep watch over her. Whatever the queen mother did was reported. If conciliatory messages were sent by her to the Reformers it was known instantly. If Catherine planned an interview with any of the leaders, the Guises were immediately informed of it.

On one occasion an address was put into her hands as she was crossing a passage. Mary Stuart, who was with her, seized it and carried it to her uncle. But Catherine was too cunning to betray herself. When confronted with the man, she reproached him with having offered her a pamphlet which attacked herself. 'In what way, madam?' was the reply. 'In attacking the duke of Guise you attack me,' answered Catherine; 'we are one.' Yet the Reformers had good cause to believe that the queen mother looked upon them with favour. By her influence the duke of Guise, who had already thought it necessary to make explanations to the king of Navarre and the parliament of Paris in reference to the punishment of the conspiracy of Amboise, appointed as chancellor Michel de l'Hôpital, a man of tried virtue, and whose nearest relatives belonged to the Huguenot party. At the instigation of L'Hôpital an edict, called the edict of Romorantin, was published, which gave to the bishops alone the power of judging cases of heresy, and thus prevented the establishment of the Inquisition in France. The Reformers, however, distrusted these signs of a change of policy, and demanded the assembly of the States-General, by which alone they believed the general grievances could be redressed.

The Guises after some delay consented. The nobles and clergy prepared to attend it, and the deputies were summoned, little knowing the snare prepared for them. A confession of the Roman Catholic faith was to be tendered to each member on taking his seat,
ARREST OF ANTOINE AND CONDÉ—ILLNESS OF FRANCIS.

and a refusal to accept the test was to be equivalent to a sentence of death.

Antoine of Navarre, as duke of Vendôme, and his brother the prince of Condé had a right to a place in the assembly, and they resolved to appear. The opportunity of visiting Paris was a temptation, for the dissipated society of the court had great charms for them, and they hastened to it like moths to a candle.

A large body of followers accompanied them part of the way, and whilst the escort was with them the friends of the Guises surrounded and caressed them. But it was dismissed, and no one came to meet them. Their way was sad and solitary, prophetic of coming danger, yet it was too late to draw back.

Catherine de’ Medici heard that they had reached Orleans, where the court was then established, and burst into tears, but Mary Stuart was by her side and she dared not give them warning. The two princes, on entering the city, passed through two files of soldiers, and were greeted with laughter. Arrived at the palace, they were only admitted through a wicket. They ascended the stairs, and were introduced into the presence of Francis and the queen mother, and the little pale king assumed, as he had been ordered, an appearance of anger, and immediately ordered them to be arrested. Antoine was kept in the palace, whilst Condé was conveyed to a house with closely barred windows, which was rendered still more secure in the course of the next two days by the erection of a brick fort, bristling with cannon, in its immediate neighbourhood.

A commission was appointed to try Condé for high treason, but admiral Coligny was expected daily, and it was thought well that the enemies of the Guises should perish at the same moment. They waited, therefore, for his arrival.

In that short interval the king, after a hunting expedition, became dangerously ill. The order for the execution of Condé, which had been given before the trial, had been drawn up, but not signed. The Guises went to Catherine, offering to make her regent in the event of the king’s death, if she would only put her name to the paper. Catherine sought the advice of the chancellor, who objected to the proposal. The Guises were in despair, for Antoine of Navarre would be the natural guardian of the little boy of ten years old, Catherine’s second son, who was about to succeed to the throne. Catherine was useful to them in this emergency. The king of Navarre was summoned. He thought himself still in peril, and agreed to all which she required. He would not interfere with the Guises, and would refuse the regency. Catherine might have it, and he would be content to be second in the kingdom. He was still to be king of Navarre by name. He might still amuse himself at court—and the care of religion and politics might, without
regret, be entrusted to his enemies. The Guises were satisfied, and little mattered it to them that a few days afterwards, on the 5th December, 1560, Francis II. breathed his last, after a reign of scarcely eighteen months, which, short though it was, proved fatally important in its influence on the future destinies of his country.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHARLES IX.

A.D. 1560–1574.

The constable Montmorency, who was thought to be lying ill at Étampes, galloped to Orleans the day after the death of Francis II., and meeting at the gates of the city a guard stationed there by the Guises, exclaimed, 'What business have you there? The king is guarded by his people;' and by right of his office he sent them all away. No doubt the constable had not only right but power on his side; the Guises, however, had more power. The little king, Charles IX., was in the keeping of the duke, and the cardinal had the control of the treasury. Yet one thing was against them; a large number of the members of the States-General, which had recently been summoned, were on the side of the Reformers. The States met in three divisions—the nobles, the clergy, and the 'tiers état,' or commons. It was hoped that the cardinal of Lorraine might be chosen for their leader, but he was decidedly put aside, and the discussion of grievances began.

Catherine de' Medici, now regent, whilst Antoine of Navarre was lieutenant-general of the kingdom, endeavoured to hold an even balance between the various parties. The prince de Condé, released from prison, was made a member of the council. The constable Montmorency kept the command of the army, the duke of Guise was master of the royal household, and De l'Hôpital was the regent's confidential adviser. The States-General undertook various judicial reforms, and religious persecutions were forbidden. It might have seemed that an era of peace was at hand.

But Catherine's toleration was simply policy. There was no principle in it, and friends and enemies alike distrusted her. Reconciliation between the two religions seemed, however, possible, and a discussion took place with this view at Poissy between the cardinal de Tournon and Theodore Beza, the most learned of the Calvinistic reformers. In the middle of it, the cardinal declared himself unable to listen to the blasphemies of his opponent, and put an end to the conference.
OUTBREAK IN THE FAUBOURG ST. MERCEAU.

But the fact that it had been attempted gave strength to the Protestant party. At Bordeaux the Huguenots formed a fifth of the population, and the principal families of the south were reckoned amongst these. Even in Paris they were numerous enough to be feared, and the Roman Catholic clergy were especially jealous of their influence over the poor, who were liberally relieved by them.

The first open outbreak of animosity began in a poor quarter of Paris, the Fanbourg St. Merceau. The Protestants—often to the number of 6,000—held their meetings there, in a building called the Patriarch, close to the church of St. Medard. The crowds thronging to the spot roused the opposition of the clergy. On the 24th of December, 1561, the curé of St. Medard, having finished his appointed services, set the bells of the church ringing so loudly as to drown the voice of the preacher at the Patriarch. A remonstrance despatched to the curé silenced the bells for the moment, but the curé took his revenge. On the 27th the poor of the neighbouring fanbourg were told to assemble at St. Medard at the sound of the tocsin. The same day, 12,000 persons came to the preaching at the Patriarch, at three in the afternoon. About the same hour vespers were said at St. Medard, then the building was left apparently deserted; but no sooner did the sermon at the Patriarch begin, than the bells began also, thundering, pealing, whilst the mob gathered round the church. Again two deputies were sent to beg for silence, but as they drew near St. Medard, heads peered from every opening in the tower, and arrows and stones poured down like hail. One of the deputies entered the church, the other ran back. Then followed a terrible and painful scene. The immense Huguenot congregation forced their way into St. Medard. They found their unfortunate deputy lying on the ground a corpse. In their bitter wrath they revenge themselves on inanimate objects. Images, statues, crucifixes, were thrown down and broken in pieces. The curé, with some friends, rushed into the belfry, and the Huguenots threatened to set fire to it. In alarm they came down, and were immediately seized, committed to the hands of a magistrate, and sent to the prison of the Châtelet.

This was the first Huguenot victory. The next day the Huguenot services were conducted without interruption.

The chancellor De l'Hôpital was willing in all sincerity to stop his terrible animosity by mutual concession, but the constable De Montmorency, now allied with the Guises, swore that he would give his life for the Roman Catholic religion. By the advice of the chancellor, deputies from the provincial parliaments were summoned to St. Germain, and an edict was passed, compelling the Huguenots to give up the churches they had taken from the Roman
Catholics; but they received, in lieu of this, permission to assemble openly for their own services outside the towns. A temporary bill was all that could be expected from such measures, and the duke of Guise, foreseeing the probability of civil war, left Paris for Lorraine, where, being in the neighbourhood of Germany, he endeavoured to conciliate the Lutheran prince, and thus to deprive the Huguenots of their chief support. At the same time the feebleminded Antoine of Navarre was persuaded to abjure the Reformed doctrines, whilst measures were taken secretly to collect troops, so that all might be in readiness for the approaching contest. The first act of the great religious war of France was brought about by an unexpected outrage.

It was the 1st March, 1562. The duke of Guise was on his way from his château of Joinville to Paris, where he was to meet the constable Montmorency. He proposed to halt for the Sunday at the little town of Vassy, in Champagne. Vassy was in his own domain, but the inhabitants were mostly Huguenots. The duke was accompanied by his wife and child, and his brother, the cardinal, his servants were armed; he had with him 200 soldiers, and a body of archers and men-at-arms were waiting for him at Vassy. Just as the bell was going for the Huguenot service, the party reached Vassy and took up their quarters in a monastery. The duke seemed anxious and agitated. After dinner he walked up and down the court of the monastery with the prior, and then gave an order that no person who was attending the services in the church of the monastery should be allowed to leave it. He himself went with his own people to a barn, where the Huguenot minister was preaching.

Orders were issued that the heretical preaching should be stopped. A fierce tumult followed. The duke was assailed with stones, and his men fired upon the unarmed Huguenots. Sixty persons were killed, and upwards of 200 grievously wounded. The news of the massacre of Vassy, as it was called, spread with rapidity. Pictures of it were engraved to suit the popular taste. They were copied in Germany, and were far more influential than pamphlets. The duke of Guise felt himself alone, neither his wife nor his brother upheld him. His only hope was in the support of the constable De Montmorency, who conducted him with an immense number of armed followers to Paris. The reception there given him was freezing. Men stood at the corners of the streets muttering that they would willingly die if they could only plunge their daggers into him. The duke attempted a defence before the parliament. He had done nothing, he said, save for preservation. He begged that an enquiry might be made. He would give himself up as a prisoner if it were required. Humble words, contradicted by
the fact that, being supported by the constable's troops and by the Spanish ambassador, Paris was absolutely in his hands, and that the first act of the Guises was to take the king, his mother, and Antoine of Navarre from Fontainebleau to the Louvre; Catherine as usual acting a double part, apparently working with Guise, but secretly urging the Huguenots to fight.

The prince de Condé, admiral Coligny, and Dandélot now placed themselves at the head of the movement, and sought foreign support. Elizabeth of England furnished troops to garrison Havre, Rouen, and Dieppe for the Huguenots, and by degrees Normandy, part of Languedoc, Dauphigny, and many great towns declared themselves openly in revolt. Condé—"le petit galant," as the duke of Guise called him, from his small, delicate figure, or, as he was described in the popular songs of the day, "the pretty little man"—always singing, always laughing, was very faulty in his private character, but his personal bravery was unquestioned; and after obtaining possession of Orleans he received the adhesion of many of the most illustrious families of France.

On the 26th of October, 1562, Rouen was taken from the Huguenots by the king of Navarre and the duke of Guise, but the victory was fatal to Antoine of Navarre. He received a musket shot in his arm, which inflicted a deadly wound, and he died shortly after, inconstant to the last, and renouncing the Roman Catholic faith on his death-bed. His children, Henry—afterwards the famous Henry IV—and Catherine, were left at Beauvais, under the care of their Huguenot mother, Jeanne d'Albret.

Condé and Coligny, anxious to retrieve the loss of Rouen, marched from Orleans towards Paris, but were met by the duke of Guise near Dreux. A battle followed, disastrous for both parties. Marshal St. André was killed, and Condé was taken prisoner by Guise, whilst the constable Montmorency was left in the hands of the Huguenots.

The duke of Guise caressed Condé, even made him share his bed. Such open familiarity was, he well knew, likely to make the Huguenots distrust the prince, and to lead them to say, as the Germans already said, "These weathercock French, for whom we are called to die to-day, are prepared to rush into each others' arms to-morrow."

The struggle was continued by Coligny. On the night of the battle of Dreux his German troops, pointing to their broken weapons and their dead comrades, demanded their pay. Coligny could only answer that if they demanded money they must find it by taking Normandy; and the Germans followed him, leaving Orleans to be defended by Dandélot.

The siege of this city began early in February 1563. An epi-
demic broke out, but the Huguenots were proof against discouragement. Dandelot, though stricken with fever, was to be seen everywhere, and each morning, at six o'clock, the Huguenot minister, collecting the soldiers and inhabitants, led them chanting psalms to their work at the fortifications. 'I could bite my fingers off with vexation at the city,' said Guise in one of his letters, and he wrote to the queen that 'Orleans should be razed to the ground. He would kill everything, even the cats.' It was he himself who was killed. On the evening of the day before that fixed for a general assault a Frenchman, named Poltrot, a Huguenot, who had been a prisoner in Spain, and had imbibed a bitter hatred of Philip II., the Inquisition, and all who supported them, stationed himself in the twilight at the corner of a wood, and—believing, as he afterwards stated, that he was especially commissioned by Providence—fired at the duke as he passed a pistol loaded with poisoned balls.

Guise lingered six days, and expired on the 24th of February, 1568, with his dying breath recommending the queen regent to make peace with the Huguenots. The assassin's punishment was torture, only ended by the executioner's axe. The confessions drawn from him in his agony were made a pretext for the fearful revenge soon to be taken on the Huguenot party.

The dying counsels of the duke of Guise were ultimately disregarded by Catherine de' Medici. If she offended the Roman Catholic party she knew they might turn her little sickly, suspicious son against her, and they would certainly stop the funds which she was receiving from the Pope. One thing, however, was against them now. Their nominal head, Henry, the son of the murdered duke Francis, was but thirteen. Courageous as his father, he was yet inferior in talent; but he had a charm of manner and appearance of which his mother was not slow to avail herself as, dressed in her mourning robes, she everywhere exhibited her own grief, and endeavoured to awaken the interest of the people in his handsome boy. To avenge his father was the one instruction enforced upon Henry of Guise, and well he profited by it.

The Huguenots were, however, for the moment saved. Peace became necessary, and an edict published at Amboise on the 19th of March, 1568, gave the Reformers of the higher classes permission to worship according to their own forms in their own houses, whilst certain towns were specified in which public services might be held.

Early in 1564 the young king, who had now attained his fourteenth year, and was pronounced of age, was taken by his mother to Bayonne, where Catherine was to receive a visit from her daughter Elizabeth, the wife of Philip II.

Philip and his minister Alva were at that time universally
dreaded. The Low Countries were being prepared for insurrection by their bigoted persecution. As yet only murmurs of the coming storm were heard, but it was desirable that a clear understanding should be arrived at as to the intentions and principles of the French government; and with this view various meetings were held at Bayonne between Catherine and Alva. The particulars have never been fully divulged, for the meetings usually took place at night. But Alva's well-known principles were embodied in a short saying: 'A fine salmon is worth a hundred frogs;' or, in other words, 'Destroy the leaders and leave their followers to themselves;' and the Huguenots naturally regarded these nocturnal conferences with suspicious dread. Outwardly, however, all was bright, and the court was amused by songs and plays whilst Catherine and Alva were discussing in a low voice the plans which were to end in a general massacre.

Insurrection in the Netherlands speedily broke out. Alva's troops passed through France on their way to the scene of action. The Huguenots in the north entreated Catherine to collect a body of Swiss, who might be a protection against the Spanish soldiers. Catherine agreed. The Swiss were collected, but Catherine kept them for her own purposes.

The Huguenots, now full of suspicion, gathered around admiral Coligny. Plans were discussed at his house, and the only hope of the Huguenots was found to be open war. Gathering together to the number of about 4,000, they marched to Paris, and, headed by Condé and Coligny, encamped at St. Denis. The constable Montmorency undertook to oppose them. The Parisian citizens, glittering with gold-tinsel and bright armour, were placed in front of the constable's forces. When the battle began they fell back upon the Swiss behind, and threw them into disorder. Montmorency had made a most brave resistance to an overwhelming charge, when he was deliberately shot down by a Scottish officer named Robert Stuart. Victory then seemed secured to the Huguenots; but the constable's son rallied the Roman Catholic forces, and when night drew on the Huguenots were compelled to retire.

The successor of Montmorency in the office of constable was the effeminate Henry, duke of Anjou, the second and favourite son of Catherine de' Medici. Catherine had no love for Charles IX. He frightened her. Born with a furious temper, he had moments of sincerity, during which she dreaded lest he should betray her secrets. Henry, on the contrary, resembled her in his duplicity, and though he delighted in dress and gossip, and teasing the ladies of the court like a silly girl, he was not without ability. At sixteen, in spite of the opposition of the Guises, he was made lieutenant-general of the
340 JARNAC—CONDÉ’S DEATH—MONCONTOUR—PEACE OF ST. GERMAIN.

Charles IX.

kingdom. Catherine placed by his side two noted generals—marshal Tavannes and Strozzi, an Italian.

A short contest and a hollow peace followed the death of Mont-
morency. Then, in 1569, the war broke out again with fury, and a battle took place at Jarnac, on the Charente, between the Huguenots under Condé and Coligny and the royal forces under the duke of Anjou. A kick from a horse as Condé was on the point of engaging the enemy fractured one of his legs. "Nobles of France," he exclaimed, "behold in what a condition Louis of Bourbon goes to battle for Christ and his country." The enemy surrounded him. He fell under his own wounded horse, and a captain of the duke of Anjou's Swiss guard shot him dead. His loss was fatal to the Huguenots, but Coligny drew off his army in good order. Henry of Anjou exulted brutally over his enemy's death. Condé's body was carried off the field on the back of an ass, and then placed upon a stone in front of the church of Jarnac and exposed to the derision of the soldiery.

Rome, Paris, and Madrid chanted thanksgivings for the death of Condé and the victory of Jarnac, and Catherine demanded that the duke of Anjou should be rewarded by the gift of a large territory.

The Huguenots were not discouraged even by the loss of Condé, for they soon had another nominal leader in the young Henry of Navarre, the son of Jeanne d'Albret and Antoine. Jeanne, heroic and devoted, presented him herself to the soldiers in the Huguenot camp, and with him the youthful son of Condé. Coligny was still the real leader, but the name of the king of Navarre was a rallying cry for the Protestant party throughout Europe.

It was not till the 3rd of October, 1569, that another regular battle took place. The two armies, respectively under Coligny and the duke of Anjou, then met at Moncontour. It was a fatal day for the Huguenots; 6,000 men were slain. A ball pierced Coligny's cheek and broke four of his teeth, and he was borne away from the field of battle, while the duke of Anjou escaped without injury, though his horse was killed under him. Europe resounded with his fame, but the effect of the victory was not what had been expected.

The retreat of the Huguenots was made so slowly and with such order that marshal Tavannes, the real leader of the royal forces, at once decided that, with an enemy so disciplined, peace was a necessity.

The campaign which followed proved the truth of his words. It was favourable to the Huguenots, and in consequence a peace, known as the Peace of St. Germain, was arranged. Liberty of conscience for all was demanded, and conceded, though unwillingly; and, as a guarantee for the king's word, Rochelle and three less important towns were left in the hands of the Huguenots for two years.
Catherine de' Medici then, it would seem, was really favourable to the Huguenots. But her actions were no clue to her mind. She merely followed events from day to day. Diplomacy, exhibited in letter-writing, was her strength. Letter-writing was, indeed, the peculiar gift of the ladies of the French court. Mary Stuart and Marguerite de Valois wrote with remarkable grace and vivacity. But even from her letters Catherine’s true character could not at once have been discovered. She wrote simply, with a certain amount of naïveté; her children’s interest seemed her one chief concern. But she was laborious with her talent. Despatches, letters of compliment, condolence, instructions for building villas—nothing came amiss to her; and it was by the means of her vast correspondence that she directed the intricate politics of the day, and made even her indefatigable epistolary rival, Philip II., yield to her counsels.

Charles, despised, melancholy, suffering, with a violent, capricious temper, but open to noble feelings, lived isolated in the midst of his court. There would seem to have been always a touch of insanity in his constitution. In the night he would sometimes call up his courtiers, put on a mask, and then, hastening with torches to the bedside of some young nobleman in the palace, order him to be bled or flogged. At other times he shut himself up and worked as an armourer at a forge; or, again, he would ride out into a forest and remain there till he was seized with fever. Yet his choice of a wife showed that he was perfectly able to decide what was for his own good, for in November 1570 he married Elizabeth, daughter of the emperor Maximilian II., a princess gentle and high-principled, who, under different circumstances, might have brought out all the better features of his character.

In the month of January of the next year, 1571, it was proposed that the duke of Anjou should marry the English queen, who was looked upon as the mainstay of the Huguenot cause, whilst the Roman Catholic interest was identified with that of her hated rival, Mary Stuart, who had returned to her native country upon the death of Francis II., and, after a short and turbulent reign, had been deposed, and was now a prisoner in England. The negotiations for the English marriage were carried on without real earnestness on either side, and ultimately fell to the ground; but it was known that Charles approved the marriage, and the Huguenots took courage, more especially when it was understood that Charles had another union at heart, that of his beautiful sister, Marguerite, with the young Henry of Navarre. Marguerite was indeed devoted to Henry of Guise. But Charles, when reminded of this, merely said, coldly, ‘We must kill him;’ and the duke, in fear for his life, married another lady the next day.

Still less unmistakable signs of Huguenot sympathies were given
about the same time. A Reformed synod, under Theodore Beza, was, by the king’s permission, held at La Rochelle, whilst at Rouen the Roman Catholics, having risen against the Huguenots, were severely punished. This indication of a wish to protect the Huguenots induced admiral Coligny to trust himself to Catherine de Medici. That there was no danger he was assured not only by his son-in-law Teligny, but by many of the leading Huguenots. A letter of Catherine, written to London on the 27th of September, 1571, gave the astonishing intelligence, ‘We have the admiral with us here’ (at Blois). Coligny was received with all honour, but with words which might have had a double meaning. ‘My father,’ said Charles when they met, ‘we hold you now, and you shall never escape us again.’ The admiral was, undoubtedly, treated with the greatest confidence. Charles took him with the court to Paris, and allowed himself to be guided by his counsels. Military preparations were made for the support of the insurrection in Flanders against Philip II. and the Inquisition; and the favours shown to the Huguenots, whilst they excited great dissatisfaction in the minds of the Roman Catholics, emboldened Jeanne d’Albret to repair to Paris for the negotiation of the marriage of her son Henry of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois.

The marriage articles were signed on the 9th of April, 1572, and preparations for the wedding began. In the midst of them, on the 9th of July, Jeanne d’Albret died suddenly.

Then for the first time suspicion seems to have been aroused. It was declared that she had been poisoned. Many of the Huguenots left Paris, but Coligny refused to listen to the advice of his friends to provide for his own safety.

Catherine de Medici now openly complained of the influence of Coligny. She wept and lamented, and begged that, as her son had evidently no longer any need of her, she might be allowed to go back to Florence and die. She even set off on her journey, but was stopped. Charles, who could not even write a letter without her, hastened after her and brought her back; but Coligny’s counsels apparently still prevailed, and the marriage of the Huguenot Henry of Navarre and Marguerite de Valois was fixed for August. In the beginning of that month numerous armed followers of the Guises entered Paris and established themselves in various parts of the city. Many were needy nobles and poor gentlemen, others were simply ruffians. Lodgings were found for them amongst the household of the duke, or in monasteries, abbeys, and other ecclesiastical establishments. The Huguenots were scattered about the town. Some, who still felt suspicions, remained without the walls in the Faubourg St. Germain.

The betrothal, which took place on the 17th of August, excited
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a great tumult amongst the Roman Catholics, and one or two bishops openly declared that the vengeance of God would surely follow such a union.

Nevertheless, the king persisted in his declaration that the Pope’s dispensation would speedily arrive, and the Guises dared no longer resist.

On the wedding day (the 18th of August) a great platform having been erected in front of Notre Dame, the ceremony began. Marguerite, it is said, persisted in not uttering the word ‘Yes;’ and it was Charles who, by a sudden rough movement, made her bend her head, so as to appear to give her consent. Mass followed the marriage ceremony, and whilst it was going on the bridegroom and Coligny remained in the episcopal palace. The papal permission had, after all, never arrived, but it had been dispensed with, and those who had taken part in the marriage could now only prepare themselves bravely to abide the consequences.

The Guises were by this time driven to desperation. The destruction of their enemies—planned before—was now resolved upon. But authority was wanting. The duke of Guise was a mere youth, and the prudent cardinal of Lorraine had set out on a journey to Rome, whilst the duke of Anjou and the queen mother had shown themselves too jealous of the Guises to be relied on. Fear, however, wrought an alliance which would probably otherwise never have been entered into.

The vacant elective throne of Poland was at this time offered to the duke of Anjou. The duke demurred to accept it, and the affair was discussed before the king and Coligny. The brusque old admiral insisted that the duke should state what he really wished. Did he intend never to leave the kingdom? The question implied that Anjou looked upon himself as his brother’s heir. Charles became furiously jealous, and his manner was so menacing that the duke, in his terror of the king and his hatred of Coligny, became the supporter of the Guises and their plans.

The death of the admiral was the first necessity. The details were arranged by Catherine de’ Medici and Anne d’Este, the dowager duchess of Guise—who now bore the title of duchess of Nemours—in the presence of the duke of Anjou and two other witnesses. A man named Maurevert was chosen as the assassin; the window at which he was to station himself with his arquebus was fixed upon. A horse, taken from the stables of the duke of Guise, was made ready for his flight, and for three days Maurevert remained hidden behind curtains and bending down so as to take sure aim at his victim. And in the meantime balls and farces, music and feasting, occupied the hours of night at the Louvre, whilst the days were spent in sleep. There was no distinction of sect or party.
Huguenots and Roman Catholics danced together, and the king entered into the amusements with his usual excitability.

Coligny, ill and solitary, occupied a small house near the Louvre, and close to the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. He was by no means blind to his danger. A touching letter sent to his wife, though expressing his intention of leaving Paris the week after the marriage, shows that he also felt he might be writing to her for the last time. The news brought him day by day was dispiriting. The Edict of Pacification was entirely disregarded, and a child taken to be baptised by the Huguenots had been killed in the arms of its mother. The admiral's personal influence over the young king was the only hope of safety for the Huguenots, and Coligny remained in the place of danger. On Friday, the 22nd of August, after attending a meeting of the council, he was returning slowly to his house, reading a petition as he walked, when he passed before the fatal window where Maurevert lay couched. The arquebuse was fired. One ball carried off the forefinger of Coligny's right hand; the other entered his left arm.

The admiral coolly pointed to the window, and said, 'Let the king be told of this.'

Charles was playing at tennis with the duke of Guise and Téligny. Entirely overcome by the intelligence, he threw away the raquette and abruptly entered the palace. Orders were issued by him for the arrest of the duke of Guise, but the duke had quitted the Louvre and sought refuge in his own hôtel, where he remained till the next day, when the king's wrath had somewhat subsided.

The famous surgeon Ambrose Paré dressed the wounds of the admiral, who during the most painful part of the necessary operations never even knelt his brows, but only whispered to one of his attendants that a hundred crowns should be given to the poor Huguenots in Paris. In the afternoon the king, accompanied by Catherine, the duke of Anjou, and several noblemen and gentlemen, visited him.

Charles was greatly excited. 'My father,' he said, 'the wounds are yours; the grief and the outrage are mine. But I will take such vengeance as shall never be forgotten;' and he swore a terrible oath. Coligny spoke of the injuries received by the Huguenot party, and enquired how it was that the duke of Alva was told of every word uttered in the council chamber. 'Then, in a low voice, he added, 'Remember the warnings which I have given as to the plots against you. If your majesty cares for life, you must be upon your guard.' 'You are exciting yourself too much,' interrupted Catherine. 'We must not let an invalid talk too long.' And she carried the king off, whilst Henry of Anjou lingered a moment behind to say a friendly word to the man whom he had planned to murder.
As the news of the attempt on the admiral’s life spread through the city, a counter report was originated, that the Huguenots had sworn to kill Henry of Guise; and, in spite of the king’s commands, the people took up arms. A conflict seemed inevitable. The Louvre was thronged with Huguenot chiefs, and the threats increased in violence.

Charles was left nearly alone. In his state of terror and excitement it was clear he might be wrought upon to any deed of madness, and marshal de Retz, an Italian protégé of the queen mother, was sent by her command, and that of the duke of Anjou, to seek an interview with him. The truth was avowed. Catherine and her son owned themselves to have been parties with the Guises in the attack upon the admiral, and the king was warned that the indignant Huguenots believed that he also was privy to it, and were on the point of rising against him. The king, overwhelmed with horror, made no reply. A little later Catherine, the duke of Guise, and other persons of influence visited him, and still further and most craftily impressed upon him that his own life depended upon the death of the admiral, for that with Coligny all the Huguenot schemes would die.

The unhappy king at last, maddened by his fears, sprang from his chair, exclaiming, ‘If it is good to kill the admiral let it be done, but every Huguenot in France shall share his fate. Not one shall live to reproach me with my perfidy.’

The next day (Saturday) was spent in preparation. The first design appears to have been directed only against the Huguenot leaders in Paris, for the letters despatched to the provinces gave special orders that peace should everywhere be maintained. The king’s mind evidently wavered, but Catherine in a final consultation, held after dinner in the gardens of the Tuileries, again dilated on the wrathful turbulence of the Huguenots, and so kept up the terror on which everything depended. In the meantime the provost of Paris was summoned by Catherine to the Louvre, and directed to assemble the city guard. The artillery of the town was directed to be in readiness, and a watch was placed over the powder magazine. Arrangements were also made for the murder of the admiral.

The Huguenots had requested a guard for the admiral’s dwelling, and fifty arquebusiers, commanded by the sieur de Cosseins (a known enemy of Coligny), were stationed in the vicinity, whilst the Roman Catholic gentlemen lodging in the little Rue de Bethizy, the street leading to the house, gave up their rooms to the Huguenots, so that the admiral would seem to be surrounded by his friends.

The inmates of the Louvre separated for the night, and Catherine was attended to her chamber by her two daughters, Marguerite, queen of Navarre, and Claude, duchess of Lorraine. Mar-
guerite, as the wife of a Huguenot prince, knew nothing of the coming horrors; her sister would fain have detained her with them for safety, but Catherine sternly forbade it, lest suspicion should be excited, and Marguerite was dismissed, trembling at the prospect of unknown peril, yet ignorant from what quarter to expect it.

For two hours there was silence in the palace. At midnight Catherine rose and went to the king's chamber. She found Charles with the dukes of Anjou and Guise and other noblemen. He was still undecided—at one moment vowing to warn the Huguenots, then cursing his mother, his brother, and even the admiral as disturbers of his peace. It required all Catherine's eloquence to induce him to persist in the consent given. 'In this case,' she exclaimed, quoting an Italian preacher of the day, 'pity would be cruelty and cruelty would be pity.' The dukes of Guise and Anjou left the king between one and two, and went to the Rue de Bethizy to wait for the signal of the tocsin from the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. The façade of the Louvre now glowed with light, and royal messengers carrying torches were seen hurrying through the streets. The sentinels at the Louvre were questioned by some passers-by. Angry words were heard, and the clash of arms. Catherine saw that delay might be fatal to her enterprise. The order was given, and just before dawn, on St. Bartholomew's Day, the tocsin sounded, and its hoarse voice was echoed from all the steeples of Paris. Catherine, Charles, and the duke of Anjou repaired to a chamber over the grand portico of the Louvre overlooking one of the courts. A pistol shot was heard, followed by screams and the clashing of weapons. The sound, as the duke of Anjou afterwards himself confessed, seemed to deprive them all of judgment. The noise increased, the great bell of the palace added its clangour to the uproar, and voices in the corridors told of the death of some of the Huguenot nobles in attendance on the king of Navarre. Terror, and it may be remorse, touched the heart of Catherine. A messenger was despatched to the duke of Guise with orders to save the admiral. The answer came back. The admiral was dead.

The work had indeed been rapid. As the tocsin sounded, Cosseins posted arquebusiers beneath Coligny's windows, and then knocked at his door. The officer who opened it was instantly killed, and the assassins, breaking through a door at the foot of the staircase, ascended to the old man's chamber.

Coligny had passed a sleepless night, watched over by Ambrose Paré and the Huguenot pastor Merlin. Hearing the noise, and knowing well what it portended, he put on his dressing-gown and rose, saying to Merlin, 'Pray for me. I commend my soul to my...

1 La pietà lor ser crucede—la crudeltà lor ser pistola.
Saviour. I have long been prepared for death,' he added, addressing the frightened attendants, who hurried to his room; 'but for you, save yourselves, if possible.' The counsel was obeyed. Several escaped over the roof of the house, and Coligny was left with only Merlin, Paré, and a German attendant. A few moments after Cosseins appeared, followed by Behme, a German servant of the duke of Guise, and three other men. With them also came a small party of the duke of Anjou's Swiss guards.

'Art thou the admiral?' said Behme, advancing to Coligny.

'Young man,' was the reply, 'I am wounded and aged. Do as thou mayst; thou wilt not shorten my life.'

Behme swore a horrible oath, and plunged a spear into the old man's body. Coligny fell to the ground.

The duke of Guise was waiting on horseback in the courtyard below. 'Is it finished?' he cried out; and Behme and his companions took the bleeding corpse in their arms and threw it out of the window. The duke dismounted and examined it, wiping the blood from the face. 'Yes, it is he; no doubt!' he exclaimed; and, remounting his horse, he rode back through the Rue de Bethizy, where a general slaughter of the Huguenots had commenced, only Ambrose Paré, the skilled surgeon, being conducted to the Louvre in safety by the duke of Anjou's archers.

The young queen of Navarre had during this time been in deadly terror. An account, written by herself, gives the incidents of this fearful night. 'After leaving the queen,' she says, 'I went to my husband, and found him surrounded by thirty or forty Huguenots, who were all talking of the outrage upon the admiral. Just at daybreak my husband left me, saying that he should go and have a game of tennis, and he would insist upon justice from the king as soon as he awakened. Overcome with fatigue myself, I told my nurse to shut my door, that I might go to sleep. An hour after I was awakened by a man knocking at the door with both hands and feet, and calling 'Navare! Navare!' It was a gentleman, a stranger to me, wounded and bleeding, and pursued by four archers, who all entered after him. He threw himself upon the bed and clung to me, as in great terror, to avoid the archers. I cast myself upon the floor. Just then M. de Nancy, the captain of the guard, entered. He was very sorry for me, yet he could not help laughing. He demanded the archers, and bade them depart; and granted me the use of the poor man, whose wounds I drest, and made him lie down in my apartment. M. de Nancy told me all that was going on, and assured me that my husband was safe with the king, and then taking me put on my dressing-gown, he took me to my sister's room, which I reached more dead than alive.'

The king of Navarre and the prince de Condé were summoned
from their game of tennis and taken before Charles, who, it is said, gave them their choice—the mass or death. Their reply is uncertain, but they were kept prisoners in their own apartments, with a view to their ultimate conversion. The other Huguenots in the palace were chased from room to room by the archers, whilst in the streets the massacre was carried on by organised assassins, distinguished by white crosses in their hats. The ferocious marshal Tavannes was most eager in the terrible work. 'Blood! blood!' he exclaimed. 'The doctors say that bleeding is as good in August as in May.' The scenes in the streets of Paris on that Sunday morning have been described by a contemporary historian. Nearly 60,000 armed men, he says, were perambulating the streets, blaspheming and sacking houses, in which they cruelly massacred all whom they met. A horrible tempest of yells and shouts raged, mingled with the report of pistols and arquebuses and the pitiful shrieks of the victims, while carts traversed the streets, filled with booty, or laden with mutilated bodies, which were cast into the Seine.

The duke of Guise was throughout cool and collected. 'It was necessary,' he said to the soldiers, 'that they should get rid of the Huguenots whilst they were in their power;' and he himself arranged the murder of certain individuals whom the king would probably have saved—one of them being Teligny, the brother-in-law of Coligny, a man almost universally beloved.

The Huguenots of the Faubourg St. Germain, confident of the king's favour, sent to demand protection against what they supposed to be a special vengeance of the Guises. But, on endeavouring to escape by the river below the Louvre, they were fired upon by the royal guards. It is said that Charles saw several of them fleeing for their lives, and seizing a weapon joined in the firing, but the story is not authenticated.

The duke of Guise had taken the Faubourg St. Germain into his own hands. When he found that some of his chief enemies had escaped he became furious, and rode full gallop after them. The magistrates of Paris, emboldened by his absence, went at once to the king, craving protection for the city, and Charles gave orders to stop the massacre. But the command was more easily issued than enforced, and the carnage continued for several days. Similar horrors took place in all the great provincial towns. The estimate of the number of victims is very various, but the most careful historians reckon that 10,000 were slain in Paris, and 30,000 in the provinces.

On the 26th of August, whilst blood still flowed in the streets of Paris, the miserable king, at the instigation of Catherine and the duke of Anjou, appeared before the parliament of Paris, and openly declared that the murderous work was his own act, that he had been compelled to it by the conspiracies of Coligny and the Huguenots.

De Thou, the president, complimented Charles on his wisdom.
Charles IX.

quoting the saying of Louis XI.: 'He who knows not how to dissemble knows not how to reign.' The greatest effort was made to vilify the memory of Coligny. His papers were brought to the Louvre. In a short account of the war in the Netherlands he had given it as his advice that it should be carried on, because if France did not take the country England would. Catherine showed the paper triumphantly to Walsingham, the English ambassador. 'Look,' she said; 'this is your friend. See now whether he cared for England.' 'Madame,' was the reply, 'he loved France.' But the admiral's patriotism did not save him from dishonour. He was burnt in effigy, and the court made a procession to Montfaucon, where his mangled remains still hung on a gibbet; thither also, according to the custom of the times, were taken his young sons, one fifteen, the other seven. They were newly converted Roman Catholics, and it was thought that the sight of the fate of their Huguenot father might have a salutary effect upon them.

At Rome the Pope and the cardinals publicly returned thanks to Heaven for the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Medals were struck to commemorate the event, and the Pope sent to his 'dear son Charles' the golden rose, the most signal mark of favour he was able to bestow. Philip II. also rejoiced, though in his usual gloomy, sullen manner, and it certainly seemed that terror might avail for outward conversion where argument and persuasion had proved powerless. The Protestant princes, horror-struck at first, were by degrees induced to listen to excuses for the crime. It was important not entirely to break with France, and but a few months after the horrible slaughter had taken place Elizabeth of England, having guarded herself against the Roman Catholic intrigues carried on in her own country by ordering the execution of Mary Stuart, was negotiating a marriage between herself and Catherine's youngest son, the duke of Alençon; whilst the Polish ambassadors were urging the duke of Anjou to accept their crown, and William of Orange, the leader of the Protestants in the Low Countries, was seeking the protection of the French king. 'I care but little for the admiral and his party,' wrote Elizabeth of England to Catherine. 'I am only surprised that the king of France should desire to alter the decalogue, and to make murder no longer a crime.' To which Catherine quietly replied that 'if Elizabeth was displeased on account of the death of a few Protestants, she was quite at liberty to take her revenge by killing all the Roman Catholics.'

For the moment the great state crime appeared to have been successful. The Huguenots were paralysed. Henry of Navarre and the prince de Condé, after a short struggle with conscience, professed themselves Roman Catholics.

1 Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.
In March 1573 the Huguenots, gathering together at La Rochelle, broke out into open revolt. The duke of Anjou was despatched to besiege the town. The Huguenots, men, women, and children, fought and worked as one man, and at low tide the women and the ministers might be seen wading through the shallow pools, though exposed to the enemy's attack, that they might set fire to the vessels which closed the entrance to the port. English reinforcements were despatched to them; but in her heart Elizabeth disliked the Calvinist Huguenots, and her support was but lukewarm. It served, however, to protract the siege until an event occurred which caused the withdrawal of the besiegers. This was the election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland. It had required all the address of Catherine de' Medici and her ambassador Montluc, bishop of Valence, to secure this election. But oaths cost them nothing, and when the Poles, horrified at the tidings of the massacre, would have repudiated the duke, Montluc at once solemnly swore that the affair was entirely a matter of accident. The Poles, greatly afraid of having an Austrian archduke forced upon them, accepted the excuse. Henry of Anjou became Henry, king of Poland, and left the Huguenots of La Rochelle to make peace upon advantageous terms, including liberty of conscience and the permission to worship openly in La Rochelle, Nîmes, and Montauban.

Catherine de' Medici, though she bitterly grieved at the approaching separation from her favourite son, gave a splendid ball at the Tuileries in his honour. The terrible night of St. Bartholomew was apparently forgotten; the grave had closed over its victims, and the dread past, which could not be recalled, might well be thought to be buried with them in oblivion. But the interior of the French court was very different from its outward seeming. The health of Charles was rapidly declining; a fixed gloom oppressed his spirits. Wearied by slow fever and acute pain at the heart, he was unable to attend to public business, and found his only relief in a frantic passion for hunting, which he pursued until both horse and rider often sank with exhaustion. At night the unhappy young king's sleep was broken, and he would start from his pillow, calling wildly upon his mother, or giving vent to sobs and moans of bodily and mental anguish. Superstitious terrors added also to his misery. They seem, indeed, to have haunted him from the very first moment of his crime. A strange, weird story was often in after years related by Henry of Navarre of multitudinous hosts of croaking ravens, that a week after the massacre descended upon the palace of the Louvre, and were followed at night by sounds of shrieking, groaning, howling voices, such as were heard on the night of St. Bartholomew. The terror of Charles, as for seven nights successively the accountable sounds returned, is said to have been terrible to wits...
for, whatever might have been their origin, he interpreted them
according to the reproaches of his own heart. So when his illness
increased and his couch was often bathed in blood, he saw, in the
natural consequence of his disease, the direct vengeance of Heaven
upon his sins. 'Ah, dear nurse,' he exclaimed one day to the old
servant who sat by his bedside, 'what blood! what murders!
I have followed wicked counsels. O my God, forgive me, have
mercy upon me!'

Such was the condition of the king when Henry of Anjou set
out for Poland, leaving powerful enemies behind him. His younger
brother, the duke of Alençon, was already plotting for the crown, in
the event of Charles's death; Henry of Navarre, Condé, and Mont-
morency were joined with him, and foreign support was promised
by Louis of Nassau, the brother of the prince of Orange. This
party, known as 'Les Politiques,' desired to remove the queen
mother from power and to restore equality in matters of religion.
Catherine was well aware of these schemes, but she still bade Henry
depart, engaging herself to secure the throne of France for him
under all circumstances.

The duke of Anjou was no sooner gone than every effort was
made to induce the duke of Alençon to own himself the protector
of the Huguenots, and thus win them over to his interests; but
Alençon was too vacillating for his position, and before he could
determine upon his course of action Catherine de' Medici had
defeated the whole scheme. An attempt was made on the life of
the duke of Guise. The assassin accused marshal Montmorency as its
instigator, and the duke of Alençon also was mentioned as being
cognisant of the crime. Catherine seized the occasion to poison the
king's mind against his brother and the marshal. There is reason,
indeed, to think that the whole affair was arranged by her for this
purpose. Instead of naming the duke of Alençon lieutenant-general
of the kingdom, Charles gave the office to the duke of Guise.
Alençon was angry. The Huguenots were suspicious. A pre-
mature insurrection was the consequence. A body of armed
Huguenots appeared near St. Germain, much to the consternation
of the duke of Alençon, who was not in the least prepared for this
sudden movement in his favour, and raved and wept as he declared
to the king of Navarre, and others who implored him to take a bold
part, that nothing should induce him to sanction so preposterous an
enterprise.

The unfortunate Charles, who was now so weak that he could
only sit up part of the day, was overcome by the panic and tumult.
'Could they not have waited for my death?' was his agonised exclama-
tion; but he refused to listen to the urgent remonstrances of
Catherine when she entreated him to leave St. Germain, reminding
him that her astrologer had told her that it would exercise an evil
influence over him.

The terrified Alençon made a full confession to Catherine of all
his plans, and escaped with only a reprimand. The king of Navarre
was equally fortunate, but Charles insisted that they should send a
message to the Huguenots forbidding their advance. Catherine at
midnight carried off Alençon to Paris in her own coach and under a
strong escort. "Shortly after the court removed for safety to the
strong castle of Vincennes, the Huguenots being still in arms in the
provinces. But the ambitious hopes excited in the weak mind of
Alençon made him restless. A new plot was formed for his escape,
and that of the king of Navarre, from Vincennes, in order that
they might join Condé and the Huguenots. The pretext was to be a
hunting expedition. But again Catherine and the king received
intelligence of the intention, and the duke and the king of Navarre
were detained as prisoners at Vincennes, whilst marshal Mont-
morency was sent to the Bastille.

But the chief punishment fell upon their subordinate agents,
who were accused of designs upon the king's life. Several were
executed, amongst them Alençon's favourite attendant, Le Mole.
On the eve of this man's execution Catherine went to see the
duke of Alençon, who was ill from anger and grief. 'I dared not
approach too near my son's bed,' she said afterwards to the cardinal
de Bourbon, 'for fear — such was his resentment — that he should
plunge his dagger into me.'

After the punishment of the conspirators of the Carnival plot,
as it was called ("l'entreprise des Jours Gras"), the king became
rapidly worse. During the greater part of the month of May he
was carried from his bed to a couch placed close to an open window
and strewn with green boughs, to remind him of his favourite
forests. Music soothed him, and at night he was often lulled to sleep
by the voice of his favourite chorister. On the 29th of May it
became evident that he was sinking fast, but he still retained his
singular energy, and it was with evident reluctance that he signed
letters patent committing all things to the care of his mother, 'who
he knew to be very competent,' until the arrival of his brother from
Poland.

In the middle of the next day extreme unction was administered
by the bishop of Auxerre. When the rite was over Charles took
leave of his mother, embracing her and saying, 'Adieu, madame;
adieu, my mother,' and then relapsed into partial insensibility; the
last words which he was heard to utter being, 'If Jesus, my Saviour,
should number me among His redeemed!' which he slowly re-
peated three times. He died about three o'clock in the afternoon of
A.D. the 30th of May (Whit Sunday, 1574), his last breath being drawn
in sleep.
Henry III.

When we look at the physical constitution and the early training of the unhappy Charles IX., it is impossible to avoid a merciful judgment even while recognising his acknowledged offences. That he was far superior to those who ruled and misled him, and that he was deceived and almost maddened before he consented to the great crime for which his memory has been handed down for execution, is now universally admitted; and surely we may trust that the faint, far-off hope which marked his last moments of consciousness has received its completion in forgiveness.

One person certainly there was whose prayers for him were fervent and deep. When Catherine de' Medici left her son's dying chamber to attend a service in the castle chapel, she found the young queen, Elizabeth of Austria, on her knees before the altar. 'And there,' says a contemporary writer, 'I believe her majesty was still found when the soul of her husband and lord passed from this world.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HENRY III.

A.D. 1574—1576.

Henry III. no sooner learnt that he was king of France than, without making any provision for the government of Poland, he left Cracow secretly, and in the greatest haste. Polish nobles followed him, entreat ing him to return, but Henry persisted that France was in danger, and continued his journey; not, however, by the shortest road, for he went round by Austria and Italy; and in the latter country he stayed two months, having, as he said, a strong desire to see Venice.

The doge gave him splendid entertainments, and admitted him to the privilege of citizenship; and the weak prince was enchanted with his Italian visit, but he left the country poorer than he entered it, for he was induced by the duke of Savoy to surrender Pignerol and some other fortresses in Piedmont, which were all that remained of the conquests of his grandfather, Francis I.

It was early in September when he entered his own dominions. Catherine met him at Lyons, presented to him the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre, who were publicly pardoned, and then gave up her authority into his hands.

But she still retained her influence, and used it for the destruction of the Huguenots, now becoming every day more powerful under Henry of Navarre and the prince de Condé, who had again
professed the Huguenot faith, and were recognised as the leaders of the party.

The new king gave but little heed to the threatening condition of his country. One of his first exhibitions of himself was in a public procession, a singular mixture of folly and hypocrisy, in which Catherine de' Medici and the cardinal of Lorraine, dressed as penitents, took part. The king and his courtiers walked barefooted through the streets of Avignon, holding a crucifix and scourging themselves, and then returned to their degrading profligacy. The cardinal caught a fever on this occasion, and died a few days afterwards. He had taken a decided part in the cruel disturbances of France, and Catherine, when she heard of his death, appeared for the moment relieved, but the following night she woke wild with terror, from dreams in which she had fancied herself and the cardinal dragged to punishment for their crimes.

The prospects of the country were unaltered by the cardinal's death. The king was not without talent and courage, but his tastes and habits were effeminate and vicious. Ridiculously vain, he painted his face red and white, wore plasters at night to improve his complexion, stained his red hair, and when it fell off took to a Turkish turban. He amused himself with a cup and ball, and in a time of great distress was to be seen with baskets of little puppies slung round his neck. His strongest feeling seems to have been a passionate attachment to Marie de Clèves, princesse de Condé, and one of his first objects on returning to France was to obtain from the Pope the dissolution of her marriage with the prince, so that she might become his own wife. But on the 20th of October Marie de Clèves died of inflammation of the lungs. Henry, when the news reached him, fell back in his chair speechless, and for three days shut himself up and refused to eat. His haggard face, when he was again seen, showed that his grief was sincere, but he displayed it by introducing the fashion of wearing little death's heads instead of the silver tags which at that time ornamented a gentleman's dress.

His ultimate choice of a wife was influenced by his feeling for the princesse de Condé. Louise de Vaudemont, the duke of Lorraine's niece, resembled her, and, though other marriages were discussed and partly negotiated, Henry stated to his mother his fixed resolve that Louise should be his wife.

The princess, who was about twenty years of age, is described by a contemporary writer as 'very handsome, her figure elegant, of middle size, so that her majesty has no need to wear high-heeled shoes to increase her height. Her eyes light and full of vivacity, the colour of her hair pale yellow, which gives great content to the king, because that hue is rare in this country.' Gentle, benevolent, and by no means deficient in wit and understanding, Louise de
Vaudemont seems to have been only too good a wife for the frivolous Henry, to whom, however, she appeared quite devoted. Probably she was as much deceived in him as her biographer, who records that the piety of Louise equalled that of the king; 'which,' he adds, 'is saying everything.'

For the first few months of her married life the new queen had the satisfaction of driving about alone with her husband in a closed chariot, much to the disappointment of the Parisians, who were greatly annoyed also to find that their king chose to dine in private, and would only allow himself to be approached within a certain distance. The court seems to have been dull except when enlivened by the reports of quarrels and duels. Henry amused himself with coarse jests and immoral poetry, studied the political writings of the wily Italian, Macchiavelli, and listened nightly to a few selections from the Missal, whilst the duke of Alençon, gilding about, smiling and plotting, was trying to persuade the king of Navarre to revolt. A little band of adherents surrounded him, their leader being Bussy d'Amboise, a bold, insolent profligate, with whom no one dared to quarrel.

Catherine was still dreaming of the marriage of Alençon and Elizabeth of England, but the duke had other objects in view. His party, the 'Politiques,' or liberal Catholics, were prepared to make common cause with the Huguenots. Were they once to get the upper hand, the king would be murdered and the duke placed on the throne.

This Henry well knew, and the fear of it was ever in his mind. In the month of June 1575, being ill, he thought that he had been poisoned. The duke of Alençon, he declared, had bribed one of his valets to scratch him in the nape of the neck while fastening his ruff. He sent for the king of Navarre, implored him to be on the watch, and even urged the assassination of Monsieur, as the duke of Alençon was now called. 'Shall I,' he said, 'leave my crown to this vile profligate? Take my advice, "mon frère;" rid yourself of him, and be prepared, in the event of my death, to seize the crown.'

Henry of Navarre received the suggestion as the mere frenzy of delirium, but he thought it wise to inform Catherine of what had passed, and Monsieur was in consequence warned to avoid for the present his rambles through the streets of Paris.

It could scarcely be expected that Alençon would long endure the position of danger and restraint in which he now found himself, and a rumour that the duke intended to make his escape reached the king. An order for Monsieur's arrest was issued, and though at the instigation of Catherine it was quickly annulled, it hastened the event which it was meant to prevent. Two days afterwards, about half-past seven in the evening, Monsieur, wearing a cloak and a mask,
proceeded with one attendant to the Porte St. Honoré, where a friend's coach awaited him, and was driven leisurely out of Paris. At a house by the wayside the coach was stopped, the driver being told that the duke had a visit to make. In the fields at the back of the house four cavaliers were waiting, and the duke, throwing himself upon a horse, rode off towards Dreux, where a body of 300 nobles and gentlemen were prepared to attend upon him.

At the king's supper that night the absence of Monsieur was remarked. Marguerite of Navarre, who was Alençon's special confidante, laughed and jested and appeared quite at her ease, and when pointedly asked by Catherine where Monsieur was, answered quietly, 'Madame, I have not seen the duke since he dined.' The chamberlain was despatched to the duke's apartments, and the report came back that Monsieur was not in the Louvre, and it was believed not in Paris, as he had been seen driving out of the city by the Rue St. Honoré. The fury of Henry broke forth without restraint. But Catherine took his arm and led him away, and orders were then sent to certain trusty persons to ride in pursuit of the duke, and offer to grant whatever he might desire. But the duke was not to be entrapped, and making his way to the south, was proclaimed the head of the confederacy which professed to have for its object the reformation of the government, as well as the grant of equal rights to both Roman Catholics and Huguenots.

War was now carried on more decidedly. In a severe engagement between the duke of Guise and a detachment of the Huguenot army, Guise, though victorious, received so severe a wound from the discharge of an arquebus that he was ever after known as Le Balafré, or the Scarred. Catherine, as the virtual ruler of the kingdom, made many vain attempts to bring her son to submission, and at length released marshal de Montmorency from the Bastille, intending to employ him as a mediator between the two parties.

Under these circumstances Henry of Navarre, who was looked upon with suspicion, now found himself almost a prisoner at the court, and seizing the occasion of a hunting party, he escaped from Paris in the beginning of 1576. As he reined his horse on the banks of the Loire, he is said to have exclaimed, 'Thanks be to God, who has delivered me! My mother died in Paris, so also did the admiral, and the same fate was reserved for myself.' Then, turning to the gentlemen of his suite, he added jestingly, 'I regret only two things that I have left in Paris, the mass and my wife. For the mass, I will try and dispense with it; but my wife—I will have her again.' He then pushed on towards to his own principality of Bearn, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm.

Negotiations were now again opened with the duke of Alençon.
and a peace, known as 'the Peace of Monsieur,' was signed on the 6th of May, 1576.

Once more the Huguenots were granted the full exercise of their religion. The king of Navarre was made governor of Guienne, and Condé governor of Picardy. To the duke of Alençon were ceded Anjou, Touraine, and Berri, and from this time Alençon took his brother's former title, and was known as the duke of Anjou. A promise was also made that the States-General should be convoked within six months.

The Peace of Monsieur was regarded by the zealous Roman Catholics as an insult and a disgrace, and from that time they bent all their efforts to the formation of a League, headed by the duke of Guise, having for its object the support of the church.

'The Protestants have formed a League; let us form one likewise, and foil them with their own weapons,' was the great argument for enlistment, and it had a rapid effect. Beginning in the north, the League spread south to Poitou, and from thence made its way all over the country, being greatly aided by the Order of Jesuits, who had already formed brotherhoods with a similar object, and now united them with the League. Success makes success, and the League went about whispering mysteriously that they had at their command an army of 30,000 men, and could calculate on the support of Philip II. and his Spaniards.

But little cared Henry for the League. A royal business-pro\-gress which he made through Normandy was chiefly remarkable for large purchases of little dogs, parrots, and apes, and on his return to Paris the king found the following placard posted up in the streets:

"Henry, by the grace of his mother, useless king of France and imaginary king of Poland, porter at the Louvre, churchwarden of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, hairdresser to his wife, haberdasher to the palace, &c. Incensed at the Parisian insolence, he retired to a castle which he had recently purchased near Chartres as a present for queen Louise, previously, however, summoning the States-General to meet at Blois in November.

The meeting of this important assembly was regarded with the deepest anxiety by the Huguenots, who dreaded lest their recently gained privileges might be annulled, for they were no longer thoroughly in accord with the duke of Anjou and his party, whilst the League was growing every day more powerful.

The 6th of December, 1576, on which the deputies met in the great hall of the castle of Blois, was for them, therefore, a day of great moment, and the king's opening speech must have been listened to with trembling attention. It was dignified and moderate. Fluency of words and a certain majesty of demeanour were amongst Henry's chief endowments. 'Our vices,' he said, 'lie at the root of
our miseries. They have poisoned all classes of the community.' And as he went on he exhorted his subjects to peace, urging them to put down leagues and to reform their morals. His hearers applauded, but when they looked at their sovereign they could scarcely have believed in his sincerity. He wore 'a most surprising mantle' (thus it is described by a trusty chronicler) of 'cloth of gold, lined with silver cloth, the whole dress being trimmed with more than four thousand yards of passementerie' (lacing or embroidery) 'of pure gold,' whilst a most lustrous pair of diamond earrings completed his ornaments. Henry was scarcely the sovereign to lecture his subjects upon their follies. The deputies only replied by making extravagant demands for power, and the king then felt that his best chance of safety lay in proclaiming himself the head of the League. Thus alone could he hope to make himself superior to the duke of Guise.

Once more the declaration went forth that the Roman Catholic religion only should be tolerated in the country, and once more the Huguenots flew to arms. Henry, having no money, and now no independent authority, was obliged to ask permission of the League to sell some of the royal domains. It was refused. 'It is a frightful cruelty,' he exclaimed. 'They will neither give me money nor allow me to use my own,' and he began to weep. The duke of Guise and the army of Leaguers gained a few easy victories in the south over the Huguenots, and Henry became terrified at the success of his own party. Distrusting everyone, he listened to overtures of peace from the Huguenots, which were confirmed at Bergerac in the month of September 1577, and virtually separated himself from the League by inserting in the treaty a clause prohibiting all political confederations, of whatever kind they might be.

An interval of repose for France followed, but its only effect was to give the king the opportunity for the further display of his extravagance, frivolity, and profigacy. In his desire to lessen the influence of the house of Lorraine, he heaped honours upon two recently chosen favourites—the duc de Joyeuse and the duc d'Épernon—both brave, selfish, and ambitious. The two favourites laboured cleverly for their own advancement and for their sovereign's interests by flattering the Huguenot noblemen who appeared at the court. To each apart it was said that 'the king earnestly desired to assist him, but that his religion was an obstacle. It was impossible to do anything, except for the Roman Catholics.' The result was in many cases conversion, and the Guises looked on in alarm as the royal party became stronger.

And yet, while thus professing himself devoted to the Roman Catholic religion, Henry in 1581 permitted his brother, the duke of Anjou, to raise a considerable French army for the support of the Flemings in their struggle with Philip II. The secret of his consent
was his desire to rid himself of the presence of the duke. But such a step could not be taken with impunity, and early in the year Henry received a message from Philip warning him that, should the duke of Anjou advance to the Flemish frontier, the Spanish general, the duke of Parma, would make a descent upon France. The emperor of Germany's ambassador waited upon him with a similar protest, but Henry only replied peevishly, and shrugging his shoulders, that 'he had nothing to do with the projects of M. d'Anjou. He (the duke) never consulted him, but followed his own good pleasure.' And Monsieur departed at the head of a magnificent body of troops, half of which, in defiance of every treaty with Spain, were in the pay of the king of France.

On the 17th of August he confronted the army of Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, which was besieging Cambrai. Farnese withdrew his troops, and the duke of Anjou entered the town peaceably. A few more conquests of a similar kind followed, and then Monsieur, regarding himself as a great general, crossed over to England, to press his suit upon Elizabeth, and urge her to give direct support to his enterprise in Flanders.

Elizabeth was apparently well inclined to the marriage. She exchanged rings with the duke, and Monsieur assumed the position of the betrothed husband of the queen of England. He returned to Flanders, and the people, overjoyed at the prospect of such powerful aid, installed him in 1582 duke of Brabant and count of Flanders and Holland; but he was not permitted to exercise any royal authority. The prince of Orange, in fact, possessed double his power and influence, and Monsieur, oppressed by his position, applied to his friends in France to relieve him from it.

The queen mother persuaded Henry to send marshal Biron to Monsieur's aid, and, taking advantage of his presence, the duke was tempted to an act which was his ruin. He had sworn, on receiving the sovereignty of Flanders, to leave the great towns, and especially Antwerp, free and independent. Now, with Biron's aid, he made a treacherous effort to seize the citadel of Antwerp, that he might keep it in his own hands.

The attempt was a total failure, and the mortified duke quickly crossed the Scheldt, and made his way to Dunkirk, and then to Boulogne.

'Would to God,' exclaimed Catherine de' Medici, when she heard of this shameful conclusion to Monsieur's career, 'that my son had died rather than have been the cause of this slaughter, and of the difficulties in which it will involve France!'

The excitement and anxiety he had thus undergone proved too much for the duke of Anjou's strength, and Catherine, hearing that he was ill, went to see him. In her absence, and that of queen
Marguerite banished from court—Death of Monsieur.

Henry III.

Louise, Marguerite of Navarre, who still remained in Paris, was accustomed to preside at the court entertainments. Witty, beautiful, but utterly without principle, Marguerite's life had long been a subject of scandal even to the profligate society in which she moved. The king, shameless himself, could still feel shame for his sister, and on this occasion, giving way to a wild fury against her on account of some scandalous stories which had reached his ears, he approached the dais upon which Marguerite sat in the midst of her brilliant circle of guests, and in a loud voice reproached her for her offences and ordered her to retire from his presence.

Marguerite listened in silence, with the greatest outward composure, and making a profound courtesy, quitted the Louvre, followed by only three persons. A few days afterwards a decree was issued for her banishment from the court of France. It was long before her husband would forgive her, and even when there was a nominal reconciliation they still lived apart.

The duke of Anjou's health rapidly failed. He was reduced to a lamentable state of mental as well as bodily weakness, and wept as he bewailed his approaching death, blaming his brother as having caused it by refusing to forward his projects in Flanders. Catherine persuaded him to return to Paris, and a reconciliation with the king took place. But the temporary improvement in the duke's health which followed was marked by a wild and fatal outburst of folly. At the time of the Carnival the king, his brother, and their minions rode in disguise furiously through Paris to the fair of St. Germain, where, during the night, they amused themselves with insolent absurdities. The renewed illness of the duke was the consequence. He retired to Château Thierry, and on the 10th of June, 1584, he died.

His body was embalmed and taken to Paris. The king surveyed the funeral pageant as he stood bareheaded at a window near the cathedral of Notre Dame. With him was the duke of Guise, outwardly mournful, but inwardly, there can be little doubt, full of ambitious hopes. The reigning family was becoming extinct. The relationship of Henry of Navarre was but remote, and his religion would in the eyes of many be an insurmountable objection to any claim to the throne he might bring forward.

The Guises, on the contrary, were not only the acknowledged leaders of the Roman Catholic party, but traced their descent from Charles of Lorraine, the last of the Carolingian kings; and the young duke, with his popular manners and almost extravagant munificence, had every chance of being supported by the people.

But the hour was not yet ripe for any open movement, and in the meantime another claimant to the succession was to be brought forward.

'I have received certain news from Château Thierry that the
condition of Monsieur grows worse every day,' said Henry of Guise to his mother, the duchess of Nemours, as, shortly before the duke of Anjou's death, he sat at the foot of her bed, during some temporary illness from which she was suffering. I have resolved on my course. I shall pay my court to the poor little cardinal de Bourbon. We shall be indispensable to him, and we can keep a hold upon Paris.' The cardinal de Bourbon was the uncle of the king of Navarre, weak in intellect and infirm from age, but all the more would he serve the purpose of the Guises as regarded the succession.

The king was not ignorant of these pretensions. His own predilections were decidedly in favour of Henry of Navarre, to whom a message of entreaty was sent, urging him now to conform to the Roman Catholic faith.

Some remarkable and salutary reforms were taking place at this time in the king's conduct. He became energetic, and to a certain degree industrious, and took an interest in the regulation of his household. In this he was aided by the countess of Stafford, the wife of the English ambassador, for queen Louise had no authority, and lived apart from her husband, performing constant penances. The etiquettes of the court were also minutely, even absurdly, laid down, including the ceremonies to be observed when a glass of cold water was presented to his majesty on awaking in the morning; and the distance within which each gentleman might approach was defined according to the respective rank of the individuals, with the exception of the two favourites Joyeuse and Epernon, who were placed on a footing with the princes of the blood.

The machinations of the Guise party unfortunately neutralised to a great degree the effect of the king's personal reformation. Secretly instigated by them, the preachers in Paris thundered forth seditious harangues, accusing him of atheism and tyranny. Henry was resolved to see what part the old cardinal de Bourbon took in these threatening manifestations, and suddenly declared his intention of paying him a visit at his château of Gaillon in Normandy. He was received with all outward honour, and whilst walking with the cardinal in the pleasure-grounds the subject of the succession was quietly brought forward. 'Cousin,' said the king, 'God has not been pleased to give me children; my crown therefore will fall to the house of Bourbon. I am told, however, that you are disposed to dispute the succession with your nephew of Navarre.' 'Sire, replied the cardinal, 'I pray God to take me before your majesty.' 'Yes,' persisted the king; 'but if it should not be so?' 'In that case, sire, I should dispute the crown with my nephew, and, moreover, be very resolute not to cede it to him.' 'All right, my good friend,' answered the king, laughing, as he looked at the
cardinal's bent figure and patted him on the shoulder. 'The Châtelet' (meaning the rogues and vagabonds in the prison of the Châtelet) 'will give you the crown, but the court will soon take it from you.'

The king's visit had the effect of strengthening the old cardinal's resolution, and from this time he assumed the air and dress of a young man, publicly set forth his rights in his new character of heir presumptive, and sent a representative to a conference of the Lorraine family held at their château of Joinville, in the month of January 1585, the object of which was the extirpation of heresy. The Spanish ambassador and a special envoy from Philip were also present. Philip engaged to furnish the confederates with a monthly sum of 50,000 crowns, and to assist them with troops.

A year, it was thought probable, would elapse before the agreement could be openly carried out, but the explosion was unexpectedly hastened by the course of events in Holland. The prince of Orange had been assassinated in July of the previous year, and the United Provinces, in their hopelessness of other aid, now determined to offer to the king of France the sovereignty which his brother had so recklessly thrown away. Deputies from the States arrived in Paris at the beginning of February 1585. Elizabeth of England also despatched an envoy extraordinary to entreat the king of France to send help to the Low Countries. Henry, thus tempted, showed every inclination to listen to these overtures. His favourites took opposite sides in the question. Joyeuse, dreading a rupture with Spain, recommended him to refuse; Epernon, who hated the Guises, and considered their interests one with those of Philip II., recommended him to accept. Cardinal Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, repaired in all haste to Joinville, to urge the duke of Guise at once to take up arms with the view of extorting an edict abolishing the Reformed worship, and recognising the cardinal de Bourbon as the heir to the crown. 'The reign of the said cardinal,' he added, 'will be brief, and it will be the bringing in of a glorious orthodox dynasty.' Excited by these considerations, the duke of Guise was induced to take immediate measures for commencing the first campaign of the League. Levies were summoned from foreign countries, and arrangements for a general rising were made with many of the great nobles, including the queen's brother, the duc de Mercœur. 'These Guises,' said the Spanish ambassador, 'have won the favour of the people that it is a common thing to hear individuals remark that they would rather serve them than the king.'

The first measures of the confederates were rapid. They advanced towards Paris, taking possession of the towns which resisted them, and on the 2nd of April the duke of Guise conducted the cardinal de Bourbon in triumph to Chalons-sur-Marne, the
Henry III.

proud banner of the Guises, with its blazonry of young eagles and its suggestive motto 'Chacun à son tour' (‘Everyone in his turn’), being borne before the credulous old man, who fully believed that France had risen for his cause.

Henry was not without support. The king of Navarre offered troops and his own services. The duc d'Epernon, at the head of a gallant body of young nobles, defeated several detachments of Leaguers. The Huguenots were marshalling their forces to fight, but Henry had no spirit, no resolution. When the rumour was circulating that the duke of Guise was not averse to an accommodation, but that he required marks of favour for the Roman Catholics, Henry appealed for advice to the queen mother, and Catherine sighed, wept, and murmured her favourite word, 'negotiation.'

At Nemours, on the 20th of June, a treaty was signed, and an edict issued by which all former edicts in favour of the Huguenots were revoked; they were declared incapable of inheriting lands or dignities, or of holding any office in the kingdom. The position of the cardinal de Bourbon was left undefined, but the most important offices were given to the Guises.

'The treaty,' says a contemporary, 'was miserable and ignominious. The king was on foot, the League on horseback, and his majesty's sack' (alluding to a penitential garb worn by the king on a public occasion two years before) 'was not, like the cuirasses of the Leaguers, proof against hard blows.'

The princes of Lorraine insisted that the king should present the edict to the parliament for registration. The queen mother, suffering greatly from gout, and threatened with an attack of pleurisy, retired to the country, and Henry had only the support of his two favourites. The haughty Epernon had formerly permitted the royal princes to address him bareheaded whilst he himself remained covered. Now so changed was his manner that it was said by the courtiers, 'The duc d'Epernon never before knew where to seek his hat; now he has fortunately found it.'

On the day of registration the king appeared before the parliament, accompanied by a brilliant suite, but he looked pale and harassed, and his words were few. He sat with compressed lips, and was evidently bitterly feeling his humiliation. 'Mark well,' he said to the cardinal de Guise, as he afterwards descended from his coach in the courtyard of the Louvre, 'against my conscience, but most cordially, I gave my Edict of Pacification of Poitiers to the Huguenots. To-day I have revoked it, but most reluctantly, for I see that the revocation will be the ruin of my kingdom.'

The duke of Guise soon after entered Paris, with a cavalcade of six or seven hundred horsemen, and after a private interview with the king at the Louvre accompanied him to hear vespers in the
chapels of the Hôtel de Bourbon. Henry's state of mind under these circumstances may be gathered from the fact that he entered upon a course of such extravagant fasting and penance that the Pope was compelled to send a special envoy to France to bid him desist.

Henry of Navarre now treated the duke of Guise as a rival claimant to the throne, and sending his glove to him, defied him to mortal combat, so that their respective dissensions might be at once decided. The challenge was courteously declined, the duke stating that he fought only for the church, and had no personal quarrel with the king of Navarre, and the latter then put forth a declaration showing the injustice of the edict of Nemours, whilst he set on foot measures for obtaining the assistance of all the Protestant princes of Europe.

The war of the three Henrys, as it was called, now began in earnest, and very ruinous it was to the nation. Paris fell into the hands of a faction calling itself 'La Ligue des Seize,' or the League of the Sixteen Sections into which the city was at that time divided. Its originator is said to have been an opulent citizen who really had it at heart to oppose the universal corruption; but it soon fell under the evil influence of the duke of Guise, and was especially supported by the duchesse de Montpensier, his sister. Clever, fascinating in manner, but utterly devoid of principle, madame de Montpensier ever since her husband's death had devoted herself to political intrigues. Her moods were variable, her satire was pitiless, and (what especially excited the wondering alarm of the extravagant court) she was so quick in arithmetic that she could detect almost at a glance any flaw in the royal financial reports. Her very recklessness of the ordinary restraints of life gave her power, and with such an adherent the power of the 'Ligue des Seize' greatly increased.

In the beginning of 1587 news reached Paris from England which still further aroused the popular feeling for the Guise family. In consequence of a detected conspiracy of the Roman Catholics against the life of Elizabeth of England, in which Mary Stuart was said to have taken part, the beautiful and unhappy queen of Scotland had been condemned to death and executed. It was popularly believed in Paris that the king had abetted the sentence, and the groundless suspicion gave a fresh impetus to the general disaffection. Taking advantage of this, madame de Montpensier and her allies of the Seize formed a project to seize the king on his return from the fair at St. Germain, and shut him up in a little turret chamber of a house in the Rue St. Antoine until the Seize had determined what should next be done with him. An assault on the Louvre, the Bastille, and the arsenal was to follow. The plot was imparted to the duke of Mayenne, but not to the duke of Guise. Before it could be carried out it was treacherously betrayed. There was no evidence to bring forward,
III.

COMTESSE DE BOUCHAGE—ADVANCE OF GERMAN ARMY.

and no direct notice could therefore be taken of it, but the duc de
Layenne was permitted, at his own request, to leave Paris.

The duke of Guise gave vent to a transport of passion when
he heard of the contemplated enterprise, and sent a message to the
parlement of the Seize, telling them that for the future they might manage
their own affairs, for he would have nothing to do with them, and the
Paris Leaguers in alarm humbly craved his forgiveness, and sent him
handsome contributions towards the expenses of the war. He also
harshly reproved his sister, asking her sarcastically how she had in-
 tended to proceed, having once got the king into the turret chamber
of St. Antoine.

About this time the king seemed much touched by the death, at the
age of twenty, of the comtesse de Bouchage, the sister-in-law of the
duc de Joyeuse. Though so young, madame de Bouchage, appalled by
the wickedness of the court, had retired from it and devoted herself to works of charity. Henry so reverenced her that he would
sometimes kneel to kiss the hem of her robe, and after listening to her
shortsermons he would weep convulsively and shut himself up for
hours in his oratory. For eleven days he and the court mourned for her
death; then gaieties recommenced, the only signs of the king’s grief
being that he wore at his girdle a scourage, a chaplet of death’s-heads,
and little figures of saints in gold. But the festivities were soon
stopped by the intelligence that a German army in aid of the
Huguenots was pouring down on the fertile plains of Champagne, and
its sword and fire opening a way to the Loire, whilst the king of
Navarre, Condé, Turenne, and a crowd of noble Huguenot leaders
were prepared to effect a junction with them.

The king was in the utmost consternation. The treasonable
menacing speeches of the clergy connected with the League
rousing the populace to fury, and under the windows of the
royal palace the mob shouted for the heads of Henry of Navarre and his
protector the duc d’Epernon.

The latter was now all-powerful with Henry, for the attractions of the
court had become less to the duc de Joyeuse since the death
of the comtesse de Bouchage and her husband’s retirement into a
monastery, whilst the jests of the king upon his insignificant services
bound him to the quick. He resolved now to distinguish himself or die in the attempt. At the head of one of the three great
columns of the royal army he advanced into Poitou to prevent the
approach of the king of Navarre and the German auxiliaries.

A plain about half a league from Contras lie confronted the
Huguenots. The duc de Joyeuse watched the latter from a distance
while he was listening to an address made to them by the king of
Navarre. When it ended all knelt in prayer. ‘Look,’ exclaimed the
king’s aide-de-camp, ‘look; the Huguenot traitors are already
They tremble.’ ‘Monseigneur,’ was the reply, ‘these
Huguenots choose now to appear humble and sanctified. When we come to the charge we shall find them devils with the courage of lions.

Between seven and eight o'clock on the following morning, the 10th of October, 1587, the armies formed in battle array. "Cousins," cried the king of Navarre to Henri de Condé and the comte de Soissons, "I have only to remind you that you belong to the blood of the Bourbons; 1 and by the help of God I will show you to-day that mine is the elder branch," and leading his men forward he routed and dispersed the royal army in the short space of three-quarters of an hour. The duc de Joyeuse was desperately wounded; yet he still attempted to rally his troops, but being unhorsed for the third time, he was taken prisoner and shot in cold blood by two Huguenot soldiers.

The king of Navarre, left master of the field, commanded a muster of his victorious army, and, after giving public thanks to God for this signal victory, returned to Coutras, whither the body of the duc de Joyeuse had been carried and laid on a table in the lower hall of the house in which the king was to dine. Henry went to the hall, and putting back the long locks of fair hair dabbled with blood, which streamed over the face of the young duke, shed tears of regret for his memory, and commanded that the body should be embalmed and taken to Paris, or wherever the king might direct.

His generosity and sympathy were easily touched, but so also were his less praiseworthy feelings. After the victory of Coutras he hurried back to Bearn to the fascinating Corisande, comtesse de Grammont, who was for the time the reigning favourite. It was a grave fault never retrieved. Not a single impediment lay in the way of the junction of the Huguenot forces and the Germans. Money was plentiful, and an English fleet laden with ammunition lay in the barbour of La Rochelle; but the departure of the leader left a free course for the plans of the enemy. The duc of Guise took every advantage of it, and his successes, though not striking, were important, as they obliged the German auxiliaries to retire.

The sudden death of the prince de Condé in March 1588, under circumstances giving rise to grave suspicions of poison, was also a grievous loss to the Huguenot cause. Henry of Navarre exclaimed that he had lost his right arm, and even the duke of Guise appeared to mourn for a prince with whom he had once been intimately associated. The event was the more startling from the fact that the princesse de Condé was accused of having participated in the crime, and in consequence imprisoned. The accusation was, however, never proved, and after seven dreary years the unfortunate princess was set at liberty.

1 Henri de Condé's father was the second brother of Antoine of Navarre. The father of the comte de Soissons was Antoine's youngest brother.
A cavilling correspondence was all this time kept up between the king and the Guise faction, whose demands Henry refused to grant, and the plots of the Leaguers, and the infatuation of the king for the arrogant Epernon, more and more widened the breach.

In the beginning of May a rumour reached the court that the duke of Guise intended to visit Paris. The king dreading the consequences, sent to him to beg that he would give up any such idea, but on Monday, the 9th of May, the duke, at midday, rode into the capital, hiding his face, however, in his cloak until he reached the Rue St. Denis, when he cast it from him and boldly showed himself to the people.

Catherine de' Medici, who was residing at the Hôtel de Soissons, was just then resting on a couch, whilst her dwarf Majosky stood at the window entertaining her with jokes at the expense of the people passing below. Suddenly Majosky called out that M. de Guise was alighting at the palace gate. Catherine reprimanded him for falsehood, but 'vivas' from without confirmed his assertion, and almost immediately afterwards the duke entered and advanced humbly to kiss her majesty's hand. Catherine bade him welcome, though she added, 'Monseigneur, this pleasure would have been increased tenfold had you obeyed your sovereign's command.' A conference ensued, and the king was sent for. The cries of 'Long live Guise!' 'Long live the pillar of the church!' had reached him as he sat at the council-board, and burying his face in his hands he had given way to a burst of indignation. When the message came from Catherine he passionately refused to go to her palace, and with withering sarcasm ordered the duke of Guise to be informed that the king waited to receive his homage.

The Swiss archers were ranged on the outside of the Louvre, the bodyguard was drawn up in the hall, and Henry prepared to receive his formidable enemy in the apartment of queen Louise, to whom he had lately been reconciled.

Catherine and the duke set forth for the Louvre together, the queen in an open sedan chair, and the duke walking by her side, erect, bearded, and with smiling courtesy acknowledging the plaudits of the citizens; but when he drew near the Louvre he paused and exclaimed, 'Gentlemen, it is enough; it is too much. Cry now, 'Long live the king!' ''

The Louvre looked gloomy and silent. The stern faces of the officers in command of the guard seemed for a moment to awaken the duke to a sense of his imprudence. He hesitated, but quickly went on, and was ushered with Catherine into the presence of queen Louise.

The king was in the adjoining apartment, and at that very moment giving instructions for the assassination of his enemy.
he entered the queen's room, Louise, who was ill and lying on her bed, was talking with Catherine in low and rapid tones. The duke of Guise, standing in the embrasure of a window, had begun a conversation with the princess Christine.

On the king's appearance Guise advanced and bowed profoundly. 'What brings you here? I ordered you not to come,' was the king's angry greeting. 'Sire,' replied the duke, 'I am here to offer my humble services to your majesty in suppressing the cabals of the capital.' Henry burst forth in a torrent of indignant complaints, till the queen mother interposed, and drawing him to a window warned him that any hasty vengeance would ruin his cause. The duke of Guise was standing by queen Louise and talking to her, when suddenly (it seems probable upon some hint from the young queen) he craved permission to retire. Henry hesitated, but Catherine gave the consent, and laying her hand on the king's arm kept him engaged in conversation with her till the duke had managed to retreat. She then obtained a promise from Henry that he would sanction no act of violence.

For the moment the duke was safe, but the king's distrust caused an order to be issued to the sheriffs of Paris to search houses and send out of the city all persons who failed to give a satisfactory reason for their residence. Madame de Montpensier instantly drew up placards, which the next morning were posted all over the city, stating that the king intended to hang or behead all the popular leaders; and the officers employed to make the required investigations were pelted in the streets and obliged to retire. The king then gave directions that certain divisions of the Swiss troops in the neighbourhood should be brought into the capital. Monsieur d'O, a nobleman high in the king's confidence, also received orders to introduce some of the French regiments encamped without the walls.

The duke of Guise was keeping himself carefully in the background. The gates of the large, gloomy Hôtel de Guise were strongly barred, and, except that occasionally some person glided through the narrow wicket leading into the court, no appearance of interest in what was passing without was visible.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 12th of May, when the sound of drums and fifes announced that the troops were taking possession of the city, and when the populace, urged on by the Seize leaders, were throwing up barricades of paving-stones, rafters, carts, and barrels to prevent their advance, the duke of Guise, just wakened from sleep, appeared at a window, in a white satin dressing-gown, and calmly enquired what was going on. The answer came in the form of shouts of 'Arm! arm!' and the clamour of the tocsin in every parish.

About twelve o'clock the duke, accompanied by the archbishop of Lyons, paraded the street in which his hôtel stood, and which
II.

A filled with people, who greeted him with shouts of applause. A glance of the duke's eye and his erect demeanour showed confidence and satisfaction. He was evidently no longer solicitous for his own safety, but rather concerting the way to shield his reputation, and eventually deliver the troops from the fury of a populace, for the contest had now begun in earnest. When the dukes endeavoured to take possession of the Place St. Antoine and the Place Maubert, they were attacked furiously and compelled to surrender, and the wild mob then rushed on to the Louvre.

When intelligence of the insurrection reached Catherine de' Medici she earnestly entreated the king to show himself on horseback to the people and command their dispersion; but Henry, pale and faint, peremptorily declined, not from personal cowardice, but because he deemed the appeal likely to be unsuccessful. The tumult seemed nearer and nearer, and the king's orders were incoherent. At one moment he wished the palace to be defended, the next he gave a faltering command that the due d'Epernon should send for. Catherine remained for a while in silent meditation. Then turning to marshal Biron, she said, 'Go to the duke of Tuscany and command him, in the king's name, to suppress the insurrection and deliver his majesty's troops.'

The humiliation was bitter, but there was no alternative, and de Biron presented himself at the Hôtel de Guise.

The duke received him with grave courtesy. 'He could not,' said, 'restrain the people. The king's bad advisers, especially M. de', were responsible for the tumult.' Biron expostulated. The duke for some time persisted in his refusal; but at length, feeling that only too glad to take the important position of mediator between the sovereign and his people, he threw a cloak over his white satin doublet, and, with an escort of four gentlemen on horseback and two pages, issued forth, accompanied by marshal Biron.

They reached the Place de Grève. The Swiss troops were on their knees, disarmed, the wild mob surging around them. The king greeted the duke. 'Stop, gentlemen,' he exclaimed. 'You in me. Cry, 'Long live the king!' and he rode into the centre of the place. A pause in the tumult followed, as the people listened to the duke's entreaty that they would, in gratitude for their own freedom, allow the Swiss to depart. Acclamations of assent followed, and the troops, marching in file through the barricade, quitted the city. Before the close of the day Paris was completely in the hands of the duke of Guise and the League.

Catherine meanwhile resolved to hold a conference with the king at his own hôtel. About five o'clock in the afternoon she was carried slowly through the streets in her open sedan, being obliged
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Henry III.

to wait at every barricade whilst a passage was made for her and again blocked up; but the delay was borne quietly, Catherine, whilst it lasted, questioning with the greatest coolness certain individuals amongst the mob of insurgents who surrounded her. The duke of Guise waited at the entrance of his palace to hand the queen mother from the sedan. Catherine signified her wish for a private interview, and was taken to the duke’s cabinet. An angry conversation followed. Guise acknowledged that he feared for his own safety, and stated that he would not therefore permit the people to lay down their arms until he was declared lieutenant-general of the kingdom. He insisted also that the king of Navarre should be pronounced incapable of the succession; that certain persons, whom he named—amongst them marshal Biron and M. d’O—should be banished from the court; that the taxes should be lessened, and the war against the heretics diligently prosecuted.

‘Monseigneur,’ exclaimed Catherine indignantly, ‘is it your intent to take the crown from the head of the king, my son!’ ‘Madame,’ was the reply, ‘the medicine may be bitter, but it will in the end be salutary;’ and Catherine was compelled to end the unsatisfactory interview, and was carried back in her sedan through the now dark streets to the Louvre.

Hungry and weary were the inmates of the palace that night. In the panic of the day no provisions had been taken in, and any attempt to pass the barricades to procure them would have been death. At dawn the king, summoning his council, announced his intention to quit Paris whilst it was still possible. Catherine feigned opposition, and Henry then gave her unlimited authority to treat with the duke. Catherine once more, therefore, visited the Hôtel de Guise. The duke was inexorable in regard to the terms proposed, and, under pretence of needing the royal permission to sign the agreement, Catherine sent a private message to Henry, and afterwards began to discuss the separate articles, making slight objections, with the greatest seeming candour and goodwill. Thus the king had time to make all his preparations for the departure which had been previously resolved upon. With a light cane in his hand, and followed by a troop of dogs, he boldly quitted the Louvre, and walked leisurely to a gate opening into the Tuileries palace, the queen mother’s usual residence, where he was comparatively safe. But on receiving Catherine’s message he ordered his coach to be made ready. Whilst the horses were being harnessed he rested with folded arms against a low wall and wept bitterly, reproaching the Parisians for ingratitude, and then entering the carriage he and the duc de Longueville, with the duc de Montpensier, drove rapidly out of the courtyard and took the road to Chartres. A crowd of Royalists and nobles followed his example
and dashed through the Porte Neuve. Horses and conveyances were hired for the occasion at fabulous prices. Everyone took the vehicle or the animal which soonest presented itself. One nobleman saddled with his own hands a fiery steed from the royal stables, and was thrown several times; another mounted a mule, without saddle or bridle, guiding the animal by the help of a pair of spurs, which Catherine's housekeeper manufactured for him out of the branch of a tree. The pompous chancellor Cheverny bestrode a wretched hack, not worth twenty shillings; and as he ambled up to the royal coach to offer his condolence to the king, Henry fell back in the carriage in a convulsion of laughter, and from that time felt his spirits revive.

Catherine, in the meantime, kept the duke of Guise engaged in a discussion till nearly six o'clock in the evening. Suddenly a gentleman rushed into the room and whispered a few words to the duke, who immediately turned to the queen mother, exclaiming in a menacing voice, 'Madame, you have betrayed me. The king has quitted Paris.' Without the slightest change of countenance Catherine replied that 'she did not believe the report, but it was possibly true. She would, therefore, herself go back to the Louvre.' The duke hesitated for a few seconds, but finally escorted her to her sedan. Smilingly the queen stepped into it and repassed the barricades, the angry mob asking rough questions and giving rough warnings, to which Catherine replied with her usual courteous presence of mind. Once more at the desolate Louvre, where she announced that she meant for the present to take up her abode, she became the soul of everything. Guards were stationed and sentinels posted. Queen Louise was visited and comforted, and the mother and sister of the duke of Guise were summoned to attend upon her, and thus became, as it were, hostages for the duke's conduct.

So far she was entire mistress of the occasion, and Guise was placed in a most embarrassing position, between the crown and the people.

The League having taken possession of Paris, placed the government of the city in the hands of their own friends. The barricades were removed from the streets, and an appearance of order was restored to the capital. But there was no recognised head, and the duke did not choose to commit himself so far as to assume the position. On the other hand the throne was actually within his reach, but apparently he dreaded to grasp it. In this interim negotiations were again proposed by Catherine, and being entered into by Guise, were finally accepted by the king, though he still cherished inextinguishable hatred in his heart.

The demands of the Leaguers included the exile of the duc d'Epernon and his kindred; and the news that Epernon was about to
appear at Chartres at the head of 500 men was therefore no gratifying intelligence. The hitherto fortunate favourite had been fighting against the rebel Huguenots during the late events in Paris. The king's flight might have forewarned him of his own downfall, but he could scarcely have been prepared for its suddenness. He was received so cordially by the king that he haughtily left the court and repaired to Angoulême, where he threw himself into the castle, and prepared by the help of the king of Navarre to defend it against all his enemies.

One great obstacle to union being thus removed, the negotiations proceeded rapidly. The king had especial reason for desiring their completion. The great armada had just been despatched by Philip II. for the invasion of England; its success was considered certain, and Philip, once master of England, would assuredly use his increased power to support the Guises. Aided by Spain, the duke would be able at any moment to make himself king; and, haunted by this dread, Henry easily agreed to the Edict of Union, the articles of which were precisely similar to those which the duke of Guise had proposed to Catherine on the Day of the Barricades. To complete his concessions he received the duke of Guise at Chartres, and invited him to a banquet. 'Whom shall we pledge, cousin?' asked the king during the feast, taking up a cup of wine. 'It is for your majesty to decide,' was the reply. 'To our good friends the Huguenots!' exclaimed Henry. 'It is well said, sire,' answered Guise hastily. 'But,' continued the king, 'I was going to add—the health of the noble barricaders of Paris! We certainly must not forget them.' The duke smiled, but his countenance showed his displeasure.

The news of the destruction of the armada arrived whilst Henry was still at Chartres, and he may then have regretted his easy compliance with the demands of the Leaguers. Certain it is that he refused to show his confidence in the Parisians by returning to the capital, but in the beginning of the month of October repaired to Blois, where the court, more brilliant even than in the days of Francis I., was to be present at the opening of the States-General. Festivities also were to take place on the marriage of the princess Christine of Lorraine with the grand duke of Tuscany. The Guises mustered in overwhelming numbers. Madame de Montpensier, universally acknowledged as queen of the League, wandered through the splendid rooms, recklessly making enemies by her satire, and not hesitating to display before the court a pair of golden scissors hanging from her girdle, which she said she wore in order to give

1 This was the first time that barricades were constructed on the occasion of a popular insurrection in Paris.
the king the tounure when he had abdicated. Pale, sorrowful, and timid, queen Louise stood apart from her ladies, her only friend being her sister Marguerite, the widowed duchesse de Joyeuse, whilst Catherine de' Medici, splendidly dressed and concealing her failing health by her unequalled majesty and tact, moved from one to the other, speaking soft words and striving to set aside prejudice, and was greeted with respectful deference alike by Royalists and Leaguers.

The 16th day of October was fixed for the first general meeting of the assembly. A throne, gorgeously decorated, was placed on a magnificent dais at one end of the hall, and in front of the throne, with his back to the king and facing the deputies, sat the duke of Guise as lord high steward.

In his opening speech the king professed his devout adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, and declared that he desired no mausoleum grander than one raised on the ruins of heresy. ‘Some of the greatest princes of my realm,’ he added, ‘have entered into unlawful leagues, but I desire to obliterate the past, and for this reason, and to relieve the natural fears of many of my loving subjects that after my death they may fall into the hands of a heretic prince, I have caused this august assembly to be called together.’

The sentence in the royal speech beginning with the words, ‘Some of the greatest princes of my realm,’ gave deadly offence to the duke of Guise and the leaders of the League, and they boldly issued an order to the printers not to distribute the speech. The archbishop of Lyons, in an interview with the king, demanded the erasure of the obnoxious passages, declaring that if this were not conceded the majority of the members of the States-General would quit Blois.

Henry listened, and waved his hand in token of dismissal, and the archbishop retired in furious indignation. The queen mother now urged her son to yield, but for a long time the king resisted; suddenly, however, summoning the duke, the cardinal de Guise, and the archbishop of Lyons, he declared himself willing to concede the point, and by the flickering light of a single wax taper, hastily brought by a page, on account of a dense fog which had subsisted more or less throughout the day, he signed his retraction, and handing the document significantly to the duke of Guise, dismissed him and his friends. An attempt was now made to force upon the king a resolution declaring the king of Navarre excommunicate and incapable of succeeding to the crown of France. The duke of Guise would then have been heir presumptive, and Henry absolutely refused to sanction it. The disappointed duke revenged himself through the medium of the finances.

On the 2nd of December the States decreed that a large reduction in the taxes was necessary for the relief of the people. The
king was in despair. He was bound by the Edict of Union to carry on the Huguenot war, yet the States desired to take from him the means. Three times during the same day did the archbishop of Lyons wait upon him, by the command of the assembly, to insist on the measure, and at length, weary of resistance and influenced by the advice of his mother, Henry signed it. On the following day a Te Deum was chanted in the church of St. Sauveur, and there, seated beneath a canopy of state, his head buried in his hands, the king, who had been specially requested to be present, was compelled to listen to a fierce vulgar harangue, in which his friends were denounced as harpies and thieves, and coarse jests were made upon them, which convulsed the assembly with laughter, imperfectly suppressed. Henry bore the insult with dignity; but from that hour the fate of the duke of Guise was decided.

* It is strange that the duke should have been so little aware of his danger, but from the beginning his conduct had presented a singular mixture of courage, audacity, and imprudence. The documents relating to this stormy period unanimously agree in imputing to him treasonable and even murderous designs, and Henry, fully aware of them, prepared to circumvent them with the dissimulation and indifference to the means used which marked his character. Every day brought fresh aggravations on both sides. A dispute arose between the king and the duke as to the office of governor of Orleans; the duke claimed the appointment as his right, but Henry insisted on giving the office to one of his own friends. At vespers, on the day the appointment was made, the duke, instead of joining in the service, was observed by the king to be reading a small pamphlet. 'You are always so very devout, mon cousin,' said Henry sarcastically as they quitting the chapel. 'Excuse me, sire,' replied the duke. 'I have been reading a pamphlet, written by a Huguenot, on the condition of France. I advise you, sire, to read it yourself.' It was a virulent libel, and the king, understanding well what the courtiers called the 'amusing maliciousness' of M. de Guise, coldly declined. These things were not likely to lessen Henry's hatred.

His fears also were worked upon by an intimation that the duke sought his life. The duchesse d'Aumale one morning entered the queen's salon, dressed in mourning robes, and kneeling down appeared to be absorbed in prayer. Several ladies enquired why she chose such a place for her devotions. The duchess replied that she was praying Heaven to grant her an interview with the king: she had momentous things to confide to him. The interview was granted, and the duchess gave Henry information as to the designs of the duke, urging him to take precautions. Ominous debates between the king and his intimate friends followed. Henry seems never to have fully opened his
schemes to his mother, but Catherine knew that some great blow was
mediated, and entreated him in general terms to hasten it. 'You
will ruin everything by delay,' she said. 'Arrange all so well that
you may not be again taken in as you were at the Barricades of
Paris.' The advice was only too acceptable. The difficulty lay in
devising the opportunity to act upon it.

On ordinary occasions the duke was always accompanied by his
gentlemen, but when a royal council was called the noblemen who
attended it left their followers at the foot of the staircase leading
from the courtyard of the castle to the hall in which the meeting
was held. The session of a council to which the duke should be
summoned would therefore, it was thought, afford an opportunity
for the murder. On the evening of the 22nd of December the duke
found on his table several anonymous and warning notes. 'Be on
your guard,' was written on one; 'a dangerous attempt is about to
be made on your life.' He took a pencil and wrote beneath the
warning, 'They would not dare,' and contemptuously tossed the
paper under the table. Yet the next morning, depressed and un-
easy, he sought a conference with some of the chief members of the
League, and told them of the cautions he had received. 'Might
it not be better to withdraw to Orleans? The idea was greatly
disapproved. 'He who forsakes his party ruins it,' said the arch-
bishop of Lyons. 'The king is a fool, a tyrant, and mad; and we
trust him as if we feared him,' exclaimed another; and it was decided
that the duke should remain at Blois.

The king in the meantime passed the day as usual, issuing in the
morning a programme for the devout celebration of Christmas week,
and giving up the afternoon to business, in order, as he said, that his
devotional exercises during the coming festival might not be inter-
rupted. At nine o'clock in the evening he sent for Larchant, the
captain of the Scotch guard, and commanded that at seven the next
morning the men of the regiment should be drawn up in the cour-
yard of the castle, and be directed to entreat the duke of Guise, as
he passed to the council, which was to be held early, to petition the
king for the arrears of their pay. 'I wish,' Henry added, 'at this holy
season, to do a kindness to the poor soldiers, and I know no one at
whose intercession I would more willingly confer the boon than that
of my cousin of Guise.' Lognay, the captain of the Gascon band, was
also sent for and directed to attend the king at five o'clock in the
morning with his soldiers, to escort him to church; and orders were
given that a carriage should be ready at a certain gate at eight
o'clock. These arrangements being made, Henry retired to his private
cabinet, attended by M. de Bellegarde, the chief gentleman of the
chamber. They remained in conversation till midnight. As they
parted the king said, 'Good night, my son. Give orders to DuWaldé
(the chief valet) to awake me at four o'clock, and be ready yourself at that hour.

Catherine slept in the rooms beneath, on the ground floor. Her great size and the sufferings she endured from gout rendered this necessary. She had gone to bed early that night, and Henry's special injunction to the persons in his confidence was to tread softly, lest his mother might be awakened and interpose to save the duke's life.

At four in the morning Du Halde knocked at the outer door of the royal apartments to announce the hour. 'His majesty and the queen are asleep,' was the reply of the queen's waiting-woman. 'Rouse them, or I will knock to awaken them,' exclaimed Du Halde peremptorily. 'What is the matter?' said the king in a feeble voice from the inner chamber. 'Sire, it is M. du Halde, who says that it is four o'clock.' 'Ah! hand me my slippers, my dressing-gown, and my taper; and refusing to answer the queen's questions, the king rose, and taking Du Halde to a little room over his own, turned the key upon him and left him. At five the Gascon band arrived, and each man was conducted separately, with stealthy step, by the king himself, to a large room adjoining that of Du Halde, and all were then safely locked in.

It was now six o'clock—a dark, cold, dismal morning, the rain pouring in torrents. The lords whom Henry had invited the previous evening assembled in the king's cabinet, which was lighted by wax tapers. They looked pale and anxious, but the king as he entered seemed cheerful, though restless. He addressed them shortly, recapitulating the treasons of the duke of Guise, expressing his full determination to take his life that morning in self-defence, and calling upon them to support him. All declared he had spoken well, and offered him their lives and their swords.

The king then went to the room in which he had locked up the Gascons, and spoke to them as he had spoken to his nobles, demanding of them as he concluded whether they would not promise to avenge his wrongs.

A shout of assent was the answer. The king placed his finger on his lips, enjoining silence; he then led the Gascons from the chamber, placed twelve in the outer cabinet looking on the courtyard of the castle, eight in the ante-chamber, and the remainder in the adjoining Galerie des Ceris. After this he retired to his private cabinet to await the arrival of the privy councillors. By this time Henry was extremely agitated; his face was very pale, and every now and then he raised the tapestry separating the inner and outer cabinets, and exhorted the Gascons to remember the courage of M. de Guise, and not to allow themselves to be wounded. 'I should be so sorry for it,' he added in his weak terror, which was by no means
Henry III.

shared by the leader of the Gascons, who sternly sat with folded arms on a coffin opposite the door.

The duke of Guise was not left without a warning. At three o'clock in the morning his uncle, the duc d'Elbeuf, crept stealthily to his room to repeat the ominous rumours which were afloat; but Guise derided them. 'The king,' he said, 'dared not attempt ought against his life.' Nevertheless he had made up his mind to quit Blois that very day. He fell asleep, and his gentlemen refused to arouse him until a message was sent desiring his presence at the council. Then he rose hastily and sallied forth.

The Scotch guards were in the courtyard. On such an inconsiderate morning this was suspicious. 'Why are you here, my friends?' asked the duke. 'Monseigneur,' replied Larchant, 'we wish to petition for the arrears of our pay.' The duke gravely promised to further the request and passed on into the castle. He found the nobles who had arrived conversing together without any sign of the usual formalities of a council. The archbishop of Lyons, having his suspicions strongly roused, asked where the king was going on such a day. 'He is going into retreat as usual,' was the duke's reply, made in a tone of easy indifference. Presently, finding that he had forgotten his handkerchief, the duke requested one of the attendants to see if any of his people waited without. His private secretary was there, and went to fetch the handkerchief, but on his return he was stopped by armed sentinels. Instantly apprehending danger, he rushed across the quadrangle to the apartment of the duchesse de Nemours, and entreated her to rise and go to the queen mother, for her son's life was in danger. The words were scarcely spoken when a body of Swiss soldiers came up, turned the secretary into the court, and placed the duchess in arrest in her own room.

By this time the preparations for the intended crime were completed, and Revol, Henry's secretary, was sent to request the duke of Guise to come and speak to the king in the old audience-chamber. Revol came back saying that the Gascons would not let him pass.

'How pale you look!' exclaimed Henry. 'You will spoil everything. Rub your cheeks, Revol; rub your cheeks;' and lifting the tapestry he ordered the Gascons to allow the secretary to go through the apartment.

The nobles in the council chamber sat round a table, listening to the reading of a paper by the superintendent of finance. Revol went up to the duke and in a low voice said that the king asked for him. The duke rose, bowed graciously to the cardinal de Vendôme, and passed into the ante-room, the door behind him being immediately closed by one of the Gascons. He then approached the tapestry curtain, but before raising it he turned to look at the sullen
band of Gascons who occupied the ante-chamber. The expression of their countenances seemed to awake his apprehension, and one of the Gascons, observing the momentary hesitation, and thinking that he was about to draw his sword, rushed forward and struck his poniard into the duke's heart, exclaiming, 'Traitor, thus shalt thou die!' Another seized him round the legs to drag him to the ground. A third, from behind, dealt him a mortal wound in the throat. 'My friends, my friends, what treachery! Have mercy!' The unhappy duke's utterance was stopped by a flow of blood from the mouth, yet in his great strength, though blinded by the blood which poured down his face from a wound in the forehead, he dragged his assassins across the apartment. Lognac, the Gascon captain, held forth the scabbard of his sword, and the duke, not seeing it, stumbled and fell to the ground, faintly breathing forth the words, 'My God! my God! have pity upon me!' As he lay in his death-gasp the king slowly raised the tapestry screen and came forth. The duke still breathed, and Henry for some instants stood looking at him with savage exultation gleaming in his eyes. 'Mon Dieu, qu'il est grand!' was all he said, and slowly he retreated to the inner chamber. Reveled, by the king's command, began to search the duke's person for papers. A spasm convulsed the body of the dying man. 'Monseigneur,' said the secretary earnestly, 'I beseech you, while yet there is time, ask pardon of the Almighty and of the king.' The lips of the duke moved and the words 'My sins, my sins' were audible. Then heaving a sigh he expired.

In less than five minutes the wicked work was done. The fate of the duke was guessed in the council chamber. The archbishop of Lyons rushed to the door of the ante-room, but could not open it. The cardinal de Guise, exclaiming, 'They are doing violence to my brother!' strove to escape by an opposite door. Both were seized and guarded by the soldiers who poured into the apartment. The remainder of the councillors were summoned to the presence of the king.

Henry stood in the middle of the ante-chamber near the body of the duke, now partly covered with a Turkey rug. 'At last I am a king!' he exclaimed, sternly addressing the cardinal de Vendôme. 'Behold, monseigneur, what he may expect who presumes to usurp my authority;' and the cardinal was conveyed from the council chamber, in company with the archbishop of Lyons, closely guarded. The old cardinal de Bourbon, who had been arrested in his bed, was then waited for. He appeared trembling and weeping. 'Fool, knave, and puppet, do you recognise that?' asked Henry, pointing to the body of Guise. 'Imbecile! but for your age I would treat you the same.' He turned away, and the cardinal de Bourbon was taken to his chamber under a guard.
The duke and duchess of Nemours, the duc d'Elbeuf, the prince de Joinville, and the duchesse d'Almale had, during the interval, been arrested. The duchesse de Montpensier, most fortunately for herself, had left the castle, for the king was heard to declare that she should pay for her treason with her life.

The president of the third order of the States-General, and several of the most influential members, were likewise seized and imprisoned.

Henry having thus secured the persons of those whom he considered his greatest enemies, despatched a warrant for the arrest of the duc de Mayenne, and sent a secretary of state to the Pope's legate, Morosini, whose support it was all-important to him to obtain, requesting that the legate would meet him at mass in the church of St. Sauveur at midday.

He then prepared to visit his mother. Catherine was in bed, whilst a bishop was reading to her from his missal. "Madame," said the king, "I have no longer a rival. I have caused Guise to be slain. To-day I reign. " My son," replied Catherine, greatly agitated, "God grant that your anticipations may be realised, and that your act may prosper in its results." Little more was said. Catherine was in much pain, and spoke with difficulty, and Henry, kissing her hand, repaired to the church to meet the legate, to whom he gave the assurance that the death of the duke had been the punishment of his treason. Morosini seemed for the moment to be satisfied. He only entreated that no real harm might befall the cardinal de Guise and the archbishop of Lyons. The reply was evasive, as well it might be.

At eight o'clock the following morning the cardinal was taken into a gallery where four soldiers were stationed, and told to prepare for death. He knelt with his face towards a recess in the wall, and prayed earnestly, and whilst thus engaged one of the soldiers plunged his sword into his body.

The life of the archbishop was saved at the intercession of his brother-in-law, but he was condemned to perpetual captivity.

The consternation of the members of the League in Paris when intelligence reached them of the murder of the duke of Guise was excessive. The duchesse de Montpensier, who was suffering from lameness, lay on her couch for some minutes motionless and livid, and then with cries of despair tore her hair, cursed the tyrant, and made a vain effort to rise and rush through the streets and denounce the deed. In an interview with some of the chief members of the Council of the Seize she vehemently urged them to avenge the cruel perfidy of the king, and vowed that her own life should be devoted to that object, and a resolution was in consequence adopted to send immediately for the duc de Mayenne and place him in the position of his murdered brother.
Mayenne, however, never acted but upon mature reflection. He had nothing to gain by civil war and much to lose; and though he accepted the position proposed to him, he showed no eagerness for action, but took his journey leisurely to Chalons instead of setting off at once for Paris.

The States-General at Blois were in the meantime completely cowed. Nothing of moment was discussed, for the king's authority was disregarded throughout the country, and Catherine de' Medici was dying. From the fatal 24th of December her strength had rapidly given way, and she took no part in politics except to intercede for the prisoners and obtain the liberation of the duchesse d'Aumale.

On New Year's Day 1589 she visited the cardinal de Bourbon in his prison chamber. Both wept freely at the meeting, and Catherine strove to utter cheering words, but the old cardinal, in a fit of childish rage, accused her of having intentionally decayed them all to Blois.

'Hearken, monseigneur,' said the queen. 'I am innocent of having contrived your present position, and may God visit me with His eternal condemnation if I devised that which you reproach me with, or if I assented to it.'

'Oh, madame, madame!' persisted the cardinal, 'it is your doing: you have slain us all!'

Catherine turned pale, as she exclaimed, 'O God! this is too much! Take me away. I have no strength left.' And her attendants carried her back to her chamber, and laid her on the bed from which she was never to rise again.

On the following day, Monday, January 2nd, she made her will, disinheriting Marguerite de Valois for her infamous life. During the whole of Wednesday she lay insensible, and about one o'clock on Thursday, January 6th, she died in the arms of her son, apparently without pain.

A preacher of the Seize party, on the following Sunday, gave a summary of the character of the queen mother. 'This princess,' he said, 'has done much good and much ill; the latter, I fear, predominating. The difficulty is now to decide whether the orthodox ought to pray for the soul of a princess who has so often made league with heresy. It is said, however, that she made an exemplary end, and was not a consenting party to the death of our good princes. Therefore I say, give her the advantage of at least one Pater and one Ave, and much benefit may they do her. Nevertheless follow your own devisings.'

Such was the verdict of a contemporary. In the estimation of posterity it is the doubleness of Catherine's character which is her most repelling trait. She seems to have been as insincere in her vices as she was in her virtues, and though she may not have been
mourning—advice from england—public processions. 381.

monster of iniquity which she has sometimes been described, is, perhaps, no one whose name has been handed down to us as a more universally acknowledged stigma of reprobation. The king showed his grief for his mother’s loss by causing the apartments to be draped with black cloth, spotted with silver. The courtiers wore penitential sacks, and the king took to his and was only roused by the news that the duc de Mayenne gone to Paris, where madame de Montpensier was to meet him. determined then to transport his prisoners to the strong castle of Boise, but on the day of removal the duc de Nemours contrived escape by changing clothes with his valet, and immediately pro- ded to Paris, escorted by the duc d’Aumale.

The members of the States-General were now departing of their accord, and the king had no alternative but to prorogue the nbly, which he did with the most tranquil air, as if perfectly in- rent to the fact that the majority of his subjects were in arms net him. But his alarm was really great, and it was at this crisis a message from the queen of England decided his fortunes. abeth, by her ambassador, lord Stafford, sent him her urgent ce to seek an immediate alliance with Henry of Navarre.

The suggestion was humiliating and fraught with danger, but it Henry’s only hope. The University of the Sorbonne had de- d the French people released from their oaths of fidelity by sovereign’s crimes. The people made an anagram of the king’s e, and turned Henri de Valois into Vilain Hérode, and then de- that they could no longer serve Herod the assassin, whilst ame de Montpensier called upon the Parisians to join in a peni- al procession to avert the wrath of Heaven, and, barefooted, ed in a loose robe, and with her hair streaming over her riders, paraded the streets with a number of ladies in a some- similar garb, arousing the populace to frenzy. This wild excite- continued for more than a month. Persons rose in the night delirious, and walked about the streets with torches, singing es, whilst processions of boys, organised by the clergy, went church to church in the day-time, carrying torches, which they enly dashed on the ground as a sign of the extinction of the l authority. The king was not indeed wholly without help. was enabled to gather some of his friends around him, and joined by the duc d’Epernon with 2,000 men; but such aid wholly insufficient without the support of the Huguenots. depended entirely upon Henry of Navarre, who had been Hly pursuing his conquests whilst his enemies were given up to chy. He had already shown signs of a wish to befriend the, and when the proposal of alliance was made by the interven- of the duchesse d’Angoulême, in a private interview at Châtillon,
the chivalrous prince, touched by his sovereign’s position, declared it an honour to be summoned to defend him. A meeting of reconciliation and friendship was arranged to take place at Plessis-les-Tours. The majority of the Navarrese officers distrusted the king’s sincerity, but Henry was supported in his determination by the duc de Sully, his especial adviser, and Duplessis Mornay, a most influential Huguenot. ’You have done your duty, sire,’ wrote Mornay, when informed of the intended interview; ’a duty, however, which it was not lawful for any of your subjects to prescribe.’

A company of guards accompanied the king of Navarre to Plessis, but the soldiers were left at one of the gates of the town, and Henry, dressed in an olive-green velvet doublet and scarlet cloak, and wearing in his grey cap his celebrated white plume, fastened by a medal of gold, rode into the park of Plessis, attended by only a small retinue.

At the flight of steps leading from the terrace of the castle to the lawn he dismounted, and the king came forward to meet him. A crowd of spectators rushed forward, and the crush was so great that, according to the account given by a person present, their majesties remained for a quarter of an hour within four yards of each other without being able to embrace. When at length they could approach near Henry of Navarre threw himself at the feet of the king, saying that he looked upon this day as the happiest of his life, since he was permitted to offer his service to his good master and sovereign. They then entered the palace, and the king poured forth the history of his wrongs. Tears rolled down the cheeks of Henry of Navarre as he listened, and drawing his sword he threw it ringing at the king’s feet, and swore never to rest until Henry III. should once more reign at the palace of the Louvre.

This alliance between the court and the Huguenots materially changed the aspect of affairs.

The campaign was opened in great force and with a fair prospect of success, as the two kings were able to drive before them the army of the League, under the duc de Mayenne, and to advance nearer and nearer to Paris.

The Pope, Sixtus V., had fallen into a convulsive fit of fury when first informed of the alliance, and the Spanish ambassador and the envoy of Savoy adjured him to withhold absolution from such a flagrant criminal as Henry III.; but the other princes of Italy took the part of the king. When excommunication was threatened, unless the cardinal de Bourbon and the archbishop of Lyons were liberated in three days, they boldly declared the sentence unjust. No help was, however, afforded to the duc de Mayenne, though money was now greatly wanted by the Leaguers. Princesses had given their jewels to the cause, and madame de Nemours had even sacrificed the
superb diamonds which she inherited from her mother, Renée de France, and which had once belonged to Anne of Brittany.

The two kings and their army gradually fought their way to the capital. At Tours a permanent council was established for the government of the kingdom, and the king then conducted queen Louise to the castle of Chinon, where she was to reside whilst the war continued. The queen's affliction at the separation was great; the trials of the last few months had brought her into more intimate companionship with her husband, and when they bade each other farewell the unhappy wife seemed to have a foreboding of the tragedy which was in store for her.

Thirty days of grace had been allowed by Sixtus V. for the required concessions. They passed, and a bull of excommunication was sent into France, and read at the portals of the cathedrals of Meaux, Paris, and Chartres. The assassination of the king from that moment became lawful, and even righteous, in the sight of the Paris clergy, and their opinion was announced from the pulpit.

Amongst the frequenters of the churches was Jacques Clement, a young Dominican priest, ignorant, enthusiastic, and profligate. His gesticulations and cadaverous features attracted the notice of madame de Montpensier. She sent for him frequently, and spoke to him of the greatness in store for the individual who might be chosen to execute the sentence of the church. The young man applied to his Dominican superiors to know whether he might kill the king. They answered by throwing themselves at his feet, and declaring that he was the chosen instrument of God's vengeance. Thus urged and excited, Clement's brain appears to have given way. He fancied that he heard voices in his cell calling upon him to deliver an oppressed people, whilst his ambition and covetousness were stimulated by the promise of lavish rewards from madame de Montpensier, and his fears soothed by the assurance from his superiors that when the blow was struck he would be rendered invisible and borne by angels in safety to his convent.

On the last day of July the royal army, amounting to 38,000 men, encamped at St. Cloud. That same day the king received a mysterious intimation from a lady residing in Paris to admit no stranger to his presence. He mentioned the circumstance in the afternoon to the duchesse de Retz, who came to visit him at the palace, but no further notice was taken of it. Yet the assassin had already arrived, furnished, through madame de Montpensier's efforts, with a safe-conduct, which had been obtained on the pretense that he had a secret of the last importance to communicate to the king. The attorney-general, M. La Guesle, had met him on the road, and understanding that his errand was from one of the principal Royalists of the capital, who had agreed to open the gates
to the king's troops during the first assault, he took upon himself to introduce him to the royal presence.

The interview was, by Henry's direction, fixed for an early hour the following morning, and Clement slept at St. Cloud. At the appointed hour Clement entered the royal apartment and prostrated himself at Henry's feet. 'You are welcome, brother,' said the king. 'What is the news in Paris?' Clement turned to M. La Guesle, who had accompanied him, and begged to be allowed to speak with his majesty in private. The request was bluntly refused, but Henry ordered M. La Guesle and M. de Bellegarde, his first gentleman, to draw back, and sharply commanded the monk to state his errand.

Clement handed him a letter, and as he glanced at its contents the monk drew forth a knife from beneath his dress and stabbed him. 'Ah, my God! the wretch has wounded me!' exclaimed Henry. Drawing out the knife, he struck the assassin twice, and the miserable man fled with a loud cry, and crouched between the beds occupied by the king and the gentlemen who slept in the royal chamber. The body-guard, who on hearing the noise had rushed into the room, now plunged their swords through his body and hurled it from the window into the court below.

La Guesle, in an agony of despair, fell at the king's feet, protesting that he was the most unhappy man living to have introduced the murderer into his master's presence; and Henry fully acknowledged his innocence, and gave it as his special injunction that he should not be molested. He then desired that the king of Navarre should be summoned, and sent for his secretary, that he might dictate a letter to queen Louise. There was hope at first that the king's wound might prove slight, but towards evening alarming symptoms came on. Preparations were made for administering the last rites of the church. The king of Navarre entered at the time, and Henry stretched out his hand to him, saying, 'See, my brother, how my subjects have treated me. Therefore take good heed for your own safety. May my crown flourish on your head. I have commanded all the great officers of the crown to take the oath of allegiance to you.' Then addressing the nobles present, he required them to give him the comfort of witnessing their oath of fidelity to the king of Navarre, his only rightful successor.

Kneeling round the bed of their dying monarch, the nobles took the oath; after which the king, at his own request, was left with only his immediate attendants. About two in the morning he asked for his confessor. 'The hour is near,' he said. 'Pray for me.' He was left for a brief interval with his confessor, and then the priest prepared to administer the Eucharist. But before doing so he turned to the king and said, 'Sire, his Holiness has issued
sentence against your majesty for the events which have lately occurred. I exhort you to fulfill the commands of our most holy father; otherwise I may not pronounce you absolved." 'It is my intention to satisfy his Holiness on every point,' replied Henry feebly; and the declaration having been then witnessed by the great throng of nobles who, according to custom, had been admitted into the apartment by the duc d'Epernon, the last sacred rites were administered.

Two hours after, at four o'clock in the morning, Henry of Valois expired.

If it is difficult to form an estimate of any sovereign on account of the conflicting details which invariably form a portion of his private history, it is especially so with regard to Henry III. His education and early training tended to foster the worst features of his disposition. The massacre of St. Bartholomew and the murder of the duke of Guise have left a stain of cruelty upon his memory which cannot be effaced, and his frivolity, superstition, and deceit have rendered him generally despicable. Yet there were in his life indications of a sense of the duties of his position, and a desire to promote the interests of his people, which cannot justly be overlooked. He was generous and affable, and not without dignity and a sense of honour; and great though his offences were, few can follow his history attentively, especially in its later period, without feelings of sympathy and occasional dawns of respect, which lead us to hope that he may have deserved a kinder judgment than has in general been passed upon him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HENRY IV.

A.D. 1589-1610.

When the new king of France entered the death-chamber, instead of acclamations of 'Long live the king!' he heard only the litanies of two monks, who were kneeling at the feet of the corpse, and the confused chatter of attendants, some of whom drew near making protests and asking pardon for offences committed against him; whilst others, with clenched fists and eager menaces, were muttering close to his ear, 'Better would it be to die a thousand deaths than obey a heretic prince.'
It was a singular scene for an accession. Henry of Navarre turned pale, and withdrew with marshal Biron.

Brave though he was, he could not conceal from himself the peril of his position. He had many chances in his favour, and especially his power of personally attracting his followers. But at this moment his friends were for the most part absent, his enemies present. That very evening a message from the Roman Catholic nobles was sent him by the due de Longueville and M. d'O, the governor of Paris, declaring that the title of 'Very Christian,' which belonged to the kings of France, could not be assumed by him without demonstrating its reality.

Demands were then made to which Henry's answer was evasive. It was proposed that he should embrace the Roman Catholic religion, but for this he required time, though he expressed himself willing to restore the exercise of the Romish faith in districts in which it had been suppressed. The proud nobles were not satisfied. Epernon set off for his government of Provence, and several others retired into the country. A great portion of the army followed the example thus set them; and although Henry's claim, after much discussion, was recognised by many of the Roman Catholic nobles in the camp at St. Cloud, he found himself unable to continue the siege of Paris, and most reluctantly prepared to retreat to Normandy.

Civil war was inevitable. The news of the murder had been received with frantic joy by the Leaguers in Paris, and madame de Montpensier, in her excitement, had driven through the streets in an open car drawn by six horses, from time to time standing up in it and exclaiming, 'Good news, my friends; good news! There is no longer a Henry III. of France!' Her hope now was that her brother, the due de Mayenne, might be made king. But the party of the League, divided in itself, were not prepared to rally round him. The title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom was all he dared assume, and the old cardinal de Bourbon was again thought of as sovereign.

Henry, in the meantime, had established himself at Dieppe, hoping to receive help from Elizabeth of England. He had in all only 7,000 men, and the forces of the enemy numbered 30,000. Marshal Biron—a man of great experience—remonstrated against his shutting himself up in a town, and he therefore removed his forces to Arques, a village about five miles distant, where his position could, from the nature of the ground, be easily fortified.

On the 13th of September the forces of Mayenne appeared before Dieppe, and for several days the two armies confronted each other, and only desultory engagements took place. But on the 21st a more regular conflict, known as the battle of Arques, proved the superiority of the gallant soldiers who had gathered round 'the Bear,' (which was the name popularly given to Henry), and enabled him,
on the succour from England arrived, to gain a march upon
ravine and appear before the gates of Paris at the head of 20,000
in. On the 1st of November the suburbs were assaulted, and the
ps of the League gave way. Terror reigned within the city, but
fame de Montpensier, in concert with some of the chief officers in
is, organised a plan of defence, and on the following morning, rein-
ements having arrived from the dukes of Mayenne and Nemours,
king withdrew his troops from Paris and fell back upon Tours,
re he had summoned a meeting of the States-General. At
rs his arrival was hailed with delight. The deputies met in the
of the monastery of St. Julian, and the king was not only
; to arrange his home policy with them, but also received con-
ulations and assurances of foreign support and sympathy from
mbassadors of Venice and of several of the Italian states. Even
Pope, Sixtus V., appeared inclined to favour his claim, whilst the
testant kingdoms of Europe were without exception on his side.
cause was rapidly gaining ground, and that of his enemies was
ng. Philip II. was giving them aid, but it was with no wish to
either the cardinal de Bourbon or the duc de Mayenne king of
ce. The Spanish monarch openly claimed the throne in behalf
his daughter Clara Eugenia, the niece of Henry III.
The old cardinal assumed the title of Charles X., but his position
judicious. He was still imprisoned, and the council of the
 was obliged to furnish him with a pension on which he might
. Between the duc de Mayenne and the Seize an open feud
ed, and the condition of the League was, in fact, so unsatisfactory
the duke exclaimed in despair, 'Where there is no lord all the
s are lords!'
At the end of February 1590 Henry, still keeping his head-
cers at Tours, laid siege to the town of Dreux. The duc de
enne marched from Paris to relieve it. His force, brilliantly
ed—their helmets and lances glittering with gold, and bright-
ted scarfs across their shoulders—amounted to 16,000 men,
ning a strong reinforcement from the duke of Parma. Henry's
es, without decoration, but armed to the teeth and grimly de-
dined, numbered only 11,000. At the approach of the enemy
king moved his forces from Dreux, and took up his position on
ain in the neighbourhood of Ivry; and at dawn on the 10th of
he reviewed and harangued his troops in preparation for battle,
ind his soldiers that they were about to contend, not with
men, but with Spaniards. A mighty shout rose as he concluded
peach. 'My friends,' exclaimed the king whilst he fastened on
helmet, 'yonder is the enemy, here is your sovereign, and God
our side. If you should lose your standard, rally round my

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white plume; you will always find it in the path of honour and victory.'

The battle began at ten in the morning, and in less than two hours Mayenne's army was dispersed in every direction. The Swiss regiments indeed maintained their position on the field, but with arms and banners lowered in sign of submission.

The duc de Mayenne returned to Paris, but dared not enter the city until cheered by an interview with madame de Montpensier. A meeting was convened at the lodging of the papal legate Gaetano to deliberate on the condition of affairs. Gaetano spoke openly of the Pope's sentiments: 'His Holiness had,' he said, 'directed him to seek a conference with Henry, and ascertain whether there was any foundation for the current report that he was ready to adjure his heresy.' A strong protest against this intention was made, but the legate merely repeated that it was the Pope's will, and that Sixtus had written to marshal Biron begging him to bring about the conference, and if possible arrest the march of the Huguenot army upon Paris.

The Pope's wishes were furthered unconsciously by the king himself, who, after the battle of Ivry, wasted a fortnight in dissipation, and gave his enemies leisure to recover from their panic, and to enrol 30,000 volunteers under the duc de Nemours for the defence of the capital.

On the same day that Henry again encamped before Paris news reached him of the death of the cardinal de Bourbon, the king of the League, as he was sometimes called. As Charles X. his decease was proclaimed in the streets of Paris, and it tended still further to strengthen Henry and weaken the League.

The city was now so closely blockaded that no help could be obtained from without, and provisions were failing. The Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, flung small Spanish coins to the people, and promised them a fixed sum daily; but the famishing mob cried, 'Give us bread. We find nothing to buy. Give us bread.' Before the middle of July all the horses, mules, and cattle of every description in Paris were devoured; the soup cauldrons which were kept up as donations from the authorities were filled with the most loathsome substances, and the flesh of dogs was eaten raw by the wretched poor, whilst the pampered nobles of Paris were compelled to content themselves with six ounces of bread and a handful of herbs.

On the 23rd of July several persons threw themselves at night from the ramparts, and being taken up nearly dead, owned that the act was but the result of a desperate resolution to seek the king, and entreat him to allow a certain number of persons to leave the city. They were escorted to St. Cloud, and there made to Henry their piteous recital of suffering. Tears fell from the eyes of the tender-
monarch. Raising his hands, he protested that he was not
or of their calamities. They were to be attributed to the
in Paris, who wished to give the realm to the Spanish king.
ersons were allowed to quit the city, and when on the follow-
other company of starving wretches forced a way through
the gates to buy bread, many were allowed to re-enter
ith food. It was a politic as well as a charitable act, for it
ted the reports against the king’s compassion which had
read by his enemies.

it was necessary to bring the siege to a conclusion, and at
at on the 24th of July Paris was aroused by the tolling of
bell of the palace, accompanied by peals from the churches.
surbs were attacked. Two hours later they were in the king’s
on, and Henry rode through the Faubourg St. Honoré and
the gardens of the Tuileries, which were then without the
ls. Crowds assembled tumultuously before the palace and
ed that peace should be concluded. The leaders of the
were in despair. The Spanish ambassador remained firm.
ike of Parma,” he said, “was even then approaching Paris;
the famine—it might be mitigated. At the siege of a certain
se name of which he had forgotten, bread was made from
er of dead men’s bones. Let such be done in Paris rather
ake concession to heresy.” The speech was noised abroad,
Parisians sickened with horror; yet a few days afterwards
terrible expedient was actually resorted to, and the paste
ufactured was called “madame de Montpensier’s bread.”
this crisis an interview was arranged at the abbey of St.
etween Henry and his ministers and the archbishops of
Lyons as ambassadors from the League. The king received
ys graciously, and stated the conditions of peace. The
of the ambassadors was a request for a safe-conduct to the
duc de Mayenne. They proposed to urge him either
Paris or to negotiate between Henry and the city.
lords,” said Henry in his reply, “Paris is my eldest daughter,
t and crown of my realm. She shall owe me alone thanks
ervation. M. de Mayenne is at the head of an army of
is. You are Frenchmen. My lords, you ought to expire
me for having dared to connive at Spanish usurpation by
me such proposals.”
then expressed his final determination more definitely. If
eight days Paris was not succoured by the duke, it was to
. The king mounted his horse and returned to St. Denis.
bishops re-entered the city. A great concourse awaited
the famishing people expected them to be preceded by a con-
 provision carts, and when the single coach of the ambassadors
passed the barriers a dismal wail arose, heard even in the royal camp. Envoys were forthwith despatched to the duc de Mayenne at Meaux, to put before him the condition of the city. On the very day of their arrival a report was brought to the camp of the duke that the duke of Parma, by command of Philip of Spain, was advancing with a force of 13,000 men to assist him in the relief of Paris. Mayenne in consequence gave an indefinite reply to the envoys, which secured delay, and the rumour being speedily confirmed, Paris was once more saved from attack.

On the 30th of August the Royalist army withdrew to Chelles. Henry would fain have compelled Parne to an open conflict, but no defiance on his part could tempt the Spanish general from his entrenchment. The duke, however, besieged and took the town of Lagny, to which many wealthy persons had fled from Paris, and having thus secured the command of the river Marne, was enabled to send provisions to the starving Parisians.

Greatly discouraged, Henry now distributed his troops in various garrisons, and himself withdrew to Compiègne. The duke of Parma having succeeded in his object, carried his forces back to Flanders, and the duc de Mayenne was left to settle as best he might the disputes of the factions Parisians. The council of the Seize were plotting to marry the Infanta of Spain to the young duke of Guise, and place them both on the throne; but Mayenne discovered their intentions, seized and put to death four of the most dangerous members of the Seize, and thus destroyed the power of the whole body. His own power was, however, diminishing. Whilst dissensions were weakening the League, Henry, assisted by English troops under the earl of Essex, was gaining ground so fast that the duke of Parma re-entered France to aid the Leaguers. For some months, at the beginning of 1592, a well-contested struggle was carried on, in which Henry was, on the whole, victorious. Parne was obliged to retire to the Netherlands, and died soon afterwards.

Early in 1593 the States-General, convoked by Mayenne, assembled at the Louvre with the desire of devising some measures for the salvation of the country. The moderate party turned their thoughts to Henry, against whom there was but one objection—religion.

The whole tenor of the king’s private life—his open devotion to the various ladies who happened to captivate his fancy—had been shown that he had no such sense of religious obligation as would induce him to stand firm against the temptation offered him to renounce his professed belief, and it was a woman’s influence which seems at last to have been mainly instrumental in his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith. The beautiful Gabrielle d’Estrees was his acknowledged favourite, and there is no doubt that she looked for-
ward to being one day his lawful wife. She had at first declared herself on the Huguenot side, and chose her household from members of what was called ‘The Religion.’ But the Huguenot ministers were bold in their denunciation of a sinful life, and refused to give the Holy Communion to such as did not repent and amend, and Gabrielle turned from them to listen to the softer words of the Roman Catholic prelates, who held out hopes of a papal dispensation which would annul the king’s marriage with Marguerite de Valois, and enable him to place her on the throne of France, and with this hope before her she used her influence over the king for his conversion.

A new idea was now put forward, that of accepting as king the young cardinal de Bourbon, the nephew of the so-called Charles X., and it was this, as Henry himself owned to Duplessis Mornay, which at last constrained him to yield. ‘I found myself,’ he said, ‘on the brink of a precipice. Conversion was my only escape. Perhaps,’ he added, ‘the difference between the two religions is after all made great only from the great animosity of the preachers. Some day, when I am king, I shall be able to put it all right.’ Conviction certainly he had none, and he would fain have avoided any instruction, but the Roman Catholic party insisted upon his being enlightened upon all disputed points. To Gabrielle d’Estrees he wrote a flippant note, saying that he was about to ‘take the perilous leap,’ and mentioning the day fixed for it—Sunday, the 26th of July, 1593. The note was afterwards shown about in Paris.

It was at St. Denis that the recantation took place. Henry had not yet obtained possession of Paris. Accompanied by the princes and lords of his court, he walked in procession to the cathedral, at the entrance of which sat the archbishop of Bourges upon a throne covered with white damask and emboosed with the arms of France and Navarre. Henry, kneeling before him, took a solemn oath to live and die in the communion of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman faith. The words of absolution were pronounced by the archbishop, and the thunder of cannon and the applause of the multitude broke forth. Princes waved their swords, soldiers uttered shouts of congratulation, and, when the service was concluded, nobles and officers thronged around the king, kneeling at his feet, embracing his hands, kissing the hem of his cloak, and some even weeping for joy.

Henry was greatly touched by the scene. Probably at that moment he felt nothing but satisfaction and relief. But, if any regard for religious truth, any perception of the grave nature of the questions with which he had been trifling, remained with him, his feelings must have been very different when, shortly after the recantation which had brought him such worldly profit, he received the address of the

INFLUENCE OF GABRIELLE D’ESTRÊES—HENRY’S RECANTATION.
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‘No, sire,’ they exclaimed, ‘you will not easily efface from your memory those who have been one with you in faith, in danger, and in deliverance. Their faithful services have been graven on your heart by steel, cut into it by the diamond. The thought of them will follow and accompany you. It will interrupt your business, your pleasure, your sleep, picturing you to yourself not as the man you are, but as the man you were when, persecuted to the death by the princes of Europe, you were conducting your little vessel to its haven. If you fail to do us justice we will appeal to God, and He will undertake for us.’

Their fears were natural but groundless, as regarded their own safety. In public matters Henry was strictly honourable, and he had pledged himself to leave the Huguenots liberty and security. What he had done was, he believed, for his own present advantage and for the good of the kingdom. His recantation brought internal peace to France, and secured that peace outwardly for years to come. But there is another side to the subject, and when we look at the evils he averted we must not forget those which he incurred. Chief amongst them may surely be reckoned a distrust of all sincere religious conviction, eating into the very heart of the country, as the natural result of an example of outward profession covering hidden unbelief, and accompanied by a flippancy of tone upon all subjects of grave thought. Who can say, looking at the after history of France, and carrying it down to the present day, whether Henry of Navarre, showing himself the honest-hearted prince who could sacrifice his throne rather than his principles, might not have done infinitely more to save his country from the misery which revolution has brought upon her than could have been effected by the politic, gallant, generous, but light-minded Henry IV. of France; the hero, indeed, of our childish imagination, but whose character is sullied by a stain of insincerity which can never be obliterated?

The king had been accepted by the majority of his opponents. He was even crowned at Chartres, but he was not yet in possession of the capital, where the duc de Mayenne still held the chief authority. The duke, however, departed for Soissons, hoping to obtain aid from the Low Countries; and the comte de Brissac, being left in charge as governor of Paris, entered into a negotiation to surrender the city into the hands of the Royalists, and at four o’clock in the morning of the 22nd of March, 1594, the king, with a large body of choice troops, entered by the Porte Neuve.

The march through the streets was triumphant. A message had been sent to the duc de Feria, the commander of the Spanish troops who were in Paris, warning him that he was now in the king’s power, and advising him to leave the city. Following this suggestion, Feria and his soldiers marched out through the Porte St. Denis,
whilst Henry stationed himself at a window to see them pass. The duke as he went by gave a cold, grave salute, which Henry, in his exuberant joy, could not refrain from mimicking.

Paris had submitted, and the provinces followed their example. Even the duchesse de Montpensier listened to offers of reconciliation, and the young duc de Guise gave up the towns which belonged to his domains and received a pension in return. The one great enemy to fear remaining was Philip of Spain. An attempt upon the king's life, made about this time by a young Jesuit, and which was attributed to the instigation of the king of Spain, brought matters to a climax. An order for the expulsion of the Jesuits from France was issued by the parliament of Paris on the 27th of December, 1594, and in January of the succeeding year war with Spain was openly declared. Henry's first efforts were against the duc de Mayenne, who joined with Spain and held out against the king in Burgundy. At Fontaine Françoise, June 5th, 1595, in a skirmish which was as imprudent as it was brave, the French compelled the army of the constable of Castile to retire before a force of not more than two or three hundred horse, and Mayenne then agreed to acknowledge the king's title if Henry's absolution from the Pope, which had hitherto been delayed, could be obtained. This was granted soon after, but not till Henry had allowed two bishops representing him to kneel before the Pope in St. Peter's and receive a stroke of the scourge. The Jesuits were instrumental in this reconciliation.

The effect of the papal forgiveness was to put an end to the League, a complete amnesty for the past being granted to the duc de Mayenne. But the war with Spain still continued. Calais, Ardres, and Amiens were taken by the archduke Albert, the governor of the Netherlands, early in 1596; and Henry was in consternation. But his own bravery and the indefatigable exertions of his friend and minister Sully enabled him, however, to retake Amiens after a siege of five months; and Philip II., who was now old, ill, and im- overished, began to think of peace. On the 2nd of May, 1598, a treaty was signed at Vervins, and the conquests on both sides were restored; but England was not a party to the agreement. The queen, indeed, given Henry material aid, and he in return had solemnly pledged himself not to treat without her consent. Now he put her side and made terms for himself alone. His excuse was the state of health and the condition of his army. When Amiens was retaken, vanishing forces melted away in one night. In the evening he d 5,000 gentlemen with him, and in the morning 500. But, what- ever might have been the extenuating circumstances, he was double guilty of a great breach of faith.

A few days earlier a yet more important treaty, known as the Act of Nantes, had been made with the huguenots. The con-
ference preceding it was carried on in the great hall of the old ducal château at Nantes, and the Reformed cause was supported with much eloquence and earnestness by Duplessis Mornay, the duc de Bouillon, the duc de Rohan, the historian and lawyer Auguste de Thou, and several of the most able Calvinist ministers. The edict, which ensured the protection of the Huguenots, was framed by themselves. By it they were admitted on equal terms to all public employments, and received permission to hold a representative conference once in three years, and the open profession of their religion by public worship was allowed them in the towns — numbering about seventy-five — which had been given up to them by Henry III. In other places they were allowed liberty of conscience, but not public worship. On the 13th of April, 1598, Henry affixed to the agreement his sign manual, to which was appended the great seal of France. But considerable delay occurred before it was registered by the parliament, who made many objections to it. The king, however, expressed his will with a determination which could not be resisted. 'The edict,' he said, in an interview held privately with deputies sent to remonstrate, 'has been granted by the advice of my princes and nobles. Those who oppose it desire war. My officers of the High Court are, it is true, my right arm; but if the right arm is affected with gangrene, of necessity it must be severed by the left. ... What will you gain by not verifying my edict peacefully? It will be registered despite the clamour of your preachers.' The edict was registered, and no insurrection took place. Having now secured peace, the king made full use of it for his country's benefit. By the help of Sully the finances, which were in the most deplorable confusion, were brought into such order that the crown debts to the extent of 140,000,000 francs were paid, whilst taxation was reduced from 200,000,000 to 28,000,000. A great impulse was also given to agriculture and commerce. Plans were set on foot for the draining of marshes, the construction of roads and canals, and the rearing of cattle. Manufactures of silk, cloth, linen, &c., were encouraged. Communications were opened with North America, and a colony was established in Canada. In public affairs, indeed, Henry proved himself in almost every respect a wise and good king. His weakness and want of principle were reserved for his private life and his domestic relations.

His unhappy marriage was the primary misfortune of his life. He had never loved Marguerite de Valois, and her infamous conduct had brought such disgrace upon him that for years they had been separated. Now that he was peaceful and prosperous, and could look forward to transmitting his crown to his successor without a contest, he became anxious to divorce Marguerite and enter into a second marriage with Gabrielle d'Estrées, whom he had already created
duchesse de Beaufort, and whose son, the duc de Vendôme, he desired to recognise as his lawful heir.

Gabrielle’s power over him arose from her cleverness in humouring him. He could never endure a wife who crossed him, and he had lately been suffering from the temper of his sister, madame Catherine de Bourbon, in a degree which made him peculiarly alive to the miseries of domestic bickering.

Catherine was a rigid Calvinist, of a melancholy, discontented disposition, grieved to the heart at her brother’s recantation, and feeling deeply the guilt of her immoral life. She was bent upon marrying the comte de Soissons, whilst the king insisted upon her union with the duc de Bar. This was the important subject of dispute, but she also tormented him upon lesser matters.

‘My sister,’ so he wrote to the superintendent of his domains in Bearn, ‘remains in as bad a humour as she displayed at Compiègne. I therefore hasten as fast as I can to get her married, and so to add this blessing to the many which God has bestowed upon me in giving peace to the realm. She now wishes to have the furniture and moveables in my castles of Pau, Navarreins, and Nérac, and that without so much as asking my consent, though I have presented to her all the furniture in my castle of Vendôme, among which there were many valuable effects. I believe that this torment has been sent, after so many blessings, to dissipate undue elation.’

Henry might have suffered much from his sister, but he would undoubtedly have suffered much more from the quarrels of his court if he had carried out his wish of raising Gabrielle d’Estrees to the rank of queen, and it was a matter of general thankfulness when the unexpected death of Gabrielle, which took place only two months after the registration of the Edict of Nantes, released him from her pernicious influence.

Marguerite de Valois now agreed to further the proceedings for divorce, and on the plea that her marriage was celebrated without her assent, and that she had never received the pontifical dispensation, it was annulled.

The Pope was assured by the French ambassadors that Henry intended to demand the hand of Marie de’ Medici, daughter of the grand duke of Tuscany; but a new favourite, Henriette d’Entragues, had caught the king’s fancy. He wrote her a promise of marriage upon certain conditions, and, with his usual thoughtless indifference, showed it to Sully. The minister tore it in pieces before his face. Henry re-wrote it, but the conditions were not fulfilled, and at last the king was persuaded to enter into negotiations for a marriage with the Tuscan princess.

Marie, de’ Medici, though not remarkably beautiful, was accom-

1 The comte de Soissons represented the younger branch of the Condé family.
plished and well-informed; but her disposition was jealous, and she was one of the last persons likely to bear with Henry's neglect. The alliance, however, was one of policy, and suitableness of character was quite a secondary consideration even to Henry himself. 'We have just married you, sire,' said Sully when he came to announce that the marriage treaty was signed. Henry stood as if thunder-struck for nearly a quarter of an hour. Then he began to walk rapidly about the room, scratching his head and biting his nails. 'Well,' he exclaimed at last, stroking one hand upon the other, 'well, so be it. There is no remedy. You say the welfare of my kingdom requires that I should be married, so I will marry.'

The resolution once taken, he performed his part decorously, professing to be charmed with Marie's portrait, sent to him by her mother, and writing to her that 'every month of delay was as a century to him.' He made her a present also of some model dolls, from which she might learn the French fashions, whilst he begged her in return to give him a knot of ribbon which he might wear as a favour. The actual marriage, however, seemed likely to be delayed by war-like and political difficulties.

By the Treaty of Vervins the duke of Savoy had agreed to restore to France the marquisate of Saluces, which during the contests of the League he had unjustly gained possession of. In December 1599 the duke, a restless and ill-tempered man, came himself to Fontainebleau, and gained over to his views some of the chief nobles of the court, amongst them marshal Biron, to whom he offered the dukedom of Burgundy and the hand of a princess of Savoy; Biron in return agreeing to enter into a scheme for dismembering France and forming it into independent states under the feudal sovereignty of the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy's father-in-law. The duke left Fontainebleau, and when he found himself out of France boldly declared that he had no intention of restoring Saluces.

War was then inevitable, and the dowry of Marie de' Medici came very opportunely to defray the expenses. The king held himself ready to take the field in person. That any home conspiracy was brooding seems never to have been suspected. The public attention was chiefly occupied with a controversy carried on by Duplessis Mornay, sometimes called the Huguenot Pope, and Du Perron, cardinal bishop of Evreux. Mornay had written a book upon the Eucharist, and was accused of having made inaccurate quotations in it. The case was tried before the king, and the Huguenot minister was pronounced in fault. It was a sore humiliation to him. Excellent as he was in his private character, he had not sufficient learning for controversy, and now he retired into a more private sphere, consoling himself that he was only suffering what

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1 It is now in the Dresden gallery.
Henry IV.

others suffered, since even madame Catherine, now duchesse de Bar, having refused to adopt the faith of her husband, had been deserted by him, and was living alone in her palace at Nancy.

The preparations for the contest with Savoy were made with a rapidity for which the duke was wholly unprepared. On the 11th of August war was declared; on the 17th Montmélian, the strongest place in Savoy, was taken, only the citadel holding out a little longer; and on the 20th Henry himself was in possession of Chambéry, the capital of the country. In forty days the war was, if not quite concluded, at least quite decided; and after various negotiations Charles Emmanuel gave up to France the district of La Bresse, between Geneva and Lyons, in exchange for Saluces, and peace was concluded.

Henry lingered a little while in Savoy, and it was not till the 9th of December that he presented himself before the gates of Lyons, at which place Marie de' Medici, with her suite, had arrived about a week before. It was late in the evening and very cold. The gates were shut, and the king was obliged to wait a considerable time before they were opened. He was admitted at last half frozen, but very eager to see his intended wife. Her portrait was imprinted on his memory, but it had been taken ten years before, and when Henry entered the presence of Marie de' Medici he saw, instead of the lovely young girl whom he had pictured to himself, a large, tall woman, with round, staring eyes and a melancholy expression of face; Spanish in her dress and Austrian in the heaviness and solidity of her general aspect; quite unable, moreover, to converse in French, which she looked upon as the language of heretics.

What was scarcely less disagreeable to the king, the princess had brought with her a complete court; not only servants, but ladies and gentlemen;—amongst them Orsini, duke of Bracciano, her cousin, who was to wait upon her at table, and offer her the basin and napkin when she wished to wash her hands—his brother Paolo Orsini, also a great favourite—and last, but not least in importance, her waiting-woman Leonora Galigai, with the signor di Concini, to whom she was betrothed.

Leonora was the daughter of a carpenter, and had been in the service of the ducal family for several years. By her soft voice, gliding step, and humble demeanour, she had gained the entire confidence of the princess, who had raised her to a position of importance. The rise in her position had made but little change in her manner. She was still silent and unobtrusive, remarkable chiefly for her slight figure, thin face, large, dark, prominent eyes, and for a singular habit of rolling little pellets of paper or of wax between her fingers whenever she was unemployed.

The marriage was celebrated on the 17th of December. The king gave his wife the list of the ladies who were to be her per-
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Sonl attendants, but Marie imperiously rejected the name of madame de Richelieu, the first lady of the bedchamber, and insisted that the position should be held by Leonora Galgai; at the same time demanding that Leonora should immediately be married to Concini, whom the queen proposed to make her chief equerry. Henry, by the advice of Sully, declined these requests, and tears and reproaches followed. Madame de Richelieu, deeply offended, retired from the court; and as the king still persisted in his refusal with regard to Leonora, the vacant office was conferred on another lady. Sully at last effected a reconciliation between the king and queen, but Marie was already beginning to feel the pangs of jealousy, and said to a friend of her father's that 'she was miserable, that the king was governed by Henriette d'Entragues (now marquise de Verneuil), and that she must retain near her the friends of her youth.' By this time the king having begun to suspect the fidelity of the marshal duc de Biron, sent for him and questioned him. Biron, trusting to Henry's generosity of temper, confessed his traitorous schemes, and was forgiven, and sent as ambassador to England (1561). Sully, who had lately visited England, had suggested to Elizabeth doubts of his integrity, and she could not resist giving him some intimation of her suspicion. She showed him a portrait of Essex in enamel; Biron ventured to deplore the earl's fate. The queen replied, 'Prosperity rendered the earl of Essex haughty and perfidious. He suffered righteously. The king, my brother, would do well to act in Paris as I have acted in London. I pray Heaven that the clemency of your prince may not be fatal to him.' The conversation, it is said, passed at an open window, from whence could be seen the Tower and the gibbet over London Bridge, on which the head of Essex was impaled. The words were ominous, but Biron had no reason to be disappointed with his visit to England. The queen gave him her picture set in diamonds, besides other valuable presents, and he returned to France apparently fully devoted to his master's service.

Henry had at this time obtained the one chief desire of his heart. In the month of September Marie de' Medici had given birth to a son, and for the moment the queen was holding her rightful position. She might even have kept it, at least in the estimation of the people, but for her weak devotion to Leonora Galgai. In her anxiety to have Leonora in her service as lady of the bedchamber, and to secure her marriage with Concini, the queen condescended to pay attentions to the insolent marquise de Verneuil, thus hoping to find favour with Henry. In one respect she was successful. Leonora was made lady of the bedchamber, and a prospect was held out of her marriage; but Marie de' Medici sank in general estimation, and many must have placed her in unfavourable contrast with the queen.
dowager Louise, who died about this time, after a long illness, borne with the greatest patience, and left a memory honoured by all who had watched the course of her troubled life.

Externally France was now enjoying the blessings of peace. And yet there were rumours throughout the country of disturbances which were at hand. The king received anonymous communications warning him that a new foreign league was being formed against him, and specifically implicating the duc de Biron.

The king, still trusting in Biron, earnestly desired an interview, and the duke repaired to Fontainebleau. They met in the garden. 'You have done well to come,' said Henry; 'I was about to seek you. Is there nothing that you have to tell me?' 'I!' exclaimed Biron; 'I am come only to be made acquainted with your accusers, and to punish them.' The king could obtain nothing beyond this, and sought counsel of Sully and the queen. Sully insisted that Biron should be arrested; the queen spoke in his favour.

The king still wavered. Biron, becoming alarmed, gave secret orders for his horse to be ready for him at midnight at a place appointed in the forest; but he spent the evening at the palace, and was invited by the king to join in a game of cards. In the middle of the game the comte d’Auvergne, brother of the marquise de Verneuil, who was a party to the plot, drew near and whispered, 'Marshal, it is not safe for us here.' Biron continued the game. About eleven o'clock the king suddenly rose, gave his cards to a gentleman standing by, and taking Biron by the arm, led him apart. Once more the marshal was entreated to confess all, on the promise of a full pardon, but he still insisted upon his innocence, and Henry returned with him to the salon. The king then dismissed the court circle, saying pointedly to the duc de Biron, 'Adieu, baron de Biron. Remember the words which I have spoken.' The duke merely passed his hand across his brow and slowly withdrew.

He was arrested as he crossed the threshold, and almost immediately sent to the Bastille. The comte d’Auvergne was likewise taken and imprisoned. After a careful trial the charge of treason was fully proved against the marshal, but not against the count. Henry was deeply grieved at the treachery of his trusted general. 'Of all men in my dominions,' he wrote to Duplessis Mornay, 'the duc de Biron owed me most.'

The unhappy duke was executed on the 31st of July, 1602, in the court of the Bastille. Some persons looked upon him as an innocent victim to false accusations, but the king was, on good evidence, so convinced of his treason, that for long afterwards, when wishing to affirm a fact strongly, he was accustomed to say, 'That is true; as true as that the duc de Biron was a traitor.'

The fate of Biron was a warning felt by many. It secured the
outward tranquillity of France; but there was no unity of feeling. The Roman Catholics had little confidence in Henry; he had, indeed, readmitted the Jesuits into France, chiefly, it is said, through the influence of the famous St. Francis de Sales (not himself a Jesuit), whose earnest simplicity and devotedness won him a place in the favour of all men; he had even received to his special favour Cotton, a Jesuit father, who was always about his person; yet his political alliances, and especially his intimate union with England, were greatly in favour of the Protestant party.

Henry's object, however, was not the ascendency of one form of religion, but the toleration of all, with a view to the formation of a commonwealth of the chief states of Europe, which should be a counterpoise to the power of Spain. For this it was necessary to diminish the influence of Austria, which had long been intimately united with Spain; and an occasion for the carrying out of this plan was soon found. The duke of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg died without an heir in the month of March 1609. The emperor Maximilian laid claim to his small but important dominions; so also did the elector of Brandenburg and the count palatine of Neuberg, who were the duke's brothers-in-law. Henry promised to aid the two princes. This was in fact to declare war against the German empire, and the king fully foresaw this, and made preparations accordingly; but his one sinful weakness brought disgrace upon these political schemes. He had fallen in love with the young princesse de Condé, Charlotte de Montmorency, one daughter of the constable. The prince carried his wife to Brussels, and Henry, in his insane indignation, threatened the viceroy of Flanders with war if he allowed them to remain. The viceroy declined to interfere, and the king then accused Condé of having joined the Spaniards. The parliament declared the accusation proved, but left the punishment to the king's pleasure. The whole proceeding was stigmatised by Henry's enemies as disgraceful, and looked upon by his friends with mingled regret and anger, whilst the general discontent was increased by the violent opposition made by the Jesuits to the proposed attack upon Germany and Spain, which they said was intended to overthrow the Roman Catholic religion.

Indifferent—at least apparently—to both secret and avowed enmity, Henry completed his levies for the army, and, by the advice of Sully, nominated his wife regent in his absence, with a council for her support, in which she possessed but one vote. This limitation was extremely unwelcome to Concini and others, and they so worked upon the queen's mind that, fearing lest her authority should be undervalued, she insisted upon being crowned before she assumed her new office. Henry urged the need of immediate de-
parture for Germany; Marie wept and entreated still more passionately, and Henry at length gave his consent. The queen was satisfied, but the king was singularly depressed. 'Ah! mon ami,' he exclaimed to Sully one day, as he entered his minister's study and seated himself on a low chair expressly reserved for him, 'this ceremony of the coronation disturbs me. I know not why, but a presentiment of evil is upon me. I shall die in this city. I shall never again quit Paris. They mean to kill me. Cursed coronation! I shall fall during the show.' The foreboding was not without cause. Rumours of plots were current, and strange predictions had reached the king's ear, all culminating in this month of May. Sully volunteered to go himself and entreat the queen to give up her wish. But his errand was unsuccessful. 'It is with regret,' he says in his memoirs, 'that I am compelled to record that I never could persuade her majesty to yield, but I will not describe the prayers and solicitations which during those days I ceaselessly employed to move her inflexible resolve.'

The conspiracy which had for its aim the king's death was, it has been said, in the meantime progressing under the guilty but skilful direction of madame de Verneuil, the due d'Epernon being her adviser and confidant. Political plans were mixed up with personal feeling. Both madame de Verneuil and the duke dreaded the king's plan for the overthrow of the Spanish power. Such at least was the statement afterwards made by a humble friend of madame de Verneuil—Jacqueline de Conant, who declared that the marchioness had confided to her the intended assassination, and had commended to her hospitality in Paris François Ravaillac, the subsequent perpetrator of the crime, a man in the service of Epernon, subject to fits of insanity, and governed by a fanatical spirit of religious enthusiasm against the Huguenots.

The coronation took place with great splendour at St. Denis on Thursday, the 13th of May, in the presence of 8,000 persons. The queen's face was radiant with satisfaction, and Henry, as during the service he left his glazed pew and moved about amongst his courtiers, observed that 'she was the handsomest woman in the abbey.' When the ceremony was concluded the king's spirits appeared to revive, and in the evening he returned with his wife to Paris, where arrangements were to be made for the public reception of the queen on the following Sunday.

At five the next morning the king rose, having passed a restless night. In his cabinet he found the young due de Vendôme, who had brought him an astrological prediction, found on his table after his return from the coronation. The constellation under which his majesty was born threatened him, it said, with great danger on the 14th of May. The day would prudently be spent in retirement.

D D
WARNINGS AND HESITATION—RAVAILLAC'S ATTACK.

Henry IV.

'The astrologer is a crafty old fox who wants to make money,' answered the king, 'and you, sir, are a young fool to believe such nonsense. My days are in the Hands of God.' He proceeded to the monastery of the Feuillants to hear mass. Even as he passed under the gateway of the Louvre Ravaillac was lingering near, prepared to aim a deadly blow, but his wild gestures were perceived by the servants, and he was ejected from the palace.

On the king's return he talked of going to the Tuileries and the arsenal, but the queen begged him not to drive about the streets, for they were crowded with strangers and blocked up by stages and scaffolding, preparatory to the triumphal procession. He owned to a secret misgiving, and Marie entreated him to send and make the enquiries he wished for. Henry only stepped out on the balcony and asked in a loud voice whether his coach was below. The answer was in the affirmative. Still the king hesitated. 'I don't know what ails me!' he exclaimed, as embracing the queen several times, he at length left her and entered his carriage, the duc d'Epernon and his lords-in-waiting accompanying him.

They drove from the palace, entered the Rue St. Honoré, and then turned into a street bordered on one side by a cemetery wall, and which—narrow in itself—was rendered still narrower by a number of stalls, set up for the sale of fancy goods. The royal coach drew to one side to allow two carts to pass. A footpath of about three feet broad intervened between the carriage and the wall, and along this steadily walked Ravaillac. The king's back was to the causeway, for he was leaning over the shoulder of the duc d'Epernon, to whom he had just handed a paper, which both were reading together. Ravaillac took advantage of this, sprang upon the wheel of the carriage and plunged a knife into the king's body. Henry threw up his arms, exclaiming, 'I am wounded! It is nothing.' But a second and third blow followed with great rapidity. He clasped his hands, made one convulsive effort to speak, and with a groan fell back in the carriage and expired.

Ravaillac stood leaning against the wall, his face ghastly. 'He shall die! Kill him! kill him!' cried the bystanders in hoarse shouts. But he was carried off by the guards and saved from immediate punishment, though only to suffer by the sentence of the law a lingering death too horrible in its torture to bear detail.

Epernon closed the curtains of the coach, and ordered the coachman to drive back to the Louvre.

The wail of the multitude brought the first intelligence to Marie de Medici of the terrible catastrophe. Hastening from her room in anxiety for her children, she met M. de Souvieux, governor to the young princes—also hurrying, so that he did not at first recognise her. 'Is M. d'Orléans ill, or dead?' asked Maria. 'He is well,' replied Souvieux, 'but the king has been wounded by an assassin.'
Marie pushed him from her, and continued her way towards the king's apartments. She saw the tumult within, and the entreaties of Souvire made her pause. Uttering a cry of anguish, she was led back to her chamber. A quarter of an hour of intense suspense followed, but when she could bear it no longer, and was about to leave the room a second time, the chancellor De Sillery entered. The queen seized his hand. 'Monsieur—the king—this tumult? Is the king dead?'

'Madame,' replied Sillery, 'be calm, I entreat. Pardon me, the king can never die. Behold the king!' and, stepping aside, the chancellor pointed to the young Dauphin, now Louis XIII., king of France.

So ended the reign of Henry IV., undoubtedly one of great importance to the prosperity of France. Under the superintendence of Sully order was re-established, trade and manufactures were encouraged, the magistrates were rendered independent, the excessive power of the nobles was diminished, and the property of the crown protected. Frugal in his personal expenses, the king was generous to those around him, and his attractive manners won universal regard; but where his selfish gratification was concerned he could be cruelly unmindful of the claims of others, and the admiration which none can fail to give to Henry IV. as a monarch must unhappily be withheld from Henry IV. as a man.

One of the special characteristics of this period is the enormous expenditure in dress. Marshal Bassompierre, one of Henry's courtiers, who wrote his own memoirs, states that he had once a coat trimmed with jewels that cost 300l. Silver tissue, velvet, and satin were the common materials for the dresses of the higher orders. Even beds were occasionally hung with velvet curtains bordered with pearls, and had quilts of cloth of gold. Yet the rooms were furnished with only a long table and a few chairs, stools, and coffers, which also served for seats. Coaches had only just been introduced into France. It is said of Henry IV. that when driven in one he would turn pale if it went in the least wrong.

1 Sully's memoirs, the history of Auguste de Thou, and the memoirs of the Huguenot Theodore d'Aubigné, an illegitimate son of Antoine of Navarre, and therefore half-brother to Henry IV., give interesting accounts of this reign.
CHAPTER XXXVI.

LOUIS XIII.

A.D. 1610–1643.

From the moment when the tidings of the king's death reached him Sully appears to have foreseen that a contest with his political enemies was inevitable; but it was not immediate, and he took his place as first minister of the crown when Marie de' Medici as regent presented the young king to the parliament who met to enquire into the murder of the late monarch.

Ravaillac made no confession implicating others, but in the January of the following year Jacqueline de Conant brought charges against several persons, including Epernon and madame de Verneuil. The latter was arrested, but no fact was publicly proved against her; and the rank and influence of several of the accused were so great that De Harlay, the president of the parliament, at length agreed with Marie de Medici to make no further enquiries. An edict was issued for the imprisonment of the dame de Conant, but judgment in the case was deferred for a hundred years, as too many difficulties beset the decision of the judges—an ingenious if not a very just mode of escaping from a very awkward position. Madame de Verneuil remained for a short time longer at the court, and then retired to her own estate, where she is said to have given herself up to self-indulgence in eating to an injurious and disgusting degree.

The duc d'Epernon and Concini—who had been created by the regent a marshal of France, and received the title of marquis d'Ancre—now carried everything before them; and Sully, finding his measures slighted, withdrew. Marie de' Medici, in cases of emergency, occasionally consulted him, but he never again took a prominent position in politics. He could not have done so, indeed, without entirely changing his former views.

The project of Henry IV. for the diminution of the power of Spain and the house of Austria was set aside. The war which he was contemplating before his death was indeed carried on for a few months, but there was no real vigour in the efforts made, and France soon ceased to take part in the German quarrels. Union with Spain was the one object of the regent; and on the 18th of March, 1612, a proclamation was made throughout Paris of the betrothal of Louis XIII., by the grace of God king of France and Navarre, with the Infanta, Anne, daughter of Philip III., king of
Spain, and of Marguerite of Austria; also of madame Elisabeth, eldest daughter of Henry IV, and Marie de' Medici, with Don Philip, prince of the Asturias, eldest son of the Catholic king.

Louis and his intended wife were then both eleven years of age. Their education was very different. Anne was brought up by her mother tenderly and happily. Louis was treated with caprice by Marie de' Medici. The queen's unworthy favourites used their influence to shut him out from the society of the young nobles. His chief playmates were three brothers named De Luynes, sons of a gentleman of Provence, but his amusements were very dull. He liked hunting, but he was seldom allowed to hunt anything but rabbits. Tennis and billiards, colouring little pictures, snaring singing birds, and playing on the spinet and guitar were his chief occupations except his studies, which seem to have had but few charms for him, as on one occasion he tempted his preceptor by the offer of a bishopric if he would let him off a difficult lesson. Neglect certainly he had not to complain of; for his physician kept a record of how many times he coughed and sneezed during the twenty-four hours, and made a careful enumeration of the dishes served up to him, particularly noting that on a certain fast day the king supped upon almond milk and milk gruel, and ate the backs of two large soles.

To a boy brought up in such seclusion, and with such narrow interests, the change must have been overpowering when, having attained his majority, according to law, on the 27th of September, 1614, he was called upon nominally to assume the government of the kingdom by appearing before the parliament in person and holding a 'sit de justice' to compel the registration of certain edicts.

The States-General were also convoked for the 26th of October, but the regent and her ministers were bent upon destroying the influence of this important assembly, and they succeeded. Nobles, clergy, and commons (or 'tiers état') were divided in their interests. The clergy desired that the decrees of the Council of Trent should be recognised as binding in France; the nobles wished to abolish the purchase of public offices by the commons; and the commons desired to do away with the pensions which burdened the revenue.

The deputies of the third order were treated with the greatest insolence both by the regent and the nobles, one of their most distinguished members being only permitted to address the king kneeling; yet they showed themselves more anxious than either of the others for the maintenance of the royal prerogatives, especially insisting that the power of deposing kings for heresy should no longer be admitted as a principle, and that the sovereigns of France should be independent of the spiritual authority. The assembly did nothing but remonstrate against grievances, and was abruptly
dissolved by the regent, after Richelieu, bishop of Luçon, had summed up in an eloquent speech the demands of the nobles and clergy, and advised the young king to follow the counsels of his mother. The regent promised to consider the questions which had been brought forward, and to satisfy the wishes of the deputies of the States-General, if the parliament should deem it desirable. This was a humiliation to the States-General, and a source of pride to the parliament, who immediately took upon themselves to propose a discussion upon the state of public affairs. The regent forbade this discussion, and the parliament addressed a remonstrance to the king, which was read aloud before him in the presence of his mother and his ministers. Marie de’ Medici was indignant, and the parliament was obliged ultimately to yield; but the obvious disunion gave little promise of future prosperity to the country.

The marriage of the young king was fixed for the end of the year (1615). The prince de Condé, who had returned to France after the murder of Henry IV., was vehemently opposed to it; so also were the other princes of the blood royal. They withdrew from the court, carrying with them the sympathy of the Huguenots, who dreaded Spanish influence as one of the greatest evils which could befall their cause.

In the middle of November Louis, his mother, and the princess Elizabeth journeyed to Bordeaux. At Burgos the marriage of Louis and Anne, by proxy, took place, the princess having previously renounced all right of succession to the Spanish crown; and on the 23rd of November, on a small islet in the middle of the river Bidassoa, the exchange of the royal brides was made, the Spanish nobles receiving into their barge the French princess and her suite, and the French welcoming Anne of Austria and her Spanish attendants, whom she had been permitted to retain. Anne, who was then fifteen, was very attractive, being small and graceful in figure, with a complexion of dazzling brilliancy, bright blue eyes and arched eyebrows, and a quantity of fair hair which fell in ringlets on her neck. An eye-witness has described the meeting between Louis and the Spanish princess. ‘His majesty,’ we are told, ‘frequently looked at his bride, smiling, while her majesty, notwithstanding that she seemed much oppressed with the weight and amplitude of her dress (green satin embroidered with gold), could not help smiling very lovingly also.’ At a sign from his mother, Louis led her to the recess of a window, where they talked together for upwards of half-an-hour, being joined by the young king’s friend De Luyne. Afterwards Anne presented her Spanish

1 Third prince de Condé. The first of the line was Antoine of Navarre’s second brother, who was killed at the battle of Jarnac. Antoine’s third brother was comte de Soissons.
Louis, but he evidently took no fancy to them, and turning
his eyes with boyish rudeness, made a sneering remark on the
beauty of the condessa de las Torres, which caused a burst of
laughter from the underbred favourite.

There were small indications of a feeling which was to work ill
to the marriage ceremony took place in the cathedral of Bordeaux,
and the royal party then went to Tours for the winter.

The position of the new queen demanded great tact. Some of
the powerful nobles had opposed the marriage, and at this very
time the Huguenots and Condé were in arms. The regent, indeed,
was afraid of it, so as to consent that the marquis d’Ancre (Concini),
whom the queen had given up some of his appointments. A woman of
great and wisdom would, have found it difficult to steer safely
through troubled waters, but Anne was a self-confident, igno-
rant of fifteen, who had been taught that it was her mission to
once more adopt the habits and policy of Spain, and that with
the time the queen regent, to conciliate the Conse-

De Luyne, to win the king’s heart, and to be pro-

De Luyne soon saw that he looked down upon him, whilst Louis, though he liked to
see Anne’s apartments and make her join in his boyish play,
and the etiquette of her stately ladies, and more than once left
her in disgust, declaring that he would never visit her
and the Spanish duennes were banished from the palace.

The court moved from Tours to Paris, and a change came
to the life of Marie de’ Medici, who had been a duchess,
totally changed, talked and laughed with the courtiers, and threw
their amusement, to the consternation of the Spanish ambassador,
early to his master that her majesty never spoke without
his consent, and paid no attention to serious affairs.

The Medici were by this time becoming thoroughly dissatis-
fied with the position; she held, indeed, the title of regent, but
the regency was in the hands of Condé, who openly defied her authority.
this juncture, however, a new supporter of her interests was
upon the scene—Richelieu, bishop of Luçon, her almoner.
This was, perhaps, one of the most artificial and inscrutable
rulers, cautious, firm, but without heart or principle,
and in the course of European politics. He
has been compared to the famous Egyptian sphinx with its mète reversed. The death of the sphinx was to follow the reading of her riddle, whereas Richelieu's character seemed to say, 'Whoever reads me shall himself die.' By his advice Marie de' Medici ordered the arrest of Condé, on the accusation of a reasonable plot, and the prince was sent to the Bastille. Riots ensued; the rabble assaulted the regent's palace of the Luxembourg, and the duc de Vendôme, the duc de Mayenne, and others concerned in the plot, fled from Paris. The Huguenots prepared to take up arms for the rescue of Condé, and civil war was again imminent.

Anne of Austria alone was calm and happy, as calm, so she wrote in the journal kept for her father, as if she had been in the palace of Madrid. Condé overthrown, she fancied that her Spanish ladies would no longer be taunted by heretics, and that the insolence of De Luyynes would be repressed. But Marie de Medici was not so well satisfied. Her son was gloomily silent as to the arrest, and half satirically declined to take the management of public affairs, which she offered him.

An unexpected event stirred the smouldering discontent into an open blaze.

On the festival of All Saints 1616 Louis was seized with an epileptic fit. The panic was great. Concini and his wife took possession of the little Gaston, duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis and heir presumptive, and ordered the queen's guards to seize the principal avenues of the palace. But in three days the king was well. Marie de' Medici expressed a fear lest the fit might return. The remark was repeated to Louis by De Luyynes, who suggested that it implied some plot against the king's life. 'Sir,' he said, 'the princes in revolt are loyal, but the queen, your mother, persecutes them out of regard to marshal d'Ancre.' Louis, now sixteen, and jealous by nature, listened only too willingly, and De Luyynes worked upon his weakness. Some of the rebel lords offered to return if only Concini were exiled; and Vitry, the chief captain of the guard, then received private directions for the arrest of the marquis. Permission was given to use weapons if any resistance were made. On the 24th of April, 1617, as Concini was entering the great court of the Louvre, Vitry, followed by twenty archers, arrested him, 'I a prisoner?' exclaimed Concini, turning sharply and placing his hand on the hilt of his sword. The words were scarcely uttered when three pistols were discharged, and the marquis fell dead.

A few seconds of awful silence followed; then a window was thrown open, and Louis, attended by De Luyynes, came forward, raised his hat, and exclaimed, 'Great thanks to all; now I am king!' The gates of the Louvre were closed, and the body of Concini dragged to the porter's lodge and buried at midnight; but the mob
terred it the next day and hung it on a gibbet. The marquise
d'Ancre was arrested a few hours after her husband's death, on
the charge of having amassed wealth by unlawful means, and having
used magical arts to gain an ascendancy over the mind of the queen
mother. She was condemned to be beheaded on the Place de Grève.

On the day of the marquis's murder a guard was placed over
the queen regent, and she was forbidden to leave her apartments.
The king sent her a message, begging her to leave Paris for Blois,
and thither, accompanied by Richelieu, she was compelled to retire,
after a cold interview with Louis and a sorrowful parting from
her little son Gaston and her daughters Christine and Henrietta
Maria. Anne of Austria merely bowed her farewell from a window.

The property of Concini was given to De Luynes, who now
needed only a wife of high rank to secure his position. Marie
de Montbazon, only daughter of the duc de Montbason, governor
of Paris, was the object of his wishes. Marie was just seventeen,
beautiful, clever, proud, and reckless. Though one of the
young queen's maids of honour, Anne had never shown her any
marks of regard, but Louis now promised to make her superinten-
dent of the queen's household, and to allow her to sit on a folding
seat, or 'tabouret,' in the royal presence (a privilege belonging to mem-
bers of the royal family), and these honours, with the gift of a
magnificent casket of diamonds which had belonged to the marquise
d'Ancre, soon won the acceptance of mademoiselle de Montbazon.
She was married to the duc de Luynes, and installed as chief lady
of the queen's household. But Anne refused her services, the
stately condesa de las Torres protested against her authority, and
the duchesse de Montmorency resigned her situation.

The Spanish ambassador reported the affair to Philip III., who
recalled all the Spanish ladies to Madrid. The queen became
dangerously ill from vexation and anxiety, and this brought about a
reconciliation with Louis, and madame de Montmorency generously
returned to the court to assist the duchesse de Luynes in her duties;
but new and grave difficulties were at hand.

Marie de' Medici escaped from Blois in 1610, and repaired to
Épernon's castle of Loches, and many of the French nobles gathered
round her. De Luynes proposed an interview, which might tend to
mutual forgiveness, and Richelieu was entrusted with the negotia-
tion on the part of the queen mother. Besides her more personal
grievances Marie had cause to complain that her daughter Christine
had lately been married to the prince of Piedmont without her con-
sent, but this and all other offences were eventually smoothed over
by the agency of Richelieu. The government of Anjou was
conferred upon her, and she joined her son's court at Tours.
Épernon and his followers were forgiven, and the prince de Condé
was released.
The forces which Louis had prepared for a conflict with Epernon were now to be occupied in another direction. The little Protestant province of Bearn, separate from France though belonging to the king, was in revolt. A royal edict had announced that it was to be annexed to the crown of France, and that the Roman Catholic religion was to be re-established; and Louis at the head of his troops marched to Pau, and apparently reduced the province to submission. Insurrection, however, broke out again in 1621, not only in Bearn, but amongst the Huguenots generally. Louis gave the constable's sword to De Luynes, who laid siege to Montauban. At the end of three months he was obliged ignominiously to retire with a loss of 8,000 men. An outcry of indignation arose against him, and Louis himself no longer upheld him; the favourite's arrogance had lately become intolerable. 'King Luynes' Louis derisively and bitterly called him, as he saw the homage which the duke expected. His dislike increased after the failure at Montauban, and it was with no grief that he learnt that his former favourite had been seized with pestilential fever, which had broken out in the camp. In his comfortless quarters and very unhappy, De Luynes was unable to resist the severity of the attack. He died after a few hours' illness, and Louis was thus freed from the man whom he had at first blindly loved and then almost unjustly detested.

Who would be the next to rule the king, and thus rule France? This was now the all-important question, and it was soon solved. The weak Louis was once more under the influence of his mother, and Marie de' Medici was entirely swayed by Richelieu. Louis, indeed, disliked Richelieu, and perversely enjoyed thwarting his mother's wishes, but he dared not long resist their joint will; and through his influence with the Pope, on the 5th of September, 1622, the bishop of Luçon became cardinal Richelieu. The king himself invested him with the insignia of his new dignity in the presence of the queen mother; and when the ceremony was over Richelieu threw himself at the feet of Marie de' Medici and said, 'Gracious majesty, this purple, which I owe to your majesty, will be ever before my eyes as a symbol of the solemn vow which I have made, and now renew, to shed every drop of my blood, if necessary, in your service.' Two years after, 1624, Richelieu was at the head of public affairs. No other man in France was equal to the position. For the country was in great peril. As Richelieu himself afterwards stated in a narrative of his political life, called the ' Testament Politique,' foreign alliance was neglected, the great nobles and governors were acting as independent sovereigns, and the Huguenots, although they had been defeated in the contest begun by De Luynes, and had been deprived of all their fortified towns except La Rochelle and Montauban, were nevertheless a most powerful and dangerous party.
Richelieu’s policy, to which he adhered undeviatingly, was to crush the Huguenots, and to destroy the influence of Spain and Austria; with this object in view he proposed to the queen mother a Protestant alliance which would tempt her maternal pride, whilst it soothed her conscience by the prospect of converting a heretic nation. The princess Henrietta Maria had been seen by Charles, prince of Wales, when, in 1626, he accompanied the duke of Buckingham to Paris incognito. He was then on his way to Madrid, where Buckingham was to negotiate for him a marriage with the Infanta. A quarrel between Buckingham and the court of Madrid ended in an open rupture. The marriage with the Infanta was given up; and Henrietta Maria was proposed by Richelieu instead. Charles, who had been fascinated by the young princess, was only too willing to acquiesce, and in the month of July 1626 the marriage by proxy was celebrated at Notre Dame, and Henrietta Maria was then conducted by the duke of Buckingham to London, with a large suite of attendants and ecclesiastics.

The views of Richelieu were now openly seen. A war in Germany, known as the celebrated Thirty Years’ War, was raging violently. Richelieu, following out his plan of humiliating the German emperors of the house of Austria, who were staunch Roman Catholics, entered into friendly communications with Sweden, Denmark, and Holland, who supported the Protestant German princes against the emperor; and at the same time he sent an army to support the Swiss Protestant Grisons in their endeavour to retake the neighbouring province of the Valteline, which had been wrested from them by the joint power of Spain and Austria. It was a very important province, as it formed a communication between the Tyrol and the north of Italy, and the Pope had joined with Spain in placing troops in the fortresses. Richelieu expelled them, and the Pope’s nuncio complained loudly, saying that the cardinal must have been much troubled in conscience when he was upholding the Protestant Grisons. ‘Not at all,’ replied Richelieu. ‘When I became minister I received a papal brief allowing me to do and say anything which I might deem necessary for the good of the state.’ ‘Scarcely not if it were a question of supporting heretics?’ persisted the nuncio. ‘I think,’ answered Richelieu, ‘that the papal brief extended even as far as that.’

So far all had succeeded, but the chronic difficulty with the Huguenots remained. The success of the United Provinces in freeing themselves from Spanish tyranny, and forming an independent republic, seems to have inspired the French Protestants with the idea of constituting themselves a republic. La Rochelle, which was to be the capital, became the centre of an insurrection. A fleet was sent by Richelieu to the coast, and a naval battle fought.
Huguenots were defeated. But just at this moment the discovery of a conspiracy against Richelieu's government and his life gave a new turn to public affairs. A lenient peace was made with the heretics, a hasty treaty arranged with Spain, upon the sole condition that the Valteline should be restored to the Grisons, and the powerful minister turned his whole attention to the discovery and punishment of his personal enemies.

Gaston, duke of Orleans, the presumptive heir to the throne, was the most important member of the conspiracy, but he could scarcely be called its leader. Very young (for he was only eighteen), self-indulgent and ambitious, he had for some time amused himself by the society of the young queen, who, with girlish thoughtlessness, discarded in his favour the ordinary etiquettes of her position. Anne's relations with her husband had always been stiff, and they had lately been rendered more so. The duke of Buckingham, when in France, had ventured to pay her devoted attentions, which had aroused the king's suspicious displeasure. Anne was innocent of anything beyond the gratification of a foolish vanity, but Louis could not forget the uneasiness she had caused. He seldom saw her in private, and when he did his conversation was dreary, and the chief entertainment provided for her was the mournful music of two guitars and a violin. From her melancholy husband the queen turned with pleasure to her gay brother-in-law, the centre of a circle of idle youths, including the duc de Vendôme and the grand prior of St. John's (the king's half-brothers), and the prince de Chalais (master of the wardrobe), who abhorred Richelieu, and were continually urging upon Gaston schemes for upsetting his government, at the same time predicting the king's early death and the duke's accession. There seems to be little doubt that Anne herself seriously pondered the probability of the king's death and her own union with Gaston. Her dreams were fostered by the duchesse de Luynes, now, in consequence of a second marriage, duchesse de Chevreuse, who, though at first disliked, had gradually gained great and very mischievous influence over the young queen, encouraging her in a flippancy and incautiousness extremely objectionable. Through madame de Chevreuse Anne caused it to be made known to marshal d'Ornano, Gaston's bosom friend, that it would gratify her much if he could find means to prevent a marriage which had been proposed between the duke and mademoiselle de Montpensier, step-daughter of the duc de Guise, and which Gaston had agreed to very unwillingly; and—at the suggestion of Ornano—Monsieur (for this title specially belonged to the king's eldest brother) peremptorily declined to fulfil the engagement, and insisted upon a foreign alliance, complaining also that he had no influence in state affairs.

The keen-sighted Richelieu soon discovered who were the insti-
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ators of Monsieur’s conduct. The duke was made a member of the privy council, but Ornano was arrested and imprisoned at Vincennes, on the charge of having attempted to create ill-feeling between the king and his brother.

Monsieur was furious, and Richelieu, well aware that he had irrevocably offended him, begged to be allowed to withdraw from Fontainebleau. And now was brought to maturity the plot for Richelieu’s assassination and the king’s compulsory abdication. It had for some time been discussed by Monsieur, the duc de Vendôme, the grand prior, the comte de Soissons, and an attached of the Spanish embassy at Brussels. Letters upon the subject had also passed between Chalais and madame de Chevreuse, who was at Brussels, which had been seen by the queen. The assassination was to be accomplished by a pretended visit of Monsieur to Fleury, the cardinal’s residence, when the duke’s attendants, going before their master, were to quarrel with Richelieu’s servants and kill the cardinal in the consequent skirmish.

The incasiousness of Chalais on the very eve of the intended assassination betrayed the existence of the plot to a friend, M. de Valencey, who only sympathised with him politically. In horror at the idea of murder, Valencey insisted that Chalais should at once warn the cardinal, and they immediately set out for Fleury. Richelieu shed tears as he listened, apparently feeling compassion for Chalais, who declared that he had always hated the idea, and determined to denounce it; and Chalais left Fleury, hoping to reach Fontainebleau in time to prevent the departure of the assassins. But he was too late. Late that night the cardinal’s household were disturbed by loud knockings and claims for admittance, made in the most insolent manner, by the duke’s followers. The doors were immediately opened, and the cardinal himself appeared, expressed his sense of the honour done him by Monsieur’s intended visit, and stated his intention of setting out directly to meet and escort his royal highness to Fleury. Before the men could recover from their astonishment Richelieu had stepped into his coach, which he had previously ordered to be in waiting, and was on his way to Fontainebleau. Monsieur had arranged a hunting party for the morning on which the conspiracy was to be carried out, so as to account for leaving the palace early. When Richelieu arrived he was preparing to dress, and Chalais was with him. The cardinal went at once to the royal apartment, and begged to place Fleury at the duke’s disposal. Then taking Monsieur’s shirt from the trembling hands of Chalais, he courteously handed it to the duke and took his leave, saying significantly, ‘Your royal highness has not risen early enough this morning. You will not find the beast in its lair.’

Nothing more took place at the moment. The conspirators saw
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they had been betrayed, but by whom they knew not until madame de Chevreuse, a few weeks after, cleverly forced Chalais to confess the warning he had given. Chalais was now overwhelmed with attentions by the wily cardinal. Madame de Chevreuse was invited to court to please Anne. The princes de Vendôme were assured that their complaints would be listened to. The care of the city of Paris was entrusted to M. de Soissons during the king’s absence in the provinces, whilst Richelieu set himself to discover the intricacies of the conspiracy. By means of a page he obtained possession of the correspondence of the conspirators with the Spanish ministers; amongst them was a letter unsigned, but addressed to Chalais, speaking of the cardinal’s assassination, the king’s deposition, the probability of the marriage of the queen and Gaston of Orleans, and intimating Anne’s consent to the designs of the conspirators.

Richelieu carried the correspondence to Louis, and a cry of anguish burst from the unhappy king. His nearest relations were proved to be his deadliest foes, and his wife was his most treacherous enemy. He desired to take immediate vengeance. But Richelieu’s measures were always arranged with precaution. The princes de Vendôme were indeed arrested, on the pretext that they excited the people against the government, but madame de Chevreuse came to Blois, and Monsieur carried on his plans with her aid, neither dreaming of the mine dug under them.

By the advice of Chalais, who was still taken into Monsieur’s confidence, Gaston was induced to write letters to the duc d’Epernon and his son, who were supposed to be disaffected, proposing that the fortress of Metz, which was in Epernon’s province, should be given up to him. Epernon sent one of these letters to the king, and Louis at once ordered the cardinal to proceed with the utmost severity.

Chalais was immediately arrested and thrown into prison, on the charge of having meditated the king’s death, and a commission was appointed to enquire into the details of the conspiracy. The person in the most abject terror was Gaston of Orleans. Overwhelmed by the evidence produced against him by the members of the commission, he confessed everything; and the king then, by the advice of Richelieu, consented to summon a special council and call Anne and madame de Chevreuse before it.

The details of the examination which followed were never thoroughly made public, but they seem to have been fatal to the young queen’s character for truth and loyalty. She wept bitterly, and turning to the queen mother, who was present, seated by Richelieu’s side, upbraided her with the unkindness shown to her since her arrival in France. But there could be no real defence, and bitter grief and humiliation the queen was permitted to witness,
and madame de Chevreuse was sent for. Clever and apt at retort, the duchess could far better endure the trying examination to which she was subjected by Louis himself; and when at length dismissed, she was only placed under the watch of the captain of the bodyguard.

Richelieu's real victim was Chalais, who was condemned to be tortured and afterwards beheaded. For Monsieur there was reserved a more lenient yet a very bitter sentence, which took the form of a marriage and a fortune. The king consented to overlook the past, and bestow upon him the revenues belonging to the duchy of Orleans, on condition of his immediate marriage with madame de Montpensier.

On the 20th of August, 1626, the ill-omened union took place at midnight. 'Never before,' says an eye-witness, 'was seen so sad a ceremony. We had neither violins nor music of any kind. Monsieur had not even a new habit. Furniture was borrowed to decorate the bridal chamber, and few private persons have been married with such scanty pomp.'

The sentence upon the unhappy Chalais was carried out three days after the wedding, although the duke of Orleans had made it one of the conditions of his marriage that both Chalais and Ornano should be set free. Madame de Chevreuse, whom Richelieu secretly admired, was then allowed to return into the country, and the comte de Soissons went into voluntary exile. The punishment of the young queen was a strict restraint and supervision. The king would hold no communication with her, and she was never allowed a private audience with anyone without first giving notice of it to the queen mother or the cardinal.

Anne had now no friend to look to in France. The queen mother had never apparently loved her; and dared not, even if she had wished it, give her daughter-in-law a shadow of support, being herself suspected of conniving at the late conspiracy; whilst madame de Chevreuse had retired from court, though she still carried on her political intrigues. An order was issued about this time that several of the great fortresses in the hands of the Huguenots, and amongst them the citadel of La Rochelle, should be destroyed. This was the signal for a new insurrection. La Rochelle was besieged by the king's forces. The duc de Rohan, the Huguenot leader, received a promise of aid from the duke of Buckingham, the favourite minister of Charles I, and an alliance was also made with the dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, who prepared to attack France. In these affairs madame de Chevreuse took an active part. Buckingham was influenced by her, because she was the friend of Anne of Austria, for whom he still professed a frantic admiration. The expedition to aid La Rochelle was planned as much for the sake of
achieving an interview with Anne as with the hope of relieving the

With the permission of Charles, Buckingham sailed from England

at the beginning of July 1627, with a fleet of fifty men-of-war,
sixty smaller vessels, and an army of 5,000 men. The king offered
a slight pretext for the invasion, complaining of certain offences
on the part of France, and declaring his sympathy with the Hugue-
notes; but Buckingham madly, but candidly, declared his real object,
and placed a picture of Anne of Austria in his cabin, hidden by
curtains of cloth of gold, and before this he put golden candelabrum
holding wax lights.

The forces were disembarked on the Isle of Rhé, and the for-
tress of St. Martin, held by a royal garrison, was besieged. Richel-
lieu sent a reinforcement, and Buckingham, after several un-
successful assaults, ignominiously returned to England, and left
La Rochelle to its fate. Anne of Austria had really no part in
Buckingham's wicked folly, but she shared the political intrigues
of madame de Chevreuse, though about this time she received a
marked warning from the seizure, by order of Richelieu, of a young
Englishman—Walter Montagu—who had aided the correspondence
between the duchess and the English court. In deadly terror lest
she should be compromised by the letters which were placed in
Richelieu's hands, the queen was induced to have a secret inter-
view with a soldier of Montagu's guard, named La Porte, on whom she could
rely. Pitifully she entreated him to take a message to Montagu,
begging to know the contents of the correspondence, and urging him
on no account to mix up her name with his confessions; and Montagu,
in reply, assured her that he would rather die than say anything
that could injure her. Anne hearing this, actually trembled for
joy (so wrote La Porte in his account of the transaction); but
she was incorrigible in her intrigues for her own country, and
Richelieu, aware of it, never ceased to keep a watch upon her.

La Rochelle was in the meantime besieged with the most resolute
determination. The king and the cardinal repaired in person to the
French camp, and when Louis became ill and went back to Paris,
Richelieu, assisted by a Capuchin father, generally known as le
père Joseph, and almost as shrewd and unscrupulous as himself,
established himself in a lone house about a stone's throw from
the beach, and there planned and carried out the construction of
a gigantic dyke of stone across the harbour, which would prevent
the approach of the English or any other fleet. The city was also
closely surrounded on the land side, so that its fall was simply a
question of time.

Still the town held out. English ships were expected, and at
last appeared; but they also disappeared, for they could do nothing.
Famine became pressing. When everything had been eaten, even
to boiled leather, the old and infirm men and the helpless widows were put forth beyond the walls. The soldiers of the royal army fired on them, and they turned back. The gates of the town were closed, and they lay down and died of hunger. So, waiting and guarding—not fighting, but silently, and in all due order, suffocating, stifling—the miserable town, the work of the besiegers went on. Richelieu said with pride that his camp was like a convent in its discipline.

Further aid from England was doubtful. Henrietta Maria entertained her husband not to make war upon her brother, and Charles listened and delayed. The parliament, however, voted a large sum for a second attempt to be made by Buckingham, but as the fleet was on the point of departure the duke was assassinated at Portsmouth. The earl of Lindsay then took the command, and crossing to France attacked Richelieu's new fortifications, but he failed to break through the mole; and at length, when half the population had been starved, the few remaining inhabitants of La Rochelle consented, on the 28th of October, 1628, to capitulate.

The citizens were punished by the forfeiture of all their privileges of self-government, the destruction of the fortifications, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion; and the town has never since regained its former importance.

A treaty between England and France was formally concluded in September of the following year (1629), and by that time the Huguenots throughout France had laid down their arms. But peace was not therefore in store for France. About the time that the struggle with the Huguenots was at its height the duke of Nevers, a French prince, had succeeded to the duchy of Mantua. His right was disputed by the duke of Guastalla, who was supported by the Spanish king and the German emperor. The emperor sequestered the disputed territory, and a Spanish army besieged Casale, the capital. Richelieu then proposed to Louis himself to take an army across the Alps and re-establish the duke of Nevers.

The queen was indignant at the prospect of a war with her native country. Richelieu, when paying her a farewell visit before his departure for Italy, found the Spanish ambassador, Mirabel, with her. In his usual bland manner he expressed surprise at the step taken by the emperor against the duke of Nevers. The ambassador made a sarcastic reply. Anne interfered to prevent bitterness, but with her usual want of tact. Taking Mirabel's hand, she said, 'Do not excite yourself. I, who have at heart the interests of Spain in equal degree with those of France, cannot approve of the emperor's haste.'

These words were repeated to the king by Richelieu, and Louis, greatly offended at his wife's declaration that she had an equal
interest in both countries, forbade her to see the Spanish ambassador during his absence.

It was Richelieu's saying that 'if words were the first power in the world, silence is the second.' But this was an axiom the importance of which Anne never seems to have comprehended.

The Italian expedition was rapidly successful. The duke of Nevers was secured in his new title of duke of Mantua, and the Spanish viceroy gave up Casale to France, and at the beginning of May 1629 Louis returned triumphantly to Fontainebleau. Anne alone had no smiles for him, and the king, suspicious of his wife and finding his mother's temper unendurable, could only find recreation in hunting, carving wooden shrines, and setting verses to dreary music of his own composition. Richelieu's presence made matters still worse, for the court was a scene of constant discord. Marie de' Medici privately called the cardinal a liar and a deceiver, and mocked at his 'crocodile tears'; and the cardinal, when her words were repeated to him, professed to be overwhelmed with her majesty's displeasure, and then setting spies to work, learnt everything which his enemies did or said, and treasured it against the day of vengeance.

Another direction was, however, soon given to his thoughts. The king of Spain refused to ratify the viceroy's treaty, and the emperor Ferdinand again invaded Mantua. Another campaign was inevitable. The king undertook it, Richelieu accompanying him. On the 20th of March, 1630, the fortress of Pignerol was besieged. Richelieu, who was with the troops, then left the camp to visit the king at Grenoble. He was attended by an Italian, Giulio Mazarin, sent by the Pope to arrange an armistice. From Grenoble the cardinal carried Mazarin with him to Lyons, where Marie de' Medici and Anne of Austria were residing. 'Madame,' he said, as he introduced Mazarin to the queen, 'I present to you the sieur Giulio Mazarin. Your majesty will doubtless approve of him, as he is an agent of his Holiness, and bears, as you will perceive, a strong resemblance to the late duke of Buckingham.' Anne blushed and looked confused, and certainly could not have felt more cordially towards Richelieu for his impertinence.

The second campaign in Italy prospered like the first. But the fatigue was too much for Louis; he fell ill and returned to Lyons. The complaint was bilious fever, and the king, depressed and irritable, was like a child in his helplessness of mind and body. The two queens saw in his condition the opportunity of conspiring against Richelieu's ruin. The duke of Orleans, who was now a widower, with a little daughter brought up under the charge of Marie de' Medici, was admitted to the plot, and once more Anne so far forgot her dignity and duty as to discuss the possibility of her marriage with him in the event of the king's death.
KING'S RECOVERY—MANTUA YIELDED TO DUKE OF NEVERS. 419

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Louis meanwhile was nursed assiduously by his mother, and in the intervals of relief from pain Marie extorted from him a promise that in case of recovery he would dismiss Richelieu.

The cardinal was kept well informed of all that was going on. A personal friend of his own, M. de St. Simon, who had lately been made the king’s first equerry, warned him of his danger. He hastened to Lyons. Orders had been given by Marie de’ Medici that he was to be refused admittance to the king’s chamber; but Louis, whose condition had unexpectedly improved, hearing of his arrival, insisted upon seeing him. An alarmed conference of the conspirators was held in the apartments of the queen mother. Marshal de Marillac advised the cardinal’s death. Bassompierre, colonel of the Swiss guards, recommended arrest. The two queens spoke only of exile. Richelieu was informed of what was said almost as soon as the words were spoken; but his knowledge was likely to be but of small service to him, for that very night the king had another relapse.

The cardinal, believing his downfall certain, made preparations for flight. In the palace almost everyone avoided him; only the duchesse de Bouillon offered him the shelter of her husband’s fortress of Sedan. So passed the night in anxiety. At six o’clock the next morning the bells of the churches in Lyons were ringing a joyous peal. The crisis had passed and the physicians answered for the king’s life.

Richelieu was triumphant, the court was at his feet; but the two queens remembered the solemn promise that had been exacted of Louis, and nursing their enmity secretly, bided their time.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LOUIS XIII. (continued.)

A.D. 1639–1643.

The campaign in Savoy had by this time again terminated entirely in favour of France, and on the 13th of October, 1650, the terms of peace were signed; the claims of the duke of Nevers to Mantua were recognised, and Casale was ceded to him. Louis agreed on his side to support the imperial policy in Germany. This was all-important to Ferdinand. Gustavus Adolphus, the brave and chivalrous king of Sweden, was threatening the empire, and with him was joined the son-in-law of James I. of England, the elector Palatine, who had been offered by the Protestants the crown of Bohemia, and
had retained it for one year, but was now a fugitive, with bitter cause to regret that he had given up his small Palatinate, with its splendid palace at Heidelberg, for the empty title of royalty. Political and religious interests were strangely mingled in this contest, and James, though a Protestant, gave but little help to his son-in-law, whilst France could not be depended upon in the alliance with the Roman Catholic emperor. Richelieu, indeed, made it a condition that the German general Wallenstein, who was obnoxious to the Roman Catholics, should be removed, and Ferdinand consented, to his own cost; but at the very same time the wily French minister was encouraging the king of Sweden to invade Germany. European affairs were just then too complicated for the guidance of any ordinary man, and Louis seeing this, became more and more unwilling to listen to his mother when she urged upon him the fulfilment of his promise to dismiss Richelieu.

In an interview on the 9th of November Marie burst forth in such a vehement tirade that the unfortunate king was utterly confounded. 'This cardinal,' she exclaimed, 'lies both in word and deed.'

'What say you, madame?' replied the king. 'Anger is carrying you too far; you distress me so that I shall never recover it.' At this moment a rap was heard at a private door; the king opened it and confronted the cardinal. Taking the minister's hand, he led him to the queen mother, and Richelieu, as he knelt at her feet, said meekly, 'Madame, you were speaking of me, your humble servant, who deprecates your anger and prays for pardon.'

Marie turned from him with disdain and addressed the king. 'Behold, my son, this false traitor. His intention is to take your crown and give it to the comte de Soissons, when the comte shall have married the widow Combalet' (the cardinal's niece). 'Are you unnatural enough to prefer such a knave to your mother?'

Louis, making no reply, left the room. Again the cardinal tried to stop the torrent of wrath, but in vain, and he also at length retired, driven away by Marie's protestations of never-ending enmity.

In the evening Louis announced to his mother his intention of going to Versailles, from which place he promised to write a letter of dismissal and exile to the cardinal; and early the following morning he left Paris. That same day many even of Richelieu's supposed friends appeared at a reception given by the two queens. But they reckoned too confidently on the downfall of the minister. At Versailles St. Simon, the staunch friend of the cardinal, was at the side of Louis, placing the conduct of Richelieu before his master in the best light. Louis listened favourably, and St. Simon then sent an express, advising the cardinal to repair at once to Versailles.

Once in the king's presence Richelieu's danger was over.
was deeply moved as he heard the history of the court intrigues carried on during his illness. 'Stay with me, monseigneur,' he exclaimed as the conversation ended; 'I pledge you my royal word that I will protect you against such cabals,' and giving his hand to the cardinal, he led him into an adjoining gallery, where the gentlemen of the court were in attendance, and presented him to them.

The first intimation of the events of this day, commonly known as 'la Journée des Dupes' (the Day of Dupes), was an order for the arrest of one of the cardinal's chief opponents, the lord keeper Marillac, by Richelieu. Marie de' Medici was in despair. 'I shall wait for my time,' she said; 'and I shall find it. God does not pay every week, but He does pay.' And though Louis humbled himself still to seek her advice in public affairs, she remained absolutely hostile.

Monsieur was openly insolent to Richelieu, privately formed a plan for exciting an insurrection in the provinces, and at length left Paris for the purpose of carrying out his plans. Marie assisted him with money, and gave him the diamonds belonging to his deceased wife, which had been entrusted to her in charge for Gaston's little daughter, Mademoiselle. The queen also was privy to these designs.

Marie was at this time with Anne at Compiègne. The two queens had spent the evening together, and Anne had retired to her own room, when she and her ladies were aroused by the announcement that the lord keeper Châteauneuf, the successor of Marillac, desired to speak to her on behalf of the king.

Tremblingly Anne advanced to meet Châteauneuf, well knowing what cause she had given for her husband's gravest displeasure. 'Madame,' said the lord keeper, 'I have to make known to your majesty that, for the welfare of the realm, the king finds himself compelled to leave his mother at Compiègne under the guard of the marshal d'Estrees. It is therefore his majesty's command that you make no attempt at an interview with her said majesty, but that you immediately hasten to the church of the Capuchin convent, where the king expects you.'

In the choir of the church Anne found the king, the cardinal, and a swarm of courtiers, roused from their beds without knowing why, and much perplexed at their position. Two ladies also were present—madame de la Flotte Hauteville and her lovely granddaughter Marie, daughter of the marquis de Hautefort.

The king briefly recounted his reasons for ordering the arrest of the queen mother, and then addressing Anne said, 'Madame, the indiscretions of madame de Fargis' (one of the queen's ladies who had carried on a treasonable correspondence) 'having caused her removal from your service, I present to you in her stead madame de la Flotte Hauteville, and for second lady-in-waiting mademoiselle Marie de Hautefort. For both these ladies I request your favour.'
MARIE DE HAUTEFORT—BATTLE OF CASTENAUDARY.

Louis XIII.

Few commands could have been more unpalatable to Anne. Mademoiselle de Hautefort at eighteen had obtained a reputation for discretion, sense, and piety, which, added to her beauty, quiet subdued manner, and sweet smile, evidently made her very attractive to the king. On this occasion she showed her usual tact. Before the king and queen quitted the chapel mass was said, and, according to custom, the maids of honour sat or knelt on the ground, while the ladies-in-waiting had velvet cushions. The king seeing mademoiselle de Hautefort without a cushion, took his own and sent it to her. She blushed and turned to the queen. Anne signed to her to take it, and Marie obeyed, but humbly laid it by her, and when mass was over, with a deep obesiance returned it to Louis.

The king now proposed to the queen mother to retire to Moulins, where she would be permitted more freedom than at Compiègne; but she would accept of no compromise. In July 1631 she escaped from Compiègne at night by the help of madame de Fresney, niece of the bishop of Leon, who took her uncle’s coach and six for the journey without his knowledge. The unfortunate bishop was tried for high treason in consequence, and very nearly lost his see; but his coach did good service to Marie, who travelled with all speed to Brussels, where she was honourably received by the Spanish viceroy.

The friends of the queen mother suffered far more severely than herself. Several were imprisoned, and marshal de Marillac, who was known to have advised Richelieu’s death, was beheaded. As for Gaston of Orleans, he was at the head of a body of insurrectionary forces, but being attacked at Orleans, he fled to Lorraine, and afterwards to Brussels. He seems to have entertained some hope of support from Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden; but Richelieu had been beforehand with him, having already entered into an alliance with Gustavus, and promised him a large yearly subsidy.

The duke of Orleans found, however, an ally in his own country—the marshal duc de Montmorency, governor of Languedoc, a nobleman of acknowledged bravery, talent, and generosity, and greatly loved in his own province, and who had a special cause of complaint against Richelieu on account of a tax introduced into Languedoc which he thought was oppressive. In the summer of 1632 Gaston repaired to Languedoc, and actual civil war broke out, in which Montmorency took part. But it was of very short duration. The royal army, under the Protestant marshal Schomberg, routed the rebels at Castenaudary on the 1st of September. Montmorency, who fought desperately, was taken prisoner, and condemned to death.

All the nobility of France interceded for him. The execution of such a man in his own province, where the people idolised him, and where his fathers had so long been rulers, seemed too terrible; but
Louis, urged on by Richelieu, refused to listen, and the duke was beheaded at Toulouse.

Gaston of Orleans had fled from the battle of Castelnaudary, and giving up his followers to the king's vengeance, he now made his own peace by abject submission, and retired to Tours.

The interest of Richelieu was centred in the German war. Gustavus Adolphus was killed at the battle of Lützen, a.d. 1632, and after his death victory was on the side of the emperor and the Roman Catholics. Richelieu and the German Protestant princes raised four separate armies, amounting to 120,000 men, but still the Imperialists were successful, and in the summer of 1636 they invaded France on the side of Picardy.

On the 10th of August news reached Paris that the town of Corbie was taken, and the enemy on the march to the capital. Tumultuous crowds, angry with the cardinal for his foreign policy, were in the streets of Paris, but Richelieu ordered his coach and drove through them almost alone, and the people, roused to enthusiasm by his courage, prepared to make the sacrifices necessary for the defence of the country. Imperialists and Spaniards in the meantime delayed their advance, though they were treacherously aided by the lukewarmness of the comte de Soissons, who commanded the troops near Paris; and the king in person, accompanied by Richelieu, determined to relieve Corbie.

Louis stationed himself at Amiens; the queen remained at St. Germain, still corresponding clandestinely with Spain. The alliance with the German Protestants was hateful to her, as it was to the generality of the French nation; and Richelieu, finding himself unpopular, strove the more to please the king, and at this time besought to Louis in the event of his death his Hôtel de Richelieu, in Paris, now known as the Palais Royal. 'Monseigneur,' said father Joseph, who advised the gift, 'by this graceful act you will convince the public that you wish to restore to your benefactor the treasures you have acquired through him.' But no show of generosity could appease Richelieu's enemies. Gaston of Orleans, jointly with the comte de Soissons, once more plotted his assassination whilst he was holding a council at Amiens. Monsieur's panic, however, when the time drew near, alarmed the other conspirators, and they hesitated. Richelieu, who knew their intentions, quietly drove away from the council, and then spread a rumour that the king had resolved, on his return to Paris, to arrest Monsieur and the comte de Soissons. The two princes took the hint and fled from court.

Yet even at this time, Gaston of Orleans obtained from his brother what he had long desired, the recognition of his second secret marriage with the princess Marguerite of Lorraine. It was a
union entirely repugnant to Louis, for duke Charles of Lorraine, Marguerite's brother, was a chief supporter of the Spanish plot. The parliament had issued an edict annulling it. Now, however, it was legally recognised, and in one sense the king was benefited by it. Anne of Austria could no longer dream of a marriage with Monsieur. He had become her rival, and was ready, on the demise of the king, to take her crown and transfer it to his own wife.

Corbie was taken, and Richelieu returned to Paris high in the royal favour, but not the less at the mercy of the court intrigues. Dreading the influence of Marie de Hautefort, who was devoted to the queen, he thought fit to summon back to the court the unprincipled exile madame de Chevreuse. The duchess, by her first marriage with the duc de Luynes, was rich, but her second husband, the duc de Chevreuse, spent her money recklessly. Requiring a new carriage, he ordered fifteen to be built, that he might choose the most comfortable. His wife now instituted a lawsuit against him for this expenditure, and demanded and obtained a separation. She then set up an independent establishment in the Hôtel Luynes. Richelieu paid her the most flattering attentions, and thought he had gained her as his friend, but he was deceived. She still encouraged Anne in carrying on secret communications with Spain and in planning the cardinal's downfall; and once more she was arrested, being seized in the dead of the night and exiled to her castle of Dampierre, where she was constantly watched. Even then she managed to escape, and in the disguise of a peasant woman to have an interview with the queen at the convent of the Val de Grace; but shortly after the fact was known to Richelieu, a coach with a guard of musketeers drove into the courtyard of Dampierre, and madame de Chevreuse was forcibly carried off to the lonely Château de Milly, in the midst of a vast forest, where, strictly guarded and allowed only one waiting-woman, she was prevented for the time from doing further mischief.

Marie de Hautefort was a more dangerous because a more respectable enemy. She endeavoured to rouse the king to independent action. Richelieu was well aware of this, but she was too sincerely devoted to Anne to be lastingly in the favour of Louis; and the weariness which she felt when obliged to give up her time to amuse him was sometimes so evident that the king became irritable and suspicious. A rival would ensure her downfall, and Louise de la Fayette, another of the maids of honour, who had the attraction of a very lovely voice, was brought forward; but her influence was also exerted against Richelieu, and the jealous minister in consequence bent his mind upon removing her from court. Louise had always expressed a desire to enter a convent, and Richelieu, when he found her inclined to delay, induced his own confessor, the stern
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VIII.

omnican Carré, to interfere. The welfare of France, so the
omnican urged, depended upon the retirement of mademoiselle
la Fayette. Philip of Spain would never consent to lay down
ars whilst another person held, however innocently, the place
the king's regard which ought to belong to the queen, and Louise,
supported, took her farewell of the court and entered the con-
tent of the Visitation in the Rue St. Antoine. The king often saw
there, and when no longer under the restraints of a court,
purse spoke to him more openly than she had ever done before,
ploring the exile of his mother and the alliance with the German
otestants, and describing Richelieu as an ambitious and selfish
n, who would one day fail him in his need, and devote himself
the duke of Orleans, the heir presumptive. At the same time
implored him to listen to the advice of his confessor, Caussin, a
suit father, held in great esteem for his piety and integrity.

Richelieu saw from the king's manner that his power was
ading; but the folly of Anne of Austria, as before, came to his aid,
ordial was now really desirous of peace with Spain, some
tent successes having restored the military glory of France. He
ened negotiations with the Spanish minister, the count duke Olivarez
at he found himself in a mysterious manner constantly foiled in his
ns. Spies were unscrupulously employed, and on the last day of
uly 1637, having assembled the council of state at the Louvre for the
tensible purpose of making certain explanations as to military
airs, Richelieu rose and said, addressing the king, 'Sire, we have
ived at that period of national calamity when the reasonable re-
don of a queen of France with the enemy must be arrested. Her
isty, I have reason to believe, has made important political dis-
ures, the proofs of which exist in the convent of the Val de
ace.'

The sensation excited by this speech was intense. The king
tened in sullen wrath; the chancellor suggested the arraignment
the queen on a charge of high treason, and orders were given that
r confidential messenger, La Porte, should be arrested. The news
the arrest accidentally reached the ears of Marie de Hautefort,
o, though innocent herself, was perfectly aware of the queen's
iges. It was necessary to give Anne warning without loss of
e, but she was in her bedchamber, attended by madame de Sénecé,
 mistress of the robes, who was suspicious of the queen's corre-
cquence. A note written by Marie was entrusted to one of her
nds, a lady of the bedchamber, who presented herself before the
en in a very singular dress. This drew the queen's attention, d
at the same time a sign from the young lady caught her eye.
ne drew near, and as she did so the lady-in-waiting contrived to
reat until a large mirror hid the queen from the watchful eyes of
madame de Sénece. The note was then given, and Anne, under the
pretense of retiring to her oratory, withdrew to read it.

The contents so alarmed her that she fell back almost senseless.
For forty hours not a morsel of food passed her lips, and abandoning
herself to despair she was heard to murmur, 'Lost, lost! The
 cardinal will marry his niece to the king, and she will have children.'

Her anxiety was visible to all. 'Consternation is imprinted on
the face of the queen,' wrote the Swedish ambassador, Grotius, to
the Swedish chancellor, Oxenstierna; 'her health evidently suffers.'

On the Feast of the Assumption Anne attended mass and received
the Holy Eucharist in the chapel at Chantilly, and there, kneeling
before the altar, sent for her secretary and her confessor and took a
solemn oath that she had never held treasonable correspondence with
any foreign pretender, and charged them both to go to the king and
repeat what she had now done and said.

Only a few days after, terrified by hearing that several more
persons, implicated in her intrigues, were about to be examined,
she humbled herself to send for Richelieu, and make a confession to
him of her correspondence with the governor of the Netherlands, the
disclosures she had made to the Spanish ambassador Mirabel, and
many other treacherous acts of a similar kind.

A formal pardon was obtained for her as the result of this con-
fession, but even now she had not owned all, and La Porte might at
any moment compromise her further by revealing more than she had
thought fit to own. Mademoiselle de Hautefort once more came to her
aid. Disguising herself as a servant, she contrived to gain admittance
to the Bastille, and to have an interview with a young nobleman, the
chevalier de Jars, who had been for some time in prison on the
charge of having assisted the queen in her correspondence with
Gaston of Orleans. To him a note was confided, which he was
charged by some means or other to convey to La Porte, who was
imprisoned in one of the lowest dungeons far underneath the
chevalier's tower. By boring a hole in the floor of his own room
De Jars communicated with two men in the cell below, and they in
like manner dug a hole into the dungeon beneath them. The
prisoners thus mutually aiding each other, La Porte was at last
reached. The story seems scarcely credible, but it is told by La
Porte himself in his memoirs.

Once informed what the queen's confessions had been, La Porte
guarded himself even under the most alarming examination from
saying anything that might further implicate her. He showed, in-
deed, such singular fidelity that Richelieu, knowing well that all was
not told, was heard to lament that he did not himself possess so
faithful a servant.

The implication of the duchesse de Chevreuse in the queen's plot
not escape enquiry. Richelieu, though he supplied her with money for her private expenses, obliged her to undergo a severe mortification, and threatened her with imprisonment in the castle of Chateau—a severe punishment for its dungeons and instruments of torture—which concealed her identity. Much terrified, Madame de Chevreuse used the cardinal's money to gain her freedom. Taking a one day on the pretext of health, she contrived, whilst in the disguise of a young cavalier with a flaxen wig, a cloak, doublet, hose, boots, spurs, and rapier; her forehead being bound with a scarf, as if to protect a wound received in a duel. In this disguise she rode off in the direction of Spain. When she reached Bayonne, a gentleman, struck by her appearance, drew near and asked her if she was Madame de Chevreuse, laughing and waving her cap, galloped on to Bordeaux, where, on Spanish ground, she felt herself safe.

Causin, the king's confessor, was the queen's chief friend throughout this miserable affair; for he, like herself, was bent on Richelieu's overthrow and the return of the queen mother. On one occasion he sent a letter from Marie de' Medici, with which Richelieu was much touched. 'I wish, I wish,' replied Louis, 'that I could restore her; but I dare not discuss the subject with the cardinal. If you can prevail you may depend upon my sanction.' Causin, thus encouraged, ventured still further, and proposed the dismissal of Richelieu. Louis nodded assent. The confessor then used to vindicate the queen, but Louis would not endure this. Causin lost ground by the attempt. Certain reforms in the administration were afterwards suggested by him, but the king's courage deserted him; he dared not propose them, and instead of bringing Richelieu on his own head, the cardinal's papers were seized, and he received an order to leave Paris on the following morning under the guard.

Louise de la Fayette, when after this she saw the king at her request, reproached him with his abject submission to his mother. 'What would you, madame?' exclaimed Louis passionately. 'God bestows upon every creature, however unfortunate, the power of self-defence. My wife is childless, and she hates me; my mother wishes to dethrone me; my brother desires to put me on his own head; my chief nobles betray me and rebel against me. But for the cardinal I should not long, it may be, keep my crown.'

One source of the troubles which Louis thus enumerated was ill-health, however, to be soon after ended, for on the 5th of September, 1638, Anne of Austria gave birth to a son, afterwards Louis.
Louis XIV. Gaston of Orleans at once lost his position as heir presumptive to the throne, and the king had no longer anything to fear from the intrigues which had brought him so much misery, but he could never be induced to look cordially upon his wife, and even after the birth of a second son she remained estranged from his affections.

Brighter days seemed now to be dawning upon the French nation. The German war, conducted by duke Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, had proved on the whole successful. In 1638, Brisach, in Alsace, was attacked, and Richelieu triumphantly announced its capture on the 18th of December to his confidant Joseph du Tremblay, who was lying at the point of death. 'Courage, father Joseph!' he exclaimed; 'Brisach is ours,' and a smile of satisfaction lit up the face of the monk, who immediately afterwards expired. Alsace, by Richelieu's clever management, was annexed to France (a.d. 1639). In the following year (1640) Artois also became French, the Spaniards being driven out of it. In Piedmont brilliant victories were gained by the famous comte d'Harcourt, one of the Lorraine family, assisted by the French general Turenne, who was fast rising into notice. This war in Piedmont had become part of the general contest, but it originated in a dispute with regard to the regency of the country between Christina, the widowed duchess of Savoy, sister of Louis XIII., and her brother-in-law, cardinal Maurice, and Thomas, prince of Carignan.

The princes sought support from Spain. Christina threw herself upon the protection of France. Turin was taken by the French on the 22nd of September, and at the beginning of the following year (1641) the Spanish provinces of Catalonia and Roussillon were seized. Resting upon their ancient privileges, or fueras, these provinces had been always partially independent, and the despotism of Philip IV. and his minister led to an insurrection, which Richelieu of course supported. The Spaniards were defeated, and Louis claimed the provinces as a portion of his dominions. And now at last France had the advantage on all her frontiers. Richelieu profited by this circumstance to strike a last blow at his enemies. He accused the duc de Vendôme of plotting against his life, and the duke was obliged to flee from his country; and he then turned his attention to the comte de Soissons, who was still at Sedan, where he had sought refuge after the failure of the plan for assassinating Richelieu at Anvers. By the cardinal's advice the French forces were turned against Sedan. Defeat followed, and the victorious comte de Soissons might have carried his troops to Paris; but in the moment of his victory after the battle a pistol shot from an unknown hand struck him in the head as he was standing in the midst of his officers, and the power of Richelieu was secured.

1 Roussillon has remained French down to the present day.
The cardinal’s chief foes, amongst whom was to be reckoned the duc de Guise, grandson of Francis (le Balafré), were now in exile; and the duc d’Épernon was old and lived shut up in the castle of Loches, of which he was governor. The clergy, the nobles, the parliaments, dared not raise a voice against the imperious minister, and the king was simply his servant. It was a cruel tyranny which he exercised. The taxes had become intolerable to the poor, both from their amount and the manner in which they were levied. The villages were reckoned as a whole, and the industrious inhabitants of one village, after paying their own portion, often found their remaining goods, and even themselves, seized in order to make up the deficiencies of a neighbouring hamlet; whilst, as regarded the rich, the power of the government and every privilege which might interfere with the cardinal’s will were to be abolished. ‘I dare not begin any plan,’ said Richelieu of himself, ‘until I have well considered it; but when once my resolution is taken, I overthrow, I mow down, all that stands in my way; and then I cover all with my cardinal’s scarlet robe.’

The health of Louis was failing; he had no power to resist, and could only listen to complaints, and thus give a silent countenance to plots which his conscience forbade him to encourage.

Mazarin, the wily Italian who had been instrumental in bringing about peace with Savoy, had by this time taken an important position at the French court. He had separated himself from Richelieu and devoted himself to the queen, to whom his fascinating manner and apparent sympathy were most acceptable. Another ally was necessary for the cardinal, and, availing himself of the king’s fondness for young persons, Richelieu introduced to Louis, as his page, the handsome and accomplished, but vain and self-indulgent Henri, Cinq Mars, youngest son of the marquis d’Effiat. The king petted and spoilt his young page, who in return amused his master by showing how magpies could be snared, giving advice about the king’s kennels, and helping him to carve his wooden toys.

It was to this that Louis had been reduced by the tyranny of Richelieu. Puerile occupations had become a necessity, and he even interested himself in learning how to cook. But his weakness showed itself most with regard to Cinq Mars. If the page was absent and forgot to write, the king shed tears, yet at the same time he lectured him, until the boy only longed to escape from his presence and spend his time with the servants in the ante-chamber, reading the ‘Romance of Cyrus,’ the famous fiction of the period. The quarrels of the king and his favourite were, indeed, like those of school-boys, and often they would make peace by a written agreement, signed and sealed, witnessed by a gentleman-in-waiting, and then sent by Louis to the cardinal. Fashionable society in Paris
was at this time to be found not at the court, for Anne of Austria lived in seclusion at St. Germain, devoting herself to her children, but at the entertainments given by the beautiful and brilliant madame de Rambouillet, the princesse de Condé, and the princesse Marie de Gonzague Nevers, and others. By these leaders of the gay world Cinq Mars, now often called M. le Grand, from the office of 'grand écuyer,' or master of the horse, which he held, was received with an amount of flattery which quite turned his head. He devoted himself to Marie de Gonzague, and at length waited on the cardinal and asked his interest to procure for him the hand of the princess and the rank of a duke.

Richelieu looked at the youth with a smile of contemptuous amusement, and answered, 'You must, sir, be mad to aspire to the hand of a princess who was once destined to be the bride of Monsieur; whilst madame Marie is mad if she has given you the encouragement which you are bold enough to proclaim.' Cinq Mars was foiled for the moment, but he did not the less believe that he should one day be the husband of Marie de Gonzague.

Such a marriage might indeed have seemed far from impossible. The cardinal himself had been requested to give his niece, mademoiselle de Brézé, to the young duc d'Enghien, the son of the prince de Condé, and the young lady had been received by Anne of Austria with caresses and favours. Cinq Mars, however, did not recognise the difference between inferiority of rank in the case of a lady and of a gentleman. The cardinal, with his usual shrewdness, saw and owned it, and when asked to unite his nephew with a royal princess declined, saying 'that he had no objection to give gentlewomen to princes, but not simple gentlewomen to princesses.'

The presumption of Cinq Mars soon brought down upon him the increased displeasure of the cardinal. He was one day with the king, when Richelieu and the members of the privy council appeared ready for a conference. Instead of retiring Cinq Mars remained; and Louis, taking him by the hand, said in a feeble voice to the cardinal, 'In order that this, my dearest friend, may one day be capable of serving me, it is my will that he now takes his seat in my council.' The cardinal smiled blandly, complimented M. le Grand, but took care that only matters of slight moment should be discussed. Shortly after Richelieu had a private interview with the king, and Cinq Mars was then summoned, and informed by Louis in his coldest voice, that his admission to the council board was cancelled, some unpleasant remarks being added as to his dissipation and profligacy. The cardinal's overthrow seems to have been from that moment, in the mind of Cinq Mars, a settled purpose. Instruments were apparently ready to his hand—Gaston of Orleans, always
discontented; Marie de' Medici and madame de Chevreuse, in exile; the due de Bouillon, only partially reconciled to France, and whose fortress of Sedan would be a most important aid in case of civil war; and, above all—as it was supposed—the queen. M. de Thou, the eldest son of the historian, was chosen to negotiate the plot between Cinq Mars, the due de Bouillon, and the duke of Orleans. He was a man of a restless mind, and ill fitted for his task, and so singularly undecided that he sometimes lingered for an hour at his own door before he could make up his mind in which direction to walk. Cinq Mars nicknamed him 'Son Iniquité.'

The first project of the conspirators was to secure to the duke of Orleans, in the event of the king’s death, the position of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and to place Anne in her rightful position as guardian of the young king. To effect these objects the overthrow of Richelieu was deemed absolutely essential, and Cinq Mars took every opportunity of irritating the king’s feelings against his minister by representing the thraldom in which he was held, and touching his conscience in reference to the support given to the heretics. At length one night Cinq Mars ventured to clasp the king in his arms and confess that he had a project which would give freedom to them both.

Louis started, and warned his favourite of the cardinal’s power. But Cinq Mars only entreated the king to be silent, to invite Monsieur to court, and not to go, as the cardinal proposed, to relieve Perpignan, which was still in the hands of the Spaniards. ‘The king,’ said Cinq Mars in a letter written on this occasion to Marie de Gonzague, ‘said to me as he went to his bed, “Good night; do the best you can, but don’t be imprudent.” Judge, my dear princess, if I am not authorised to undertake all I wish.’

M. de Fontrailles, a cousin of Cinq Mars, who had a personal spite against Richelieu for some sharp witlessisms on his personal appearance, was now despatched to Madrid to seek the support of Philip IV. Anything which might withdraw the French from the siege of Perpignan seemed likely to be an advantage to Spain, and a treaty was concluded. Philip IV. was to furnish troops and money, and in return was to recover all the places which had been taken from him by France in the course of the war. The expediency of assassinating Richelieu was also at this time discussed. Fontrailles carried the treaty to Chambord, where the duke of Orleans was amusing himself with hunting, and immediately sought safety for himself by leaving France.

Louis knew nothing of the Spanish treaty; freedom from the tyranny of Richelieu was all that had been proposed to him, but, notwithstanding the suggestions of Cinq Mars, he agreed to accompany the cardinal to Perpignan. On the 2nd of January, 1642,
took a cold leave of his wife, forbidding her to write to madame de Chevreuse or to visit the convent of the Val de Grace. Disobedience was to be followed by the removal of the Dauphin and his brother from her care, for Louis had already become jealous of his children's love for their mother, and had taken offence because the little Dauphin, who was only three years old, cried at seeing his father one evening, after a return from a hunt, wearing a nightcap. 'The queen had brought up his sons to hate him,' he said, 'and therefore it was his intention soon to take them both entirely from her.'

But Anne was at that time studiously avoiding all the efforts made by Cinq Mars to draw her into his schemes, and had again sought the friendship of Richelieu, at whose sumptuous fêtes at the Palais Cardinal she condescended to be present, smiling and talking, whilst the cardinal stood behind her chair in splendid robes of scarlet velvet glittering with jewels.

The first rest of the king and his minister was at Briare, where Richelieu, whose health had long been failing, became so alarmingly ill that Louis proceeded alone to Narbonne, whilst the cardinal turned aside to Tarascon, his faithful and intimate friend Chavigny, one of the secretaries of state, remaining with him.

A few days after his arrival at Narbonne Richelieu was lying on his bed, lonely and very ill, when a packet was brought to him from Paris. His feeble fingers grasped it nervously, but as he began to read his eyes sparkled, he raised himself on his pillow and exclaimed, 'Surely Providence must watch with special love over Richelieu and the welfare of this great realm!' He held in his hand a facsimile of the Spanish treaty, by whom sent was never known, though there is great reason to believe that it was done by order of the queen.

Chavigny was, without loss of time, despatched with the treaty and a letter from Richelieu to the king at Narbonne. The arrest of Cinq Mars was evidently necessary, and Louis signed the order, though with tears, for he was very miserable and full of strange suspicions that the wrong names had been inserted in the treaty, and that those he loved were innocent.

Cinq Mars received intimation of the coming danger. Yet he lingered, and when at last, mounting his horse, he endeavoured to escape, he found the gates closed and guarded. For a little time he concealed himself under some hay in a stable, but being discovered he was carried off to the castle of Montpellier. De Thou was arrested the same night and taken to Tarascon, to be examined by the cardinal. The duc de Bouillon was made prisoner at Camé, whilst Gaston of Orleans fled into Auvergne, where he hid in an old dilapidated château, or roved about in disguise.

Absolute power over the fate of the arrested conspirators was
now given to the cardinal. But, as though to warn him of the preciosity of his newly-recovered position, tidings reached him almost at the same time of the miserable death of the queen who had laid the foundation of his prosperity.

Marie de' Medici died at Cologne on the 3rd of July, 1642. Richelieu had made England, Spain, and Holland afraid to receive her. She had no friends, and when she took refuge at Cologne she was without bread to eat, and was compelled to use the wooden furniture and cupboards of her apartment for fuel. On her deathbed Marie forgave all her enemies—even Richelieu—by name; but when the papal nuncio, who was present, asked whether, as a crowning act of humility, she would send a bracelet she then wore to the cardinal, the dying queen turned away her head and exclaimed, 'Ah, c'est trop!' ('That is too much'), and spoke no more for several hours.

Such a death might well have awakened remorse in Louis and his minister, but their thoughts were entirely occupied with the conspiracy. The king's mind had now turned against his favourite. Cinq Mars sent an earnest appeal for an interview. Louis received it as he was boiling sugar and treacle in a pan over a stove to make lollipops. Taking the pan off the fire and shaking it, he replied, 'No! the soul of Cinq Mars is as black as the bottom of this pan. I will give him no audience.'

The commission for the trial was issued on the 6th of August, 1642.

The offence of De Thou was that of having been privy to the plot, but he, as well as Cinq Mars, was sentenced to be beheaded. Cinq Mars died first, forgiving his enemies, and then laying his head on the block with a courage which touched the hearts of all, more especially of those who thought of the selfish affection which had fostered his faults to his ruin.

De Thou was less outwardly calm, but he had witnessed his friend's death, and doubtless it unnerved him.

The duc de Bouillon was pardoned on condition of ceding Sedan to the crown. As for Monsieur, he, as usual, confessed everything, and gave up all the names he knew. His position saved him from punishment, but it could not save him from degradation and contempt then, or from condemnation by the judgment of posterity.

Great events were crowding upon one another. 'Sire,' wrote Richelieu to Louis, 'your enemies are dead, and Perpignan is yours.' The king expressed his thanks, but said little more; and Richelieu was uneasy. Yet there was no show of this outwardly. The return journey to Paris was performed in great state, chiefly by water, on account of his illness. When compelled to go short distances from the river to the town where he slept, he was carried in a crimson
damask-covered litter, containing a bed, a couch, a table, a mirror, and a chair for his niece or his secretary. It was borne by twelve gentlemen of the guard, who all persisted in marching bareheaded. If the litter proved too large for a passage between walls, the walls were thrown down; if the lodgings were on the second storey of a house, a gradual ascent was constructed of planks railed in on each side, and the windows were taken out; indeed, under no circumstances could the cardinal enter by the door, the litter being of such an enormous size. His barge was equally splendid, and was accompanied by a flotilla of smaller barges and boats, and a squadron of cavalry followed on either side of the river.

Such was the outward display of grandeur, but Richelieu's condition of acute suffering was such as to show to all who approached him that the end of his proud career was rapidly drawing near. He reached Paris about the middle of October. The king, the queen, and the Dauphin visited him. Louis, deeply indignant with his brother, planned, with Richelieu's consent, an edict to deprive the duke of Orleans and his heirs of any ultimate right to the succession; but though acting in concert with his minister, the king with difficulty concealed his hatred and fear of him. The cardinal tried him to the very utmost by insisting upon the dismissal of four officers of the royal household, and when the king hesitated, threatening to resign the management of affairs and leave him to bear the perplexities of government alone. Great agitation and excitement on both sides followed, and Richelieu was the first to suffer. On the very day on which the most obnoxious of the household officers were sent away his illness became more serious, and on the third morning after prayers for his recovery were said in all the churches in Paris.

In the afternoon, at the cardinal's request, Louis visited him. Richelieu's chamber was filled with courtiers, bishops, and attendants; and at the moment of the king's entrance the bishop of Meaux was reading passages from the Service of the Dead, whilst the cardinal, propped up by pillows, listened, gasping for breath. All except the immediate attendants left the room. The sight of his sovereign for a moment revived the cardinal. 'Sire,' he said, addressing Louis, 'I now bid you adieu for ever in this world. In taking my leave of your majesty I behold your kingdom more powerful than ever, and your enemies vanquished. The only recompense I presume to ask is your favour for my nephew and relations. Your majesty has many competent personages in your council. Retain their assistance.' He grew faint, and his voice sank to a whisper. It is said that he recommended Mazarin as his successor. Louis gave a general promise to attend to his wishes, withdrew, leisurely strolling through the cardinal's splendid ...
of pictures, with an air of unconcern which occasioned many bitter comments.

That night the last sacraments were administered. The vast apartments of the cardinal’s palace were thronged; even his bed-chamber was thrown open for those who might desire once more to look upon him, whilst crowds filled the streets, awaiting the report of the messengers who were hourly despatched to the Louvre. The cardinal lingered till the following midday, when he expired, apparently without suffering.

The king was told of his minister’s death as he sat alone in his dreary chamber in the Louvre, overlooking the Seine. He turned pale, was silent for a few moments, and then waving his hand to dismiss the messenger, said coldly, ‘Voilà un grand politque mort’ (‘A great statesman is dead’).

By his will Richelieu confirmed the donation of the Palais Cardinal to the king. His library he bequeathed to the nation, under the charge of the College of the Sorbonne.

Louis at first appeared absolutely elated at having the uncontrolled management of the affairs of government. He opened every despatch, granted pardons, and permitted the return of all the exiles, except the duchesse de Chevreuse and madame de Fargis, who had assisted her in her plots. But his health was rapidly declining, and his thoughts turned anxiously to the future position of the country and of his children.

Though utterly distrusting his wife and his brother, it was still absolutely needful that to one or both, in the event of his death, the government should be confided. After much discussion in the council, it was determined that Anne should be named regent, and the duke of Orleans lieutenant-governor of the kingdom. The queen was to be assisted by a council of state, who were to transact all political business, and confer all the chief offices, even of the royal household; her independent rule being limited strictly to her domestic establishment and a few subordinate appointments. The authority of the duke of Orleans was in like manner so circumscribed as to be merely nominal.

A strict clause forbade the return of madame de Chevreuse to France so long as the contest with Spain should continue, whilst Châteauneuf, formerly keeper of the seals, who had been deeply implicated in the late intrigues, and in consequence imprisoned, was also excluded from pardon till the war was ended.

The queen was required to take an oath of adhesion, and to affix her signature to the humiliating edict. She went through the necessary formalities without remonstrance, and kneeling at the

1 This council was to consist of Mazarin, the prince de Conde, the chancelier Séguier, and Chavigny and Bouthilliers, secretaries of state.
DEATH OF LOUIS—HIS CHARACTER.

Louis XIII.

king's footstool, expressed her gratitude. But Louis, rising from his seat, turned away in silence. That was the last day of his appearance at the council board. He became more and more weak, and spent the greater part of his time reclining in an easy chair, and gazing from one of the small rooms at St. Germain on the lovely view below. The nearness of death was constantly present to his mind. 'Ah,' he said one day to the gentleman in attendance, as he pointed to the tower of St. Denis, which could be seen from his window, 'there I shall soon repose—a long repose. My poor body, I fear, will be roughly shaken going thither; the roads are in a very bad condition.' He was indeed almost worn to a skeleton, and with a pitiful wonder showed his arm to his faithful servant Du Pontis, exclaiming, 'Look, Pontis; these are the arms of a king of France.' On the 24th of April the king was reported to be sinking fast, and the queen and the children were sent for. Anne threw herself weeping on her knees by the pillow. For some time she talked to her husband in private, and everyone observed the affectionate change in the king's manner; and when after this he rallied, Anne was as exact in her watchfulness as the most devoted of wives.

The king's mind often wandered, but he was not wholly delirious. One evening, as the prince de Condé was bending over him, he awoke with a start and said, 'Ha! monsieur le Prince, I have been dreaming that your son D'Enghien had come to blows with our enemies, and that we gained the victory after a very hard-fought battle.' The dream was not remarkable in itself, but subsequent events caused it to be looked upon as a prophecy.

The weary struggle between life and death ended on Ascension Day, the 14th of May, 1643. The queen was with her husband to the last, and he sank gently and expired at three o'clock in the afternoon.

The character of Louis XIII. was in itself unmarked by any great qualities. The actions mostly to be condemned, such as the death of D'Ancre, cannot be judged apart from the condition of the times, which allowed of private revenge for political offences. His life was pure in the midst of a corrupt court, and his concern for the interests of his country disinterested; but he was a jealous and cold-hearted man. Throughout his reign he was but a secondary ruler. Richelieu was the real sovereign of France, and it is singular evidence both of the king's weakness and honesty of purpose that he should thus have submitted to the yoke of a minister whom he hated.

It was Richelieu who increased the power of France both politically and territorially, but in order to carry out his schemes he imposed intolerable burdens of taxation upon the people, and sought the rights of citizens. One especial talent necessary for
statesman Richelieu lacked; he was no financier. He encouraged commerce indeed, and favoured colonisation in the Antilles and in Canada; but when money was needed he knew no way of procuring it except by confiscations and the sale of offices; and his personal extravagance was such, that out of the yearly revenue of the country of 80,000,000 francs nearly 4,000,000 were absorbed by the cardinal's household.

Richelieu encouraged art and literature, and is especially to be noted as the founder of the French Academy (Académie Française), which has ever since been deemed in France the ultimate judge of literary merit.

But superstition was singularly blended with enlightenment in him, as it was in the age generally. Urbain Grandier, the curé of Loudun, was condemned to death by him as a magician, whilst astrology was held in such repute that when the Dauphin was born an astrologer was placed in the queen's room to note the signs of the heavens. The period was in all ways one of great mental development. In Spain Cervantes was writing Don Quixote, and Lopez de Vega pouring forth his plays; whilst in France the tragedies of Corneille were gaining for their author a lasting fame. The poet Tasso in Italy, Spenser and (the most wonderful of all geniuses) Shakespeare, in England, were producing works destined, it would seem, to last as long as literature shall endure. Bacon was introducing a new system of experimental philosophy, followed by Descartes in France; Galileo was reconstructing the theories of astronomy; and the painters Rubens, Van Dyck, and Teniers in Holland, and Guido and Domenichino in Italy, were proving to the world that, although Raphael and Michael Angelo were dead, the art of painting lived. To a free nation a period so marked by genius and talent would have been the dawn of a new life—a life which should spread through all classes, and rouse even the lowest to energy and hope. But it would seem the fate of France to flourish only under a pressure sufficient to keep down the ever smouldering embers of discontent, the result of selfishness and vanity, by stifling individual action. The pressure of Richelieu had been heavy; the pressure of Louis XIV. was about to be heavier; and the French revolution was the bursting of the pent-up forces for which no safety-valve had been constructed.
CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LOUIS XIV.
A.D. 1643-1715.

It was about six o'clock in the morning of the 15th of May, 1643, that Anne of Austria, after a brief repose of five hours, entered the great gallery of the old palace at St. Germain, and presented to the assembled courtiers and ladies their new king.

Louis XIV. was at that time rather more than four years old, and even then the manner of the fair-haired, handsome boy, as he stood by his mother's side without shyness, and extending his little hand to be kissed, prognosticated the graceful dignity which was to be his attraction through life. Shouts of greeting welcomed him as he was afterwards taken to the balcony overlooking the principal court, which was filled with an excited crowd. Being then taken to the council-room and lifted into his chair, the little king, his hand guided by his mother, wrote his signature with great gravity on the state paper by which it was customary for the sovereigns of France to notify their accession and order a general mourning for their predecessor. After this Anne retired, giving directions that the court should remove the next day to the Louvre.

The struggle of party spirit then began. Chavigny, well instructed in the policy of Richelieu, was resolved to win by art what he could not gain by power. For the time the queen regent must, he saw, be all-powerful. He therefore boldly determined to conciliate her by proposing, at a meeting of the newly-appointed council held very late at night, to resign the office of secretary of state, which, as one of the members, had been conferred upon himself, stating, as his reason for thus acting, that it was necessary for the welfare of the country that the regent should be unfettered by a council which she had not chosen, and urging upon his colleagues to follow his example. The prince de Condé approved of the suggestion; the duke of Orleans talked, but no one seemed quite to understand what he meant; a final agreement was, however, made by all that on the next day their several resignations should be placed in the queen's hands. Anne received the decision graciously, but retained the services of Chavigny and his father, and the chancellor Ségur, until the parliament had abrogated the edict of the late king. Mazarin kept aloof from all interference with these arrangements. Amongst the party who had been opposed to Richelieu but two persons were, he knew, likely to be summoned as the queen's advisers—Potier, bishop
of Beauvais, and the due de Beaufort. The bishop was ignorant of public affairs and bigoted; and the duke, though handsome, courteous, and agreeable, was familiar and presumptuous. Anne amused herself with his flatteries, but she could have but little trust in his abilities. The wily cardinal waited, therefore, patiently whilst the queen received the homage of the party—including both men and women—who were now anxiously expecting offices of trust, and who, from their absurd pretensions, soon received the nickname of 'Les Importans.' Amongst the ladies, indeed, were to be reckoned two of the queen's true friends—Marie de Hautefort and madame de Sénécé, the governess of the little king; but the exiled duchesse de Chevreuse, her sister-in-law, and the bold and unprincipled, though beautiful, madame de Montbazon, who delighted in her power over the young due de Beaufort, were persons little likely to advance the honour of any cause; and as regarded the leaders of the party, Châteauneuf, who was considered the head, though released from prison, was not yet suffered to appear at court, and the due de Vendôme and the due de la Rochefoucauld were entirely devoid of political experience.

The abrogation of the edict of regency by the parliament was declared on the 19th of May. On that day the queen, preceded by a gorgeous procession of knights and nobles, repaired to the Palais de Justice, followed by her little son, who was carried by the due de Chevreuse—two other persons bearing his violet velvet mantle—and placed on his throne. Presently Anne rose, lifted the child to a footstool, and whispered something in his ear. For the only time in his life it is recorded that Louis XIV. was shy. He blushed and laughed, and hid his face in the cushions of the throne. The queen, however, whispered again, and the boy stepped forward and said, with winning grace, 'Gentlemen, I am come here to assure you of my affection. My chancellor will inform you of my will.'

Then Anne spoke. She expressed the depth of her affliction, and entreated the advice of the parliament. When she paused the duke of Orleans and the prince de Condé set before the assembly the resolution of the ministers to leave the queen regent free to act for herself.

A long discussion followed; the votes of the chambre were taken, and with acclamations which shook the roof of the hall Anne of Austria was invested for the time being with absolute control over the fortunes of France.

Two hours afterwards the prince de Condé announced to Mazarin that the queen had made him president of the council, re-

1 The due de Beaufort was the son of the due de Vendôme. This illustrious branch of the royal family, descended from Henry IV. and Gabrielle d'Estrees, was the source of much political intrigue.
taining also the services of Chavigny and his father, and of the chancellor Ségurier.

This was a terrible blow to the 'Importans; they asked for an explanation, and were told that Mazarin understood the position of public affairs and was disinterested.

From that moment Mazarin began the political education of the queen, evening after evening shutting himself up with her, and discussing public affairs, so that she might be well informed of them when she met her council. The foreign policy of France was still the question of most pressing importance. The young duc d'Enghien, only twenty-two years of age, but thoughtful in mind, firm in action, and with brilliant military talents, had gained, five days after the death of Louis XIII., a victory which made him the hero of the day. The battle was fought near Rocroi, a fortress in the district of the Ardennes, which had been invested by the viceroy of the Netherlands immediately after Richelieu's death. The duc d'Enghien had been sent to relieve it. The memorable engagement by which he succeeded took place on the 19th of May. The contest was severe, but it ended in the total extermination of the Spanish infantry.

The idea of peace was now suggested. Philip IV. was willing to negotiate, but Mazarin was opposed to it. 'Madame,' he said to the queen, 'the battle of Rocroi is a noble exploit, but it is the use we shall make of it that will bring glory to your regency;' and the duc d'Enghien forthwith proceeded to carry the war into Germany. This determined policy was startling to the 'Importans,' for the queen had so humourcd them by granting their requests that the witty coadjutor-archbishop of Paris, afterwards known as the cardinal de Retz, declared that for two or three months the whole French language was comprised in five little words— 'La reine est si bonne' ('The queen is so kind'). The most evident proof, however, of the regent's political intentions was given by her cold reception of madame de Chevreuse, who had been recalled from exile. Anne indeed shed tears as she embraced the duchess, but when madame de Chevreuse spoke to her in Spanish she turned aside, and the duchess, who had expected to be received as in former years, unable to hide her mortification, was obliged to address herself to the bishop of Beauvais. By him she was treated with the utmost deference, for he imagined that she would now resume her influence and be able to defeat the designs of the party to which he was himself opposed. At the termination of the audience madame de Chevreuse returned to her home to receive the homage of many of the chief persons in Paris; but from that time she became the centre of a faction opposed to the royal authority.

Mazarin was now daily rendering himself more agreeable and more necessary to the queen. The only revenge he took upon those
who he knew were plotting against him was by absenting himself from the council on the plea of sudden illness when important foreign affairs were to be discussed, and sending a heap of letters and papers on subjects requiring the most delicate handling, to be answered by his helpless nominal chief, the bishop of Beauvais. He continued to reside in the Hôtel de Clèves, in three half-furnished apartments lighted from the roof. His coach was drawn by a pair of shambling horses; his suite consisted of two servants; and when he met the carriage of any great nobleman or lady of the court he would draw up at one side of the street to permit it to pass. On the day when the council met he usually walked to the Louvre. His courteous manners gained friends amongst the gentlemen and pages in waiting, and by their means he gained information as to the intrigues of the palace which was eminently useful.

The faction opposed to him had for its ostensible object the elevation of Châteauneuf to power. Madame de Chevreuse would have been willing that the ex-keeper should be admitted to a seat in the council with Mazarin upon any terms, for, as she significantly said, 'Once get M. de Châteauneuf again in the privy council, and he will need no further patronage.' But Mazarin was too jealous to allow this, and no concession could be obtained. Even the duke of Orleans was warned that unless he renounced his intrigues his residence in Paris would not be tolerated; and Madame de Chevreuse received a still sharper admonition, being informed by the queen, in a personal interview, that if she could not conform to the existing state of affairs she would do better to retire from the court; after saying which Anne retired to her private chamber, and made a sign to a page to close the doors, so that the duchess might not attempt to answer.

At this time Anne's conversations with Mazarin occupied every evening; the bishop of Beauvais, who was accustomed to attend her about the same time, was continually kept waiting, and was only admitted to say grace when the queen sat down to supper, after which he was allowed a few moments' conversation. All Paris talked of this conduct, until the saintly father Vincent de Paul, who was gathering around him the noblest spirits of the day, was constrained to interfere and urge upon the queen that she was losing the respect due to her high position. But Anne was still self-willed, as in her youth. Every day added to the power of the hated Italian, and at length, as in the case of Richelieu, his enemies began to discuss the possibility of his assassination. The duchesse de Chevreuse, the duchesse de Montbazon, and the duc de Beaufort entered into the warmly, and it was arranged that an attempt should be made certain night to shoot the cardinal from a window as he quitted the Louvre. Madame de Chevreuse took upon herself to visit the
malcontent duc d’Eperon, who commanded the guards which were to be on duty, and significantly begged him to order the sergeant not to interfere in any tumult about the palace. Eperon promised to comply, but it is supposed that he gave a hint to Mazarin, for certainly that night the cardinal never left the Louvre, and on the following evening the duc de Beaufort was arrested and carried to Vincennes, where he was imprisoned in a chamber high up in the tower of the donjon, and treated with considerable rigour.

The same evening madame de Chevreuse had an audience of the queen, in which she earnestly denied having any share in the intended crime. Anne professed to believe her, but added, ‘I pray you, madame, not to concern yourself about state affairs, but permit me to govern this realm at my pleasure; and allow me to suggest that it is time you should seek retirement, and rule your life according to the holy precepts which can alone assure your everlasting felicity.’ The duchess made no reply. Doubtless she would fain have resisted the sentence, but it would have been useless, and once more she withdrew from the court.

Mazarin was now fully recognised as the prime minister, and the bishop of Beauvais was dismissed as incompetent. Several of the cardinal’s opponents, though innocent of offence, were exiled. Amongst them was the good bishop of Lisieux, the queen’s confessor. He was a great friend of Marie de Hautefort, and their joint influence made the cardinal uneasy. Anne would fain have retained her confessor, but she was told by Mazarin that the times were too critical for divided counsels, and that her conscience was fully sanction the acts of her ministers. Tears were in her eyes as she saw the bishop for the last time. She held out her hand to him and he kissed it gravely, but said nothing even when Anne earnestly entreated his prayers. No doubt he felt that in giving up her old friends the queen was also giving up those who would most sincerely have upheld her in the path of honour.

‘The fair days of the regency,’ as this period was afterwards popularly called, afforded a breathing-time for France. Taxes were taken off, favours lavishly bestowed: Mazarin was all courtesy, the queen smiled. The war indeed continued, but it was carried on in Germany, and the exploits of D’Enghien and of the vicomte de Turenne rendered the people for the time insensible to the cost by which the national glory was purchased. The duc d’Enghien was not, indeed, always with his troops. Paris had many attractions for him: he was the hero of the day, and the honours showered upon him in court were soothing to his pride, whilst they added to the wealth of his family—the prince de Condé being flattered and humoured: his demands for the sake of his gallant son.
The young duke's return to the army after these temporary absences were constantly signalised by some exploit of importance, for he took back with him the flower of the young French nobility. Turenne, who remained always at his post, bore, indeed, the brunt of the contest, but D'Enghien, after coming to his assistance at the opportune moment, had the honour of the victory. So it was in an attack made upon the imperialist forces, under the famous baron de Mercy, at Fribourg in 1644, when the battle continued for three days, and Turenne was saved only by the aid of D'Enghien. So it was again the following year; Turenne was in a position of danger, when D'Enghien was despatched from Paris to his aid, and in the battle of Nördlingen, fought on the 3rd of August, 1645, Mercy was killed, and the imperialist troops were defeated, though with an equal loss of 4,000 killed and wounded on each side. With the generosity of true courage the duke, in his letter to the queen, attributed the success of the day to Turenne; but he did not receive the less honour himself, and when he returned to Paris, though he was so ill that he was obliged to be carried on a litter, the reception which awaited him raised him to a pinnacle of glory, fraught with danger to a man of his character. He would not brook the slightest opposition. To Gassion, one of the best of the French commanders, he said one day, before all the army, in reply to some remonstrance, 'It is not your business to reason, but to obey. I am your general, and I will teach you to obey as implicitly as a soldier's boy.'

Mazarin would fain have prevented this absorption of military glory in one person, and he stirred up the duke of Orleans to ask for the chief command in Flanders. It was given him in 1646, and D'Enghien consented to serve under him. The cardinal also sent a powerful army into Catalonia under comte d'Harcourt, whilst Prince Thomas of Savoy was carrying on the war in Italy. But no general could compete with D'Enghien.

Monsieur after a short time returned to Paris, and D'Enghien, ezj in sole command, besieged Dunkirk, one of the most important of the Netherland seaports, and being seconded by the Dutch fleet, under admiral van Tromp, took it in the middle of October. The cardinal's jealousy of D'Enghien's success was increased when the death of the prince de Condé, on the 20th of December, 1646, gave the young duke wealth, name, and position apart from his military distinction. The difference between the father and the son was in ways striking. The old prince de Condé was, according to the description of his contemporaries, dirty and mean-looking in appearance, obstinate and peculiar in temper; but he had been always submissive to the royal authority, and it was an evil day for the queen when deferential prince, educated under the vigilant eye of Henry IV., succeeded by the wilful young military hero whose chief characteristic was overweening self-confidence.
SIEGE OF LERIDA—MAZARIN’S NIECES AND NEPHEWS.

Louis XIV.

Somewhat of a check was, however, about this time given to the new prince de Condé. The comte d’Harcourt’s campaign in Cata-
lonia had been in a measure a failure. The town of Lerida, built on
a rock, had successfully resisted a siege, and Mazarin consented that
the hero of Rocroi and Nordlingen should undertake the task of re-
ducing it, knowing at the same time that the Catalonians would not
be inclined to aid his efforts, as they were anxious to be reassigned to
Spain. Condé arrogantly opened the trenches in May 1647 to the
sound of music, whilst the commandant of Lerida, with mocking polite-
ness, sent the prince ices and oranges as if for a ball. But the siege
was a grave matter. The miners were unable to overcome the ob-
stacles which the rock presented to them. The soldiers of Aragon
were drawing near to relieve the city. The heat of the weather
was increasing, and at length sickness broke out in the French
camp; and Condé was compelled to withdraw. He returned to Paris indignant with Mazarin for having sent him on an expedi-
tion in which his failure was inevitable, and his mortified vanity
could scarcely have been soothed by finding his defeat made the
common topic of ridicule in Paris. One evening, being at the
theatre, a low fellow began to hiss him. Some persons present
would fain have seized the delinquent, but he escaped in the crowd,
calling out, ‘I am not to be taken! I am Lerida!’

Anne had by this time removed to the Palais Royal, and
Mazarin, after the plot against his life, took up his abode in a suite
of rooms in the same building. He had hitherto spoken of his
Italian relatives disparagingly, but now the court was surprised by
the announcement that three nieces and a nephew of his eminence
were on their way to Paris.

The queen had expressed herself anxious to receive them, and
sent an escort to Rome for them; and on their arrival they were
immediately brought to be introduced to her.

Anne was much attracted by the little Italians, who were
remarkably pretty children, and though the cardinal professed no
desire that no particular notice should be taken of them, he was
evidently well pleased to have them about him. Many were the
prophecies of future grandeur which were made in reference to the
three little girls, the ‘Mazarinettes,’ as they were called by the Par-
sians of the day.

‘Ah!’ said Gaston of Orleans to his friend the abbé de la Rivière,
as they stood a little apart from the throng, watching the little fright-
ened children standing behind the queen’s chair on the day when they
first appeared at court, ‘the lives of those poor little girls are in danger:
People will stare at them until they swallow them up.’ ‘Oh, no,

1 Mazarin had six nieces, but they were not all brought to Paris at one
time.
signeur,' replied the abbé; 'we shall still have the felicity of
ning at the pretty little damsels, who will soon be endowed with
revenues, and jewels, and probably will become grandes.
boy, however, has to grow into a man, and his luck may be
doubtful.'

Inigo Mancini, however, lived but a short time, and the duke's
ostications fell to the ground; but the cardinal's favour was
bestowed on the younger brother, Philip. The first excitement
the three nieces were for a time allowed to retire into com-
itive obscurity. Madame de Sénèce accepted the office of go-
ss, and they pursued their studies under her superintendence.
up to this time the young king had passed a happy child-
Madame de Sénèce well fulfilled her task so far as regarded
ard polish. The little Louis could dance to perfection, kiss his
er's hand gracefully, and salute his courtiers with the most
able ease. He could also recite a few poems, but he read
and wrote worse, and his spelling had been greatly neglected.
osity was inculcated, but chiefly as a matter of display.
, said madame de Sénèce one day, 'kings make gifts, but
never lend;' and shortly after, when one of his little playfellows
ed the loan of a tiny jewelled cross-bow—a toy made by Louis
—the young king presented it to him with the most patronising
aying, 'Sir, I wish it was a thing of greater value, but such
is I give it to you.' His great amusement was forming a troop
soldiers and drilling them in the long gallery of the Louvre;
the manner in which he gave the word of command excited the
ation of veteran officers.

At eight years of age he was placed under Mazarin's care, the
uis de Villeroy being his under-governor. He then began a
of Latin, but his chief study was the court ceremonial, which
as obliged to rehearse daily.

A king from his earliest age, Louis never permitted the slightest
irity in his attendants, who, on their part, idolised him for
auty. Soon after the arrival of the Mancini family at Paris,
er, he was seized with the smallpox, and when he again ap-
d the courtiers his complexion was pitted and his features
thickened. But he was still admired. 'Our king,' says a
ier of the period, 'a Cupid once, henceforth moved and
d with the stately majesty of the god Mars.'

His idolised majesty was, however, now to exhibit itself in a
calculated to stir up strong resistance. The struggle between
soeverign's prerogatives and the people's privileges, which in
ultimately brought Charles I. to the scaffold, was about to
in France; and there, as in the neighbouring country, the first
ite was on a financial question. Mazarin's rapacity and pro-
digality were emptying the treasury, and Emery, the minister of finance, was compelled to impose new taxes. An old law forbade the people, for their own safety, to build beyond certain limits in the suburbs outside the walls of Paris; but in more peaceable times this law had been virtually set aside. The suburbs were now large, and inhabited by a very poor population. One morning the king's officers appeared at their doors with an edict compelling them either to pay a fine or see their hovels razed to the ground. The unfortunate people rushed to the parliaments and entreated that they might not be cast out into the streets in the bitter wintry weather. Barillon, one of the presidents, ventured to plead for them, and that evening he, with four or five others, was carried off to a fortress in the Alps, where he died in a few days. Riots ensued, and the 'toisé' (or shaving), as it was called, was not insisted upon further. The people had learnt their first lesson in resistance, and the next unpopular tax met with even greater opposition.

It was proposed to raise the duty upon articles of food brought into Paris. 'An excellent tax,' said Emery, 'which all classes will pay.' He forgot that a tax which is nothing to the rich may be ruin to the poor. The citizens rose against it as with one consent. But Mazarin held them, as he thought, in his power. A certain guarantee, called the 'paulette,' had been given to many persons holding posts under government, which assured to them and their children the possession of these offices for nine years, with the option of selling the office with the king's consent. This guarantee expired on the 1st of January, 1648, and Mazarin threatened not to renew it, unless the new taxes were quietly submitted to.

No less than 45,000 persons in France might be either directly or indirectly ruined by the withdrawal of the guarantee, yet still the citizens resisted, and the parliament refused to register the edict.

It could only be enforced by a 'lit de justice,' or the personal decree of the king in the midst of the parliament. Anne sent for Talon, the attorney-general, and informed him that a 'lit de justice' would be held. Talon replied that a visit from the king to the parliament to enforce an edict was always a serious and deplorable event. He trusted he might be able to perform his duty conscientiously without displeasing the queen. He then retired.

On the following morning, the 15th of January, 1648, Louis and his mother, in great state, proceeded to the Palais de Justice. The court resounded with acclamations at the entrance of the little king, who was rejoicing in his newly-recovered health; but the queen seemed to take but slight pleasure in his reception, and looked worn and weary. When the edicts were read Talon rose.

'Sire,' he said, 'it is a delusion in idea, and a contradiction in politics, that edicts which are not laws until after mature delibe-
tion can be made laws because your majesty has caused them to be read and published in your presence. For these two years past, sire, your subjects have been ruined. Their substance is sold to pay taxes for the war. They live upon tears and coarse bread. Only their souls are their own, because souls cannot be sold by auction. Madame, think of this misery. Sire, in the name of humanity and pity, triumph rather over the luxury of your age than over the misery of your people!"

But the warning words were useless, and the edict was registered amid the ominous silence of the assembly.

'Madame,' said the duke of Orleans ironically, when the queen returned to the palace, 'if you obey this M. Talon you will retire at once to your oratory, and meditate on the sins of your government.' Anne, however, was not in a mood for satire. Her own feeling was expressed to her lady-in-waiting, madame de Motteville, as she was reposing on her bed after the fatigues of the day, Mazarin being seated in a window.

'M. Talon,' she observed, 'is much to be commended. But he said too much. He knows that I desire the welfare of the people above all things.'

A regular contest now began between the court and the parlia-
ment. The people attributed the errors of the government to Mazarin, and this opinion was fostered by Gondy, the coadjutor-archbishop of Paris, a clever, generous, reckless man, half priest, half bravo, whose adventures were the talk of Paris. Gondy won the hearts of the ladies of the court by his good-nature, edified the devout by his sermons at Notre Dame, and, frequenting the poorer parts of Paris, secretly encouraged the increasing discontent with Mazarin. The queen herself could not understand the cardinal's fitness of action. 'God give me patience!' she exclaimed one day in the course of conversation. 'The cardinal will lose all by exalting his enemies.' 'Madame,' replied Mazarin, 'you resemble an ungrateful servant; you fight, but know not your danger.' In her eagerness she promised to renew the 'paulette' on condition that the members of the law courts—the parliament only excepted—should aid the deficit of the treasury by contributing a sum equal to their yearly salary. Of course the exaction was refused. She then acted from two courts, called the Courts of Aids and Accoupts, the enactment of an edict which the parliament had rejected. This was rudely negatived, and the result of the endeavour to separate courts was to make them all agree to meet as one body in the Salle de St. Louis, and take measures for reforming the abuses of government. Molé, the chief president of the parliament, an of strong character, after some hesitation gave in his ad-

on, and the regent and Mazarin soon learnt that a decree had
been issued by this self-constituted body which ordered the union of all the courts for the better ordering of the realm.

The decree was forthwith annulled by the king’s *lettre de cachet,* or special command, and the leaf of the register on which it had been recorded was ordered to be torn out and the royal edict substituted.

When this command reached the parliament the members gathered together in anxious groups in the hall, debating upon their next step, whilst Molé sat with his head bent down and his eyes fixed upon the ‘lettre de cachet,’ which lay upon the table before him.

Many and loud were the complaints against Mazarin and Emery. ‘Why should not the parliament of Paris follow the example of the parliament of England and impeach the dishonest ministers?’ exclaimed one member. Talon replied, urging that matters should be discussed with moderation. He was interrupted with shouts and hisses. The house adjourned in uproar, only to meet again the following day and repeat the scene. The leaf of the register containing the obnoxious decree was demanded by a special message from the regent. An excuse was made; the register was in the hands of the registry clerk, who was not at his office, and the officials in attendance refused to summon him.

A loud altercation ensued, and the parliamentary councillors who were in the different committee-rooms thronged into the registry office to learn the cause of the uproar.

The queen’s messenger continued to demand the leaf of the register, and was answered by ironical cheers; and at length, finding all his efforts vain, he escaped by a back staircase, and drove away in the royal coach amidst the jokes of the people who had gathered in the street, attracted by the archer guard, whilst the younger parliamentary members rushed to the window to witness his departure.

Another mandate was then issued, commanding the presence of the entire parliament at the Palais Royal at nine in the morning, in order to deliver to her majesty the leaf of the register by the hands of M. Molé, and at the appointed time the gentlemen belonging to the parliament and the courts set out on a walking procession to the palace. They were headed by Matthieu Molé, who, with his bald head, his long beard, which, when excited, he was accustomed to clutch, his glittering eyes, and bushy grey eyebrows, was always a picture to contemplate. Behind him came the members of the courts in their scarlet gowns, and in their wake a tumultuous rabble.

The members were ushered into the hall of ambassadors. One of the queen’s ministers soon appeared to enquire of the president whether he had brought the register. Molé replied in the negative, and Anne was indignant; but she admitted the obdurate lawyers to her pre-
FRUITLESS INTERVIEW—TRIUMPH OF THE CHAMBER OF ST. LOUIS. 449

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sence. The interview began by a speech from the chancellor, repeating the royal grievances, and again insisting upon the production of the obnoxious leaf; whilst Anne, refusing to listen to explanations, is reported to have exclaimed several times, 'I will have the leaf. Do not fail to bring it. This sedition is the work of ten or twelve among you whose names I know. Bring me that leaf.' The fruitless interview over, the ninety-four councillors and presidents walked back to the Palais de Justice, and immediately agreed that the new assembly should meet without delay.

The Chamber of St. Louis, as the newly-formed body was now termed, after due consultation made their demands for reform, and Anne was compelled partially to yield. It was decided that the people should be relieved from a quarter of the 'tailles,' or land tax, that no taxes should be collected without the sanction of the parliament, and that the office of 'intendant,' or farmer-general of indirect taxes, should be abolished.

The 'intendants' had been accustomed to pay into the treasury a fixed sum, whilst they made what they could from the taxes which they collected. They were in consequence often oppressive in their exactions, but as they advanced money to the government in time of need, and war was being carried on in Germany, the queen desired to retain them. Molé and his colleagues, however, stood firm, and ultimately gained their point.

The members of the victorious party were now greeted by Mazarin as the restorers of France, the fathers of their country; but the cardinal's soft words and deferential salutes, joined with the singularity of his foreign pronunciation, only excited ridicule. Emery, the minister of finance, was even more unpopular. He resigned his office when he found that by the new arrangements he was prevented from carrying out the financial engagements he had entered into, and as Mazarin gave him no support he was exiled from Paris. Mazarin could not conceal from himself that his own day of doom was approaching. He dismissed some of his retinue, adopted a less expensive mode of living, and said mournfully to madame de Sénèce that he desired his nieces should be brought up simply, for no one could predict what might become of him or of them.

The members of the Chamber of St. Louis were becoming more and more violent in their speeches, Blanchesnil, Broussel, and Charton being particularly remarkable for their disrespect; and when a royal edict was prepared, including several of the chief decrees of the Chamber of St. Louis, but omitting that called the Article of Public Safety, which forbade arbitrary royal arrests, the parliament refused to register it without further examination. A fierce renewal of the contest seemed inevitable, but at this moment tidings reached Paris which diverted the public attention into a new channel.
The prince de Condé had gained a fresh victory at Lens on the 20th of August, 1648. The news reached Anne at midnight. She rose instantly, sent for Mazarin and the comte de Châtillon, the bearer of the despatches, and heard from the latter the history of the battle. Condé had drawn the archduke Charles from his entrenchments before Lens and compelled him to fight. The Spanish infantry had at first retained its high reputation, and the battle was apparently lost, when Condé, by his undaunted bravery, triumphantly redeemed the day. The Spanish army was literally destroyed. The baggage and artillery, and even the camp equipage of the archduke, were in the hands of the French, and seventy-three standards were sent by Condé to the regent as the pledge of his victory.

The exultation of Anne was great, but she thought as much of the support which this victory would give the government, as of its general effect upon Europe. Even the young king, who was aware of his mother’s differences with the parliament, recognised the importance of the battle of Lens in this respect, and when informed of the victory clapped his little hands with joy, exclaiming, ‘Ah! how sorry our good gentlemen of the Courts will be at the news!’

But the gentlemen of the Courts were not likely to grieve over a victory which was to bring peace to Europe after a weary war of thirty years. The peace negotiations, which had long been slowly proceeding, were hastened by the fresh losses that Germany had sustained, for there was now but one object on both sides—that of putting an end to the desolating contest.

The victory of Lens was to be celebrated by a national thanksgiving. The parliament and all the civil and religious bodies in Paris were especially invited by the court to be present at Notre Dame on the 26th of August, to witness the consecration of the captured banners and join in a solemn Te Deum. On that very day, with the remarkable absence of discretion which marked all the regent’s acts, Anne had determined to signalise her revenge on the hated Chamber of St. Louis by the arrest, immediately after the ceremony, of Blancmesnil, Broussel, Charton, and others of the most important but most obnoxious members of the court.

Against Broussel she had special cause of offence. Some weeks before the duc de Beaufort had contrived to escape from Vincennes, where he had passed a weary imprisonment of five years. Anne had declined any attempt to seize the fugitive. ‘The poor boy,’ she said, ‘had been punished enough for his folly in 1643.’ But she disapproved entirely of a petition which M. de Beaufort brought forward, entreating the Chamber of St. Louis to institute an enquiry into the circumstances of his imprisonment; and the fact that Broussel strongly supported the petition made her especially antagonistic to him. Mazarin interposed in his favour, but Anne was inexorable.
THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY—ARREST OF BROUssel.

The thanksgiving ceremonial was magnificent. The streets were lined with troops, and the members of the High Court preceded the queen to the cathedral, where Mazarin, Gondy, and other prelates were prepared to minister at the altar, on the steps of which lay the banners of the conquered army. Anne was in a state of devotional excitement, as she herself afterwards acknowledged, praying fervently for the success of her own designs.

A rumour of the intended arrests had, however, spread, and before the procession set forth on its return four of the councillors made their escape. The president Blancmesnil was less fortunate. As he walked leisurely away from the cathedral he was seized and conveyed to Vincennes. Only Broussel remained. His house was in a narrow little street close to the river; beneath the windows was a wharf, the favourite resort of bargemen. Up the narrow street drove a coach and four, and stopped before Broussel’s door. The councillor, who was not well, and had not been at the cathedral, was quietly dining with his son and daughter and an old housekeeper, when a knock at the street door was heard, followed by a yell of dismay from the boy who opened it. He had confronted Comminges, the lieutenant of the queen’s guard, and a body of soldiers with gleaming swords. The lieutenant entered the room, and showed the order of arrest. Broussel asked for delay, as he was ill. The old housekeeper rushed to the window and shouted, ‘Help! help! To the rescue of the father of the people!’ The bargemen on the wharf and a crowd of other persons collected in the street. Shouts and cries arose, and stones were thrown at the coach, as Comminges, having seized Broussel and carried him off by force, drove away. Several attempts at rescue were made by the mob, but all failed, even though the royal coach broke down on the road, and a lady’s carriage was seized for the conveyance of the prisoner. Broussel was taken to the palace of St. Germain, which was at that time the refuge of Henrietta Maria, the exiled and widowed queen of England. By the permission of Comminges she sought an interview with Broussel, and comforted him by the promise to speak in his behalf; but she could not forbear reproaching him. ‘The insurrection in Great Britain, monsieur,’ she said, ‘began by less open acts; yet you see in me to what deplorable straits sedition may arrive. I pray you, monsieur, save our beloved France from such misery.’

In the meantime the centre of Paris was in uproar. The queen was walking alone in the long gallery of the Palais Royal, when Guitaut, the captain of the guard, rushed up to her to say that the mob had broken through the lines of Swiss guards on the Pont Neuf, and were advancing to the Palais Royal, believing Broussel to have been conveyed there. Even then, through the open windows which admitted the soft summer air, Anne could hear the
tumult. Perfectly unmoved outwardly, she desired that the marshal de la Meilleraye might be sent for. ‘Monsieur,’ she said when the marshal appeared, ‘take 200 Swiss guards and go and chastise those unmannerly chorils,’ and quietly turning away to the window, she drew Guittart’s attention to the graceful figure of the young king, who was playing at quoits in the courtyard below.

The old marshal, who was so gouty that he could scarcely get on his horse, found it so easy matter to ‘chastise the chorils.’ He rode in advance of his troops, sword in hand, but only good-naturedly expostulating with the crowd. Stones were thrown, and two old women—one of whom was Broussel’s housekeeper—seized the unfortunate marshal by the legs, whilst the mob threatened to throw him into the river. Angry and somewhat terrified, the marshal fired a pistol, and a street porter fell to the ground fatally wounded. Just at that moment the popular coadjutor, Gondy, wearing the splendid robes in which he had taken part in the cathedral service, appeared on the scene, and being permitted to approach the dying man, knelt beside him to receive his confession. The mob paused; the wounded man was borne off, and Gondy, mounted on the parapet of the bridge, was suffered to address them. Again, however, the clamour rose. ‘Go! Bring Broussel back to us! Go!’ And Gondy was compelled to give his word that he would at once demand the release of the minister. Raising his arms aloft, he then gave a solemn benediction, all persons near dropping on their knees and, accompanied by the marshal, he set off for the palace. They found Anne in her presence chamber, Mazarin and her most confidential friends with her. ‘Madame,’ said one of the courtiers in a loud whisper to the queen as he stood close to the royal chair, ‘here is the coadjutor in full pontificals. Your majesty is so sick at heart that he is come to bring you extreme unction.’ Gondy heard the speech. The queen, it seemed, allowed him to be ridiculed amongst her intimate friends. He addressed her, however, with all respect, saying that he was there to receive her commands; he would do his utmost to restore tranquillity. Anne burst forth in a passion. ‘It is revolt,’ she exclaimed, ‘to imagine that revolt can happen.’ ‘Would to God, madame,’ interposed the cardinal in his soft tones, ‘that everyone spoke as sincerely as the coadjutor. He trembles for his flock, for his city, and for the authority of your majesty.’ The queen grew more gentle in manner, but was still very irritable.

Further news was brought by M. Vannes, the lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss troops. The mob had reached the palace, demanding Broussel. M. Vannes begged permission to attack them. Mazarin turned to Guittart and asked sharply what would be his counsel. ‘To restore this old scoundrel Broussel to the people, either dead or alive,’ was the reply.
PROPOSAL TO RESTORE BROUSSIEL—GONDY'S DANGER AND RESCUE. 458

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"M. Guitaut," interposed Gondy, "your first proposal will not accord with the piety and prudence of the queen; your second might allay the tumult."

"I understand," exclaimed Anne, her eyes flashing, "the coadjutor wishes me to restore this Broussel. Ah! but I would sooner strangle him myself with my two hands, and with him all—" and stopping short, she raised her hands as if to clasp the neck of the indignant Gondy.

Mazarin's whisper in her ear calmed her for the moment, but she still refused to believe in danger until the duc de Montbazon, governor of Paris, appeared bespattered with mud, having with difficulty made his way through the streets, and informed her that he had been requested by the magistrates of the city to demand the liberation of Broussel, and that refusal would be at the peril even of the king in the Palais Royal.

Mazarin then made a suggestion. "Would marshal de la Meilleraye and the coadjutor go as envoys to the people, and promise them that Broussel should be set free if they would disperse? The coadjutor," he added, with a malicious glance lighting up his eye, "has already shown what great influence he has with the populace." Gondy irritably required that the promise should be made in writing, and as he continued to expostulate, Anne rose and retiring to a little room adjoining the presence chamber, slammed the door violently behind her.

Silence fell on the assembled courtiers, till Monsieur, gently pushing Gondy, said in a coaxing tone, "Go, dear coadjutor, go; you alone can give us peace," some of the nobles joining in the entreaty.

Along the Rue St. Honoré the marshal rode, waving his naked sword and exclaiming, "Liberty to Broussel!" The sword was an unintentional menace, and the mob closed round. A volley was fired by the marshal's soldiers, and a fierce conflict ensued. Gondy, who was on foot, was struck by a stone, and he fell to the ground. One of the insurgents put a pistol to his ear. "Ah! miserable man," exclaimed the coadjutor, "stay! Oh! if your father could only see you!" The man paused; he thought that he saw before him an intimate friend of his father's. "Are you not the coadjutor?" he asked. The name caught the attention of the bystanders. A rush was made for the rescue of the popular prelate, and, followed by 30,000 or 40,000 insurgents, Gondy was escorted back to the Palais Royal, to make known to "madame Anne" that the people agreed to disperse, if he would engage his word for the liberty of Broussel.

The coadjutor delivered his message, and La Meilleraye, who had accompanied him to the palace, added that if the councillor were not liberated or more troops called into the city, there would
not by the next day be a stone standing of all the buildings in Paris. 'Good evening, coadjutor,' was Anne's ironical reply. 'Go to rest; you have done your work well,' and Gondy, mortified and furious, faint and hungry, retired. So also did the mob, partly persuaded by Gondy's promise that on their dispersion Broussel should be liberated, and partly beginning to feel that it was supper time; but chains were stretched across several of the streets to prevent the carrying off of Broussel, who, it was still believed, was hidden in the palace.

In the meantime all went merrily at the Palais Royal. The queen, as she sat down to supper at ten o'clock, rallied her ladies on their alarm, and laughed at the adventures of the coadjutor, whom she severely censured; but at a council held after supper measures were concerted for the next day, and it was ordered that Mazarin's nieces should for safety be sent off at midnight to the convent of the Val de Grâce.

The coadjutor, meanwhile, was tossing on his bed in bodily pain and mental disquietude. Towards midnight several of the courtiers who had been present at the royal supper entered his room with the report of the queen's ridicule and censure, and one gentleman especially, sent by the marshal de la Meilllery, warned him that the parliament were to be exiled and Broussel shut up at Havre.

The coadjutor sprang from his bed, and vowed with an oath that by the following night Paris should be in his own hands. Miron, a master of the Court of Accounts and a determined enemy of Mazarin, was sent for, and a regular plan formed, and before the night was over the citizens of Paris were engaged in erecting barricades in all the principal streets.

The next morning the parliament met again at the Palais de Justice, and it was determined that the High Court should go in procession to the queen to insist upon the release of Broussel. Twelve hundred barricades had by this time been erected, and were guarded by hundreds of armed citizens, and through the narrow opening left to admit the passage of one person, and secured by chains, passed the members of the parliament in their scarlet robes and furled caps on their way to the Palais Royal.

The queen had early learnt the condition of the city. The princesse de Condé, the duchesse de Longueville, and other ladies had already sought safety at the palace, and Henrietta Maria, who had left St. Germain with the same object, had obtained permission to pass through the streets only by the influence of her gentle voice and her assurance that she had left M. Broussel well.

Yet Anne greeted Molé and his colleagues with perfect com-

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1 This day, the 24th of August, 1648, is known as the Day of the Barricades (Journées des Barricades).
posure. Her determination was fixed. She would not yield to an insurrectionary movement. 'You speak in ignorance of the gravity of this revolt, madame,' said Molé. 'The barricades of the citizens rise within a hundred yards of your palace.'

'It is you and your seditious members who have raised the revolt,' retorted the queen in her sharpest voice. 'Go! you will obtain nothing from me;' and she retired.

'The kingdom is lost!' exclaimed Molé in despair, as he withdrew with his colleagues from the presence chamber. They stopped on the grand staircase for consultation and then returned. Mazarin stood leaning over the back of the queen's empty chair, and with him was Gaston of Orleans, whose face showed that he at last understood the gravity of events.

Molé grasped his hand, exclaiming, 'Oh, monseigneur, can you do nothing? Can you again procure us audience of the queen?' Monsieur glanced at the cardinal, who opened the door of the adjoining room and beckoned to the president to enter. Anne had been weeping. Molé prostrated himself at her feet and renewed his petition. The queen replied more gently, and the cardinal interposing said that if the parliament would register the recent declaration the queen would yield the prisoner.

Molé, in answer, declared that the question concerning the declaration must be put to the chamber. 'Deliberate here,' interposed Mazarin; but the councillors declined, saying that they must deliberate formally in their own hall. They departed, but were stopped at the barricades, and the mob insisted that they should go back to 'madame Anne' and demand Mazarin or the chancellor as a hostage. Five presidents and twenty-five councillors instantly threw off their scarlet robes and fled. Molé and the rest returned to the palace amidst abuses and execrations.

The third interview was too much even for the obstinacy of Anne. Molé spoke sternly, Monsieur threw himself on his knees in entreaty, the princesses who were present wept, and Henrietta Maria reminded the queen of the terrible issue of the revolutions in England. As she spoke the merry laugh of the young king was heard in the gardens below. 'Alas!' exclaimed Molé in a tone of anguish, 'while that child is playing in happy unconsciousness he is losing his crown. But, madame, the parliament is also the guardian of the king in his minority, and—' The queen by a gesture interrupted him. 'Gentlemen,' she said, 'retire and consider the matter. Suspend the deliberations of the Chamber of St. Louis until after the next vacation, and I will release the prisoner.'

In this serious condition of affairs it would have been madness to stand upon a punctilio as to the place of debate, and in the long
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gallery of the Palais Royal the consultation was held. The result was the acceptance of the queen’s offer.

Mazarin handed to Molière the order for the release of the prisoner, saying, ‘It would have been better, in my opinion, for the king to have lost three provinces than to have been compelled to consent to such a compromise.’

The following morning (the 28th of August, 1648) Broussel entered Paris. The bells rang joyous peals and the mob welcomed him with wild delight.

A few hours afterwards every vestige of the barricades had disappeared. Shops were opened, carriages again rolled along the streets, and the mob had retired to the alleys and cellars of the city. ‘Never did I behold Paris more tranquill even on a Good Friday,’ relates the conduttore Gondy in his memoirs; ‘only the people still insisted upon Broussel’s triumph, and took him to Notre Dame, where they insisted that a Te Deum should be sung. But the poor man, greatly ashamed, slipped out of the church by a side door and so escaped.’

After this exhibition of the power of the people Mazarin lived in constant dread of violence. So bitter was the hatred excited that he dared not show himself in the streets. Satires and lampoons were poured forth against him by the members of the parliament, and jingling and profane verses, called ‘Mazarinades,’ were sung by the lowest of the people.

The following is a specimen of the pieces published about this time. It is entitled ‘A Familiar Conversation between the King and the Queen Regent, his Mother, on the Affairs of the Times’—

King.—Dear mamma, why have you exiled M. de Vendôme and M. de Beaufort?

Queen.—Because, my son, they were too good to follow the advice of the cardinal.

King.—Dear mamma, tell me why do you employ cardinal Mazarin in preference to any other person?

Queen.—Because I like him, my son, and he obeys me.

King.—Dear mamma, why have you given him a lodging in my palace, so near to you?

Queen.—To see him conveniently when I wish, my son.

King.—Dear mamma, why do you allow him to have guards within my palace?

Queen.—To protect him, my son, for without him I should not know how to exist.

King.—Dear mamma, why did you exile and imprison so many of my good counsellors of the parliament?

Queen.—Because, my son, they refused to obey the cardinal, and because they were very good and worthy people.

King.—Dear mamma, why do you not like worthy people?
Removal of the King from Paris—Illegal Arrests.

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Queen.—Because, my son, the cardinal will not allow me to listen to anybody but himself.

King.—Dear mamma, why do you receive the Holy Eucharist so often, and go to all the churches in the capital, if you don't like good people?

Queen.—My son, the cardinal tells me that I must do so for state reasons, that everybody may esteem me to be a good and devout queen.

King.—Dear mamma, why do you not conclude a peace abroad?

Queen.—Because the cardinal does not find it convenient, my son; for he says he should not then be great and honoured, as he is now.

As the unpopularity of the cardinal was thus shared by the queen, Paris became a far from enviable residence, and Anne, taking advantage of the illness of her second son, the little duke of Anjou, announced publicly that the child had the small-pox, and that it would be necessary for the king to remove to the country. The following day Louis was sent to Ruel, the country house of the duchesse d'Aiguillon. The queen followed him herself after a short delay, promising to return with him in eight days.

When safe from the Paris mob, Anne began her measures of revenge. The first objects of her displeasure were the comte de Chavigny, who was supposed to have prompted the bold proceedings of the Chamber of St. Louis; and M. de Châteauneuf, who had again been received at court, but had now incurred Anne's displeasure by advising her to be reconciled to her subjects, and to wait till the king attained his majority before she had recourse to rigour. Chavigny was imprisoned at Vincennes and Châteauneuf was exiled.

The intelligence of these punishments caused a scene of wild excitement in the parliament. It was unanimously resolved that the royal princes, the nobles, and officers of the crown should be called upon to take their seats in the assembly, and deliberate upon the question discussed in the Chamber of St. Louis, and known as the Article of Public Safety, which made arbitrary arrests illegal, and a deputation was sent to the queen to remonstrate against her proceedings.

Anne, when she received the deputation, was surrounded by all the princes of the blood royal, including the prince de Condé, who had arrived at Ruel a few days previously, having been sent for by the queen's express desire. All present joined in utterly repudiating the interference of the parliament, and Anne dismissed the deputies with a triumphant smile and the words, ' Gentlemen, you have your answer.' Nevertheless in his heart Condé was by no means inclined to oppose entirely any power which might curb the authority of Mazarin. 'The parliament,' he said in a conversation held shortly after at Paris with the coadjutor Gondy, 'is precipitate. If I were to be precipitate, I should doubtless reach my ends more triumphant-
ALARMING RUMOURS—TREATY OF WESTPHALIA.

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antly; but my name is Louis de Bourbon, and I will do nothing to shake the power of the crown. Are these square-caps mad? Do they want to force me into a civil war, or to tempt me to strangle them and their bombast, and thus to put above their heads and my own that ragamuffin Sicilian who will destroy us all?

On receiving the answer brought by the deputation, the parliament indignantly began to take measures to withstand by force any violence which might be offered to its members, whilst the alarm of the citizens was increased by the rumour that the queen intended to besiege the city, and by the departure from Paris of others of the royal family, including the little duke of Anjou, who for security was wrapped up in shawls by his attendant, and deposited as a bundle under the back seat of his coach, where he lay perfectly still whilst the guard at the barriers roughly examined the interior of the carriage. Mazarin’s nieces were also removed from the nunnery of the Val de Grâce, for they were not safe in the capital, men and boys in the streets shouting as they sang the ‘Mazarinades’—

Paris swears to cut in a hundred pieces
All who shall dare to shelter the nieces.¹

The rumour of a siege was no idle talk. Anne was resolved upon it in her own mind, but when she assembled her council, to her great disappointment, Condé advised conciliation, and undertook himself the office of mediator, Mazarin seconding the proposal.

The negotiation ended favourably for the parliament, and the Article of Public Safety was brought to the queen for signature.

Anne shed tears as she affixed her name to the concession by which she yielded the royal privilege that had placed the liberty of any obnoxious subject in the sovereign’s power. Her indignation was especially roused against the prince de Condé. But for him she might have been able still to resist the parliament, which, though only a court of lawyers, had assumed the functions belonging to the States-General, and thus excited the contempt of the princes and nobles even whilst they submitted to its usurpations.

The treaty of peace with Germany, commonly known as the Treaty of Westphalia, was signed at Munster on the same day that Anne gave her unwilling sanction to the Article of Public Safety—the 24th of October, 1648. By it Alsace, with the exception of Strasburg, was ceded to France, and the French dominions were thus extended to the long-coveted boundary of the Rhine. Metz, Toul, and Verdun were also restored, and Pignerol in Piedmont, and Brisach on the farther side of the Rhine, recognised as French towns. The general result of the long war was the diminution of

¹ Paris jure de mettre en cent pièces
Tous ceux qui logeront les sœurs.
the power of the house of Austria, and Mazarin cleverly contrived to further this, his main object, by obtaining for the lesser states of Germany the power of negotiating alliances without the emperor, and, in fact, rendering them quite independent.

But Germany was thus weakened rather than benefited, and not till our own day has the fatal mistake been remedied by the restoration of the sovereign power of the emperor. The Treaty of Westphalia was of great importance religiously, liberty of conscience being proclaimed throughout the empire. Spain was not included in it, and war with that country continued.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1648.

The foreign policy of Mazarin had no doubt been wise and successful, but this fact failed to render him more popular in France generally, whilst it required his utmost sagacity to steer clearly through the selfish intrigues of his professed friends at court.

A new cause of uneasiness from the latter source was just at this time pressing upon him. He had promised the abbé de la Rivière, the favourite of Gaston of Orleans, to procure for him the dignity of cardinal on the first opportunity, and the nomination had actually been made. The prince de Conty, Condé’s brother, though weak in mind as in body, was unfortunately seized with the same ambition, and Condé demanded that the nomination of the abbé should be revoked. The queen and Mazarin were compelled to yield. Indignant at his favourite’s disappointment, Monsieur demanded a private audience of the queen. Anne strove to mollify him and begged him not to quit the court, as he had threatened. Monsieur impertinently replied, ‘As for leaving the court, madame—where I am seems to me to be, and is, the court.’ To which Anne retorted as she bade him farewell, ‘Adieu, monsieur; I will try to console myself for your absence, and so to contrive that the king’s court shall suffer no loss by your ill-will.’

The next day, with a heavy heart, Anne returned to Paris, accompanied by Condé. Respectful silence for the most part marked her progress till the cortège had actually passed, and then a mocking song of defiance broke forth from the insolent populace, ending with—

She has come back,
Dame Anne.
She has come back—
and with such greetings sounding in her ears the queen entered the Palais Royal.

The day after Monsieur arrived, and all persons hostile to the court flocked around him. For a short time he was the focus of opposition; but becoming alarmed at his own position, he took to his bed, under pretence of a fit of the gout, listened courteously to messages sent him by the queen, and at length made up the quarrel.

Peace was now restored on the surface, but beneath lurked suspicion and animosity.

The queen was almost a prisoner in her palace, for when she appeared in public her coach was followed by a howling mob, watching, as they did not hesitate to declare, lest she should take the king from Paris. A chivalrous prince like Condé could scarcely fail to be touched by these indignities offered to a sovereign and a woman, and Anne's fascination of manner won his admiration, even while he despised her for her subjection to Mazarin. Jealousy of the duke of Orleans was also a powerful motive for espousing the royal side. If Anne were deposed the duke would be the young king's guardian, and this idea was hateful to the proud spirit of Condé. For the moment, however, it was necessary to put jealousy in the background, and as the insolence of the people and the encroachments of the parliament increased, Condé found himself involved in what might almost be called a plot for putting an end to a state of affairs so degrading to the crown by retiring with the queen and her son from Paris, and then reducing the city to obedience by blockade.

To keep such an idea entirely concealed was impossible. Gondy's quick eye saw, and his ready ear heard, everything of importance, and he took his measures accordingly. Condé had resisted his flatteries, but the weak prince de Conty might easily be won over through the influence of his grateful, clever, and intriguing sister, the duchess de Longueville, and with a prince of the blood royal to support him the coadjutor felt that he might fairly hope to carry out all objects. With this view he took the preliminary step of winning the duchesse de Longueville to his party, which now began to be known as the party of the 'Frondes,' an epithet derived from the custom of the idle boys of Paris to fight in the streets with slings ('frondes') and stones.

Madame de Longueville, who had a mania for political importance, had never been popular at the court. The queen disliked her drawling manner and thought her conceited and pretentious. At this time she had a quarrel with her brother the prince de Condé, because he had refused to use his influence to procure for her husband the post of governor of Île de France, and had made some bitter remark on the levity of her conduct, which he said brought disgrace on the family.
LEADERS OF THE FRONDE—REPU DIATION OF DEBTS—RUMOURS. 461

Louis XIV.

She was therefore quite open to the cajolery of Condé, who paid her a visit when she was staying at the house of his uncle, the archbishop of Paris, and opened to her his views. ‘I found her alone,’ he states in his memoirs, ‘and began to talk on public matters, and I perceived that she was greatly enraged at the court, and more than furious with M. de Condé.’ And as soon as I had opened my mind to her, and shown her how great was even the least rank which she would hold when affairs were settled in Paris according to our views, she went off into transports of delight.’

The counterplot was now decidedly set on foot. The duc de Longueville joined it somewhat unwillingly. The duc de Bouillon was equally lukewarm, but he was urged on by his wife. The duc de Vendôme and his son Beaufort, having recent causes of complaint, were only too willing to listen to the plans of the coadjutor; and though the duc de Mercœur—Vendôme’s eldest son—held aloof from a contest for which his reserve and fastidiousness unvited him, he still declined to take arms in the queen’s service.

The discontented nobles and the parliament, however, would have had much difficulty in carrying out their plans but for the exasperated feeling of the middle classes, on account of the recent repudiation of certain large sums which had been lent by them for the public service. Government securities had become actually worthless, and although the dishonesty had been sanctioned by the parliament as necessary on account of the state of the royal finances, it was not the less attributed to Mazarin’s extravagance.

The queen now employed all her art of fascination to win over the duke of Orleans to the project of leaving Paris and then subduing it by a blockade. Monsieur was at first struck with dismay, but Anne’s pertinacity was successful, and he consented to bear his part in the dangerous scheme. The night of the 5th of January, 1649, was fixed for the departure.

In order to give the queen the opportunity for carrying out her intentions without interruption, a great entertainment was given by the marquis de Grammont, one of the very few persons in Anne’s confidence. When the guests were assembled the doors were closed and no one was allowed to leave the house. Some rumours of the intended step had been heard, but little importance was attached to them, for there had been none of the usual preparations before removing from one palace to another, and which involved carrying with the court the hangings, beds, and other furniture required for the use of the sovereign, none of the royal palaces being completely fitted up.

Anne held a reception in her small saloon in the evening, and seemed intent only upon watching the games of the young king, who was playing about the room. Presently the duchesse de la Trémoïlle, the sister of the duc de Bouillon, came in, and seating herself behind the queen, whispered to madame de Motteville, ‘There is a
rumour that the queen leaves Paris to-night.' Madame de Morteville glanced at the queen, and seeing her perfect calmness shrugged her shoulders, and by signs showed her disbelief; and the duchess was apparently satisfied. By nine o'clock everyone had retired except the few ladies who were especially in the queen's intimacy. With them she still kept up the same farce, conversing about her intentions for the next day, and promising the little duke of Anjou that he should accompany her to the convent of the Val de Grace, a hope which supported the little prince under the trying ordeal of being obliged to go to bed, whilst king Louis sat up rather longer to enjoy a Twelfth cake, produced by one of the ladies.

His majesty, however, was at last summoned to bed by M. de Villeroy, and then the queen and her ladies gathered together for a free and pleasant talk. Madame de Morteville alluded to the report she had heard, and the whole party laughed and jeered about it; but Anne afterwards declared that she felt much confusion at the thought of leaving her ladies alone in a town she was going to besiege.

Before the party broke up Beringhen, the queen's equerry, entered. Anne took him apart and ordered that two coaches should be ready at three o'clock in the morning at the garden entrance of the Palais Royal. She then returned to her ladies, saying that she had sent for Beringhen to speak about a charitable errand. Still the ladies had no suspicion until one of the queen's favourite attendants, who had been dining with madame de Beringhen, came in and whispered amongst them the same report. The queen, seated before a large mirror, watched them, and presently, rising suddenly, she retired to her bedroom, and left them in consternation, which M. de Comminges, who was on guard in the ante-room, did his best to soothe, laughing at their fears till they also departed to rest.

It was one o'clock in the morning when the queen rose, and sending for marshal Villeroy, who slept in the king's room, gave orders that the child should be awakened and dressed, and that the gentlemen-in-waiting should also be aroused and the captain of the guard told that his services would be required.

Mazarin, Condé, and Monsieur were in like manner making their preparations for departure; Condé presented his wife with a letter from the queen, which demanded her attendance, and then went to the bedside of the prince de Conty, and, in spite of his piteous entreaties, compelled him to accompany him. Comminges repaired to the Tuileries to awaken mademoiselle de Montpensier, whose keen curiosity had already guessed what was going on, and whose first words to Comminges were, 'Am I not requested to leave Paris.' Only the duchesse de Longueville declined to obey the royal summons, professing that her state of health would not permit her to do so.

The night was dark and the weather bitterly cold, and on arriving
ARRIVAL AT ST. GERMAIN—CONSTERNATION OF THE PARISIANS. 463

at St. Germain the court found neither beds, food, firing, nor attendants. Except the royal family everyone retired supperless to sleep on straw. Mademoiselle has left a vivid account of her miseries. 'The first night,' she says, 'I slept in a superb room, vast and gilded, but I had little fire, and my windows were boarded, as there were no sashes in them; my mattress was on the ground, and my sister, who had no bed, slept with me. I was obliged to sing to lull her to sleep, but she disturbed my rest, and frequently terrified me by screaming out that she saw a ghost; so I had to sing again to quiet her; and thus passed my night.'

The queen was more comfortably lodged than her ladies, but cold and hunger made themselves felt by all for the first few days. Then provisions, furniture, &c., began to pour in from the neighbourhood, and the queen's wardrobe was smuggled through the gates of Paris in one of Mademoiselle's coaches.

A message from the queen at five o'clock in the morning had informed the coadjutor of her departure, and that he would himself be expected to appear in the course of the day at St. Germain. He was also told that her majesty had ordered an immediate advance of 12,000 men to the neighbourhood of Paris. Whilst Gondy was pondering this intelligence M. de Blanesmeul arrived in great agitation, and the two men sallied forth in the wintry dawn to investigate the state of the city. The markets were filling, but when a sudden cry 'The king is gone!' arose, the people left their goods and gathered in masses, especially around the Hôtel de Ville, where the city authorities were assembling, to hear a communication from the queen to the governor of Paris. It was to this effect:—'The king has resolved, with very heartfelt regret, to leave his good city of Paris, in order no longer to be exposed to the pernicious designs of certain officers of his parliament. These said personages have been guilty of traitorous enterprises against the king's authority, and have even gone to the shamefult lengths of conspiring to seize his person.'

The vagueness of these accusations created general alarm. The coadjutor announced publicly that he was going to St. Germain. Pale, and apparently with tears in his eyes, he bestowed his benedictions on the crowds as he drove through the streets. The people clamoured and declared that he should not leave the city. He shook his head sorrowfully and besought his friends not to detain him. Of course they acted on the hint. A dealer in firewood seized the horses and a crowd of viragoes forced open the carriage door. The coadjutor was placed on a dray and borne back in triumph to the episcopal palace, whilst the mob made a bonfire of his coach.

A humble letter from Gondy to the queen assured her majesty that he had been forcibly prevented from obeying her commands, at which Anne was indignant and Condé laughed ironically.
464 GONDY'S PRETENCE OF DEPARTURE—DUC D'ELBEUF LEADER.

Louis XIV.

But the prospects of the parliament and the conspirators were not satisfactory. Conty, the proposed head of the rebellion, had been carried off, and the duchesse de Longueville wrung her hands as she informed the coadjutor that her husband, who had been absent in Normandy, had now gone straight to St. Germain. Messengers went back and forth between Paris and St. Germain, bearing the mandates from the king and the replies from the parliament, whilst preparations were made on the one hand for defending Paris, and on the other for gathering together the troops which were to coerce it. The negotiations were not of a very friendly nature. Anne declared that she would return to Paris if as she entered at one gate the parliament would march out at the other; and the parliament in return issued a decree of outlawry against Mazarin.

In their great need of a head the parliament turned to the duc d'Elbeuf, a prince of the house of Lorraine-Guise, and who would with fairness endeavour to bring about an accommodation. This was precisely what the coadjutor did not wish, and in disguise he parambulated the town at night, telling everyone that D'Elbeuf was a spy sent by the queen, and intended to betray the city. He had just returned from one of these rambles when a servant rushed into his room with the news that M. de Conty and the duc de Longueville were knocking for admission at one of the gates of Paris, but that the people suspected them, and had pointed a cannon at the gate. Wild with excitement, Gondy hastened to the house of Broussel, and pulling him out of his bed made him go with him to the Porte St. Honoré, preceded by a dozen torches. It was broad daylight before the furious harangues of the coadjutor could obtain the admission of the princes, and it was then known that they had fled secretly from St. Germain, Conty being irritated by his brother's taunts at his incapacity, and the duc de Longueville indignant at some remarks made by Condé upon his wife.

The presence of the prince de Conty caused much debate amongst the parliamentary leaders. The duc d'Elbeuf had been appointed general-in-chief, but the prince de Conty certainly would not submit to him; yet he could not take the command himself. On the morning of the 11th of January the prince went in state to the Palais de Justice, and thither the duc d'Elbeuf also repaired, and a scene of discord ensued. The duc de Bouillon, marshal de la Mothe, and the duc de Longueville offered their services to the prince, and the duc de Longueville declared that, as a pledge of his fidelity, he would, if the members permitted, send his duchess and his children to take up their residence at the Hôtel de Ville, in the very centre of the city.

The coadjutor no sooner heard this suggestion than he left the chamber and drove off in the duke's splendid carriage to the Hôtel
de Longueville, entered, and after a few minutes returned, accom-
mpanied by the duchess and her four children; the duchess, in her
haste, having merely thrown a veil over her head.

The Hôtel de Bouillon was next visited. Madame de Bouillon and
her children were placed in the coach, and all were taken to the
Hôtel de Ville. No one concerned in this singular proceeding was
surprised, for the measure had been partly discussed on the previous
evening with Gondy.

The coadjutor himself gives an account of the effect of this
manœuvre upon the citizens, who were anxiously waiting the pro-
clamation of the chamber as to the chief command of the army, and
in their excitement had clambered even to the roofs of the houses.
* Imagine,* he says, *the effect produced by the sudden appor-
tion of two most lovely women on the balcony of the Hôtel de Ville—the
more charming as their aspect and dress showed easy negligence and
haste. Each of the ladies carried a child in her arms, beautiful as
its mother. The place was crowded; the men uttered cheers of joy,
and the women wept with emotion.*

Gondy having brought his heroines to their post, threw 500
piesteos out of the windows to the crowd, and then went back to the
Palais de Justice, where the discussion had ended by the choice of
the prince de Conty as generalissimo.

The city councilmen heard with considerable consternation of
the arrival of their guests. They repaired to the great hall opening
upon the balcony, and found the two ladies promenading up and
down arm-in-arm. Madame de Longueville advanced gravely to-
towards the provost, saying, *M. de Longueville, not having anything
dearer in the world than his wife and children, has sent us to you as
hostages of his fidelity. We therefore ask hospitality from the magis-
trates of the city.*

*Ladies,* replied the provost Féron, *we have but small accom-
modation here for persons of your dignity, and we do not doubt
the fidelity of M. de Longueville.*

*Any shelter will suffice us, gentlemen. We are here to become
the guests of our good city of Paris,* replied the duchess majestically;
and Féron then led them to a large, half-furnished apartment, which
some of the councilmen remarked had broken windows. The
duchess, however, was not to be moved by such suggestions.
*Chairs, beds, and tables,* she said, *should be sent from the Hôtel
de Longueville; and—Were there any rats in that room?* An
answer was given in the affirmative. *Then,* she added, *we will
also have several cats sent from my hôtel.*

The city authorities succumbed, and madame de Longueville
quietly established herself in the Hôtel de Ville; madame de Bouillon,
however, returned home.

H H
466 BEGINNING OF THE SIEGE—EXPLOITS OF THE CIVIC FORCES.

Louis XIV.

In the meantime the departure of the prince de Conty and the duc de Longueville had greatly troubled the royal party at St. Germain; the queen was gloomy, Condé wild with rage, Mazarin suspicious, whilst Gaston of Orleans senselessly turned everything into ridicule. All, however, were of one mind as to the siege of Paris, and by the 10th of January the army of Condé had seized the chief avenues to the capital and garrisoned the neighbouring villages.

The parliament began hostilities. Their troops attacked the Bastille, which was held by M. de Tremblay, an adherent of the queen. The duchess de Longueville and her female friends looked upon this as an amusement. Dressed in blue silk, they sat in the arsenal gardens near the Bastille to watch the conflict. Presently a great roar of artillery shook the place, the gates of the Bastille were opened, the drawbridge was lowered, M. de Tremblay and his little garrison emerged and presented the keys of the fortress to the duc de Montbazon, and everyone went home to rejoice in the success of the parliament and the union.

This small siege was followed by equally small battles. In the first sortie the city bands no sooner confronted the king's soldiers than they turned and fled wildly back to the city gates, where they were received with derisive cheers; and this was a fair sample of the support the parliament had to expect. Condé's hope lay in the junction of the army of marshall Turenne, which would enable him to blockade the city and reduce it by famine. As yet there were many inlets by which food could be brought in, and the contest was looked upon in Paris as a mere farce. The lower orders regarded the sallies of the civic forces only as a pleasant excitement, and keenly enjoyed the caricatures and squibs to which they gave rise.

The permission given them by the civic authorities to roam through the Palais Mazarin was also a never-ending source of amusement, whilst the sight of the rare treasures—the marble statues, tables of lapis lazuli inlaid with gold, Turkey and Persian carpets, jewelled clocks and tortoishell cabinets—kept up the popular indignation against the 'Italian vagabond,' as Mazarin was called, who only ten years before had arrived in France penniless. A coarse caricature expressed the general feeling. It represented the queen and her son, starved, on their knees before Mazarin, who, dressed in his cardinal's robes, and fat and puffed up, sat stretching out his hand to give a crust of bread to the suppliants.

The duchesse de Longueville—the queen of the Fronde—and her friends were as idly merry as the mob. Civilians, members of the parliament, soldiers, bishops, monks, gay cavaliers—all that was distinguished and witty in the capital—assembled nightly at the Hôtel de Ville.

Without—braving the cold of the January night, the crowd
waited in the gaily-lit place to see some popular favourite, or madame de Longueville herself; appear on the balcony, whilst martial trumpets sounded and noisy actors performed some new comedy, or amused the people with the last 'Mazarinade.' Within, dancing and light but clever conversation kept up the spirits of the guests. If a conflict had taken place during the day the wit became only the more frequent, the puns were poured forth the faster. If matters wore an awkward aspect a private council of war was easily held. Only two persons of rank kept aloof from this ill-omened frivolity—the unsociable duc de Bouillon, who, with the excuse of gout, shut himself up in his hôtel, and the unhappy Henrietta Maria, queen of England, whose husband was on trial for his life before his own subjects. Living at the Louvre, she was so poor as to be without food or fuel, and was obliged to keep her little girl in bed for warmth. The coadjutor at last procured her a pension from the parliament. But the views of Henrietta Maria and of the duchesse de Longueville upon the subject of popular insurrection must have been widely different.

The popular hero of the Fronde was the handsome, fair-haired, blue-eyed duc de Beaufort. His courteous manners and knowledge of Parisian slang, added to a certain noisy importance of manner, gave him immense influence in controlling the mobs. 'The power of such things with the people can scarcely be estimated,' writes the coadjutor. 'I wanted a phantom behind which to hide myself, and it was lucky for me that I discovered it in this grandson of Henry the Great, who spoke the language of the "halles" (the public markets), which is not a common qualification in the sons of Henry the Great.'

The duc de Beaufort kept up a political intrigue with Spain, through madame de Chevreuse at Brussels, and so did Gondy and several of the disaffected nobles. They foresaw that the parliament might at any moment be induced to make terms with the queen and abandon them; and their only reliance would then be on foreign support. The parliament, on the other hand, had but little confidence in the nobles, and before long a decided reaction in favour of the royal cause began. It was increased by the need of money. Commerce was, of course, extinct. Many of the large houses were closed, and persons who had occupied handsome apartments were obliged to remove to poorer lodgings, to the great loss of the householders. The military parade was becoming wearisome to the citizens, and they were ashamed of the absurd exploits of their own forces.

The incipient inclination for peace was strengthened by a successful attack made by the army of Condé on Charenton, a village close to Paris. In one hour after the assault the houses were in ashes, and only one person survived the massacre which followed.
This war was in real earnest, and both the parliament and the people were awakened to the fact that they were playing a desperate game. The queen had, indeed, almost equal cause to desire peace. St. Germain was dull, and she had been accustomed to amusement. To drive through the quiet park attended by only one lady was very different from passing through the gay and noisy streets of Paris. Anne was sad, and she was also in a certain sense friendless. Neither Gaston of Orleans nor Condé was likely to make sacrifices for the royal cause.

Mazarin himself recommended concession. The noble-minded Molé and the honest-hearted Talon were, he knew, really loyal, though they had sanctioned acts in opposition to the crown; but the lords were false. They would never hesitate to bring upon France the miseries of a Spanish invasion, and this was the chief dread by which Anne could be worked upon.

But there was yet another feeling which the subtle Mazarin knew well how to touch—jealousy of Condé. The surrender of Paris to the army of the prince would make Condé the dictator of France. What then would be the position of the queen? What would be the fate of her minister? These questions pressed painfully upon the queen's mind, and at length, on the 12th of February, a negotiation with the parliament was opened. It was carried on at St. Germain, whither Talon and several of the parliamentary members repaired, though sorely against the wishes of Gondy. The caudator had already been in treaty with Spain for military support, and a Spanish envoy had actually arrived in Paris from the archduke Leopold, governor of the Spanish Netherlands, bringing with him several blank forms, signed by the archduke. Gondy now filled up one of these forms, so as to make it appear to be a letter from the Spanish governor to the Paris parliament, and then instructed the envoy to present it as his credential when admitted to an interview with the chamber.

The first notification of the arrival of the Spanish envoy was made to the parliament at the very time when Talon and his colleagues, having returned from St. Germain, were relating the courteous reception given them by the queen, and the consequent hope of reconciliation. Molé started up in indignation at the bare idea of treating with an enemy of the country, but his opposition was overruled, and the envoy was admitted and made his proposals, which included peace with France, and, if the parliament should deem it necessary, military support in the quarrel with the crown.

A deep silence followed, till Molé ordered the envoy to be conducted from the chamber, and then, without comment, proposed that the archduke's letters and a copy of the offers he had made should at once be sent to the king. To this no opposition was made, and
in the afternoon a deputation repaired again to St. Germain. They returned far less hopeful of peace than when they set out. The queen had been indignant even at the reception of the envoy. As a condition of forgiveness she required that the parliament should be exiled from Paris at least for a time, and she had only been persuaded to allow one passage to be opened by which provisions might enter the city.

And yet at that very time Anne had received a warning from a neighbouring state which, as Molé himself reminded Mazarin in a private interview, might well make both king and people reflect. Charles I. of England had been executed only three weeks before.

The intelligence of this terrible event was brought to Henrietta Maria at the Louvre on the 19th of February. There madame de Motteville, who had just received permission to join the queen at St. Germain, paid her a farewell visit.

'Tell the queen,' said the unhappy widow, as she lay on a couch in her dreary darkened room, 'in what a miserable condition you leave me. Say to her that the death of the king my lord befell him because he never heard the truth. Therefore I counsel her not to irritate her people unless she is certain of power to subdue them. Adjure her to listen to the truth and to strive to extract it.' Tears prevented the queen from saying more, and madame de Motteville retired to carry her warning to one who was but little capable of profiting by it.

Many and long were the discussions in the Paris chamber before a real understanding between the two parties could be reached. The nobles in the meantime became still more bent upon an alliance with Spain, but they could not reckon on all their former supporters. Madame de Longueville, weary of her sojourn at the Hôtel de Ville, had returned to her own home. She was as changeable as the wind, and for the moment appeared to have lost her interest in the rebellion, probably because her brother Conde, the hero of the age, had expressed his contempt for the low mob with whom she had lately allied herself. The prince de Conty was little able to bear the hardships of a besieged city, and the ecadjutor was unwilling to pledge himself irrevocably to a doubtful cause. Rumours were, however, afloat that Turenne intended to declare himself for the parliament against Mazarin. But they were only rumours; and the seditious nobles hoped they might instead win him to their side. An open declaration was, however, indispensable, as Gondy stated in a conversation with Turenne's brother and sister-in-law, the duc and duchesse de Bouillon. 'If, indeed, that could be obtained, he would not hesitate himself to heard the parliament.'

'Do you promise?' asked the duchess enthusiastically. 'Faithfully, madame,' replied Gondy; 'and I will sign the engagement.
470 SPANISH TREATY SIGNED—DISCOVERY OF THE NOBLES' TREASON.

Louis XIV.

with my blood.' Madame de Bouillon took a pen and scrawled hastily, 'I promise the duchesse de Bouillon to unite her husband against the parliament in case M. de Turenne shall approach Paris with his army within ten leagues of the town, and proclaim himself our defender.' Then seizing Gondy's hand she punctured his thumb with a needle, and compelled him to sign his promise literally. Her husband instantly seized the paper and threw it into the fire.

A treaty with Spain was nevertheless actually signed, the archduke having made ample promises of assistance; whilst the approach of Turenne's army was considered so certain that the troops of the Fronde were ordered to encamp without the city and form a junction with it.

The queen, well informed of all that was going on, sent a report of the proceedings in her own handwriting to Moliére, and with it several intercepted papers, fully confirming the rank treason, not only of the nobles, but of madame de Chevreuse, who had been throughout the main instrument in the Spanish negotiations.

Moliére was then at Ruel with a few of the chief parliamentary deputies. The duke of Orleans, the prince de Condé, and Mazarin were there also. They were carrying on the long-protracted discussion as to the terms of reconciliation. On the evening of the 8th of March secret information was received by Moliére that on the very next day the chamber would recall the deputies and put an end to the negotiations. The party of the nobles would then be triumphant, and civil war would be the inevitable result.

It was a grave emergency, but Moliére was equal to it. In the dead of the night, accompanied by his colleague De Mesmes, he repaired to Mazarin's room. 'Monsieur,' he said, addressing the astonished cardinal, 'in the condition in which affairs are now we are ready to sign a peace. We will, moreover, sign it at this instant; for to-morrow our powers will probably be revoked. If this act of ours should be disavowed, we shall be impeached as traitors. We trust to you to save our lives.' The cardinal's own knowledge of the state of affairs fully confirmed the apprehensions of the deputies; the duke of Orleans and the prince de Condé were summoned, and articles of pacification were drawn up on the spot. It was agreed that the sitting of the parliament should be suspended for the remainder of the year; that the deputy of the Spanish archduke should be sent away from Paris, but overtures of peace with Spain made without delay; that the king should be allowed to borrow money for the government expenses, at the rate of twelve per cent, and that a full amnesty should be granted to the prince de Conde and his friends on their submission within an appointed time.

The summons for the return of the deputies was sent the next
day. Molé replied by unfolding the parchment and exhibiting the treaty signed. The same day, late in the evening, he and his colleagues returned to Paris, and at seven o'clock the next morning the chamber met. Molé began to read aloud his report. clamorous comments interrupted him, and as he ended a thundering refusal of assent to the treaty was heard; and then the prince de Conty in a low, plaintive tone reproached the president for perfidy, whilst the duc de Bouillon bluntly asked for a passport to leave the kingdom, now that Mazarin was to be reinstated. The clamour here increased, some members shouting to be heard, others standing on benches and gesticulating wildly. From the streets came the cries, 'No Mazarin! No peace!'

The prince de Conty complained that the treaty had been signed without him. Molé started from his seat, 'What, sir, do you ask why we concluded peace without your participation? We did so to prevent the traitorous designs of yourself and your colleagues. Your letters, which we have read, summoned the archduke into France, and would have delivered this fair kingdom to the ravages of an enemy.'

'We acted with the advice of certain members of this chamber,' murmured the trembling Conty. 'Name them! Name them!' cried Molé. 'We will arraign them as traitors.' Conty muttered that the princes were ready to draw the sword against the archduke. 'Say, then, instantly,' exclaimed Molé, 'whether you will be included in the treaty just signed. Answer yes or no.'

At this moment yells burst from the outer hall. 'Down with Mazarin! On to St. Germain! To the river with all Mazarins!' mingled with shouts for the head of Molé. Two ushers rushed in, saying that the people demanded to speak with the duc de Beaufort, and the duke went out. A troop of viragoes were preparing to batter in the doors of the inner hall. The duke unsheathed his sword, and waving it exclaimed, 'At least, ladies, this sword shall never fight for Mazarin.' A member who was with him entreated the mob to respect the lives of the king's officers. 'What!' shouted a ruffian. 'The people made the king who made the parliament! Why should one be respected more than the other?' and pressing through some side doors which opened upon a staircase leading to the galleries of the chamber, they rushed up shrieking and levelling muskets at the members below.

The members gathered round Molé, entreating him to escape by a private door behind the throne. But the president stood immovable; not a feature changed. Gondy, mounting on a bench, began to harangue the insurgents in the gallery. His speech was interrupted by cheers and laughter, and several muskets were discharged, but only struck the opposite wall. Molé then prepared to leave the Palais de Justice by the grand staircase. Gondy and the
duc de Bouillon kept by his side. A wretch strove to stab him in the breast, but Gondy turned aside the blow, and the president was hurried into a coach belonging to one of the nobles and conducted safely to his house.

This tumult startled the nobles into apparent submission to the queen, but the demands made by them were so unreasonable that it is probable no agreement would have been reached without bloodshed but for a bitter disappointment which followed the tumult in the chamber. Gondy and the Spanish envoy, who was still in Paris, were dining with the duchesse de Bouillon, when a confidential officer of the duke entered the room with a troubled face, and taking madame de Bouillon apart whispered earnestly for a few minutes. The duchess changed colour rapidly, and holding out her hands to the coadjutor exclaimed, 'Alas! alas! M. de Turenne has been abandoned by his army!'

It was but too true. The intended defection of Turenne had been suspected, and a confidential agent of Mazarin's had bribed the troops to support the royal cause. The army crossed the Rhine, but refused to march upon Paris except at the command of the queen and Condé. Turenne, on the point of being arrested, fled by night alone and in disguise, and sought the protection of the landgrave of Hesse.

The last hope of the factious lords was now extinguished, and a reconciliation was at length agreed upon. The reward which Molière received for his services was the permission for his godson, the son of Bruscel, to remain for the present in his post as captain of the Bastille. The rebel lords, on the other hand, chiefly through the influence of Mazarin, obtained many lucrative posts. The wary coadjutor refrained from making demands. Retiring to his palace, he gave out that he intended to occupy himself with the affairs of his diocese until after Lent.

But the ladies of the Fronde were apparently more obnoxious to Anne than were the haughty lords. The latter, when they paid their first visit to St. Germain, were received coldly, but the duchesse de Longueville's reception was humiliating. The queen was repulsed on her bed when the duchess and her stepdaughter were announced. The duchess bent and kissed the queen's hand, and muttered a sentence, of which only the word 'madame' could be distinguished. The queen spoke a few laudatory words, and then was silent, and the position became so awkward that madame de Motteville was obliged to interpose, in spite of etiquette, and asked 'at what hour madame de Longueville had left Paris.' The duchess replied, and the greatly annoyed, took her leave almost immediately.
CHAPTER XL.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1649.

His court did not at once return to Paris. The summer months were spent at Compiègne, whither the queen was accompanied by her eldest nieces, of Mazarin, the countess Anna Martinozzi and the rather sentimental Laura di Mancini. A marriage between the duc de Mercœur and Laura di Mancini had been for some time under consideration, and the queen approved it; but the prince de Condé violently opposed to it. "M. de Vendôme," he said, "sought the chance of the little Mazarinette only that he might obtain the post of high admiral, which had been promised him." Mazarin declared that if the marriage displeased the prince he was willing to relinquish and send his niece to a convent; but nothing mollified the ill humour of Condé, who exasperated the Fronde as well as the court by his insolence, speaking of the duc de Beaufort as a great swaggering, blustering booby, fit only to govern such duchies as 'messes de la halle' (the market women); and at length, to the general relief of the court, he left Compiègne and retired to Dijon, as he said, 'to repose himself and reflect.'

The cardinal took the departure of the military hero with much dignity. He gave the command of the Flemish army to M. de la Court, and sent him to besiege Cambrai, and he himself, with Queen and the young king, spent a short time at Amiens supervising the affairs of the war. Cambrai was not taken, much to Cardinal's disappointment, but D'Harcourt was successful in his efforts, and carried his forces into the heart of the Low Countries. It was not satisfactory, however, to the Parisians that he should spend her time in the provinces. The shopkeepers, over the stagnation of trade and the long lines of uninnocent, and the citizens declared that a republic like Eng better than the present state of affairs. Anne still delayed. Both for Mazarin and herself, and was but little moved by 300 members of the trades guilds of Paris hurried to supplicate her to return, whilst a loyal cutler, on his using much gesticulation, pronounced the address with only reply was that when the city of Paris had purified landerers and rebels the king would think of returning.
474 RETURN OF THE COURT TO PARIS—GENERAL RECONCILIATION.

Louis XIV.

The urgent entreaties of Molé, however, supported by Condé, at length prevailed, and on the 18th of August the royal carriage was seen once more at the gates of the Palais Royal, having taken nine hours to make a journey of a few miles, in weather almost unbearable from heat. The reception of the royal party, and even of Mazarin, was enthusiastic, the mob crowding near to gaze upon the cardinal, remarking that he was handsome, and assuring him, as they held out their hands to him, that they liked him, whilst others cried out that they would drink to his health; they had been deceived respecting him.

It was midnight before the queen entered the splendid hall of her palace, which was blazing with lights and crowded with gentlemen of note of both factions, and with splendidly dressed ladies, conspicuous amongst whom was madame de Chevreuse, who had been specially permitted to return to Paris.

The hearty acclamations touched the queen deeply, and turning to Condé she said, raising her voice so that all might hear, 'Monseigneur, you have nobly fulfilled your promise to bring back your king and his honoured minister to Paris. I thank you in my own name and in that of the king.' Then re-entering her former apartments, she gave vent to her passionate emotions in tears as she knelt before the altar in her oratory.

The coadjutor, at the head of the clergy of Paris, presented himself at the palace on the following morning. Gondy's manner was nervous as he delivered the address, and Anne, when afterwards asked by some of her ladies whether she had remarked his agitation, quietly replied, 'How beautiful a thing is innocence!' The parliament of Paris and the heads of the university were also admitted to an audience, and on the following day the young king rode in procession to the church of St. Louis, in the Rue St. Antoine, there to make his offerings; whilst, as a final termination to all these scenes of reconciliation, the queen was waylaid by the market women as she was going to attend mass at Notre Dame, and allowed them to crowd around her coach so as to touch her dress, whilst howling and crying they begged her pardon, and assured her they were very glad to see her again.

The queen might now, perhaps, have promised herself peace but for the impertinent assumption of the prince de Condé, which soon became intolerable.

He sat down in her presence, tormented her to invite madame de Longueville to the palace, insisted that the court etiquette should be broken through, and that the duchesse de la Rochefoucauld, whom he saw reason to please, should be allowed the honour of the 'tabouret.' Setting aside the barriers between the sovereign and the princes of the blood, he invited the young king to play at bowls and tennis in the
Hôtel Condé, and afterwards to sup with him. His insolence to Mazarin, whom he addressed as 'my fine fellow' ('mon brave') and 'the family friend' ('l'ami de la famille'), passed all bounds. On one occasion he addressed a letter to the cardinal 'Al Illustissimo Signor Facchino' ('To the Most Illustrious Head Porter'), whilst on another he left the room when Mazarin had been talking too much about military affairs in fits of laughter, and with the exclamation, 'Adieu, Mars!' For the moment Anne took no notice of this impertinence, but her subtle minister was ever at her side, and though he might long dissemble he was certain to seize the right moment for revenge.

The cardinal had remarked with some alarm the tone of intimacy assumed by Condé and the leaders of the Fronde, and his first step was to embroil the prince with the disaffected leaders, so as effectually to prevent anything like joint action. In the most wily manner he awakened Condé's suspicions of the views of the leaders of the party. The prince was told that the queen had learnt through the cardinal's paid spies that his life was in danger from the resentment of the crown creditors, who had lately made some claims which Condé had resisted but the Fronde supported; and on the occasion of a disturbance in the streets he was entreated not to venture himself into the streets, but to send his coach. Condé consented, and as the carriage passed the Pont Neuf it was actually attacked; a pistol shot was fired, and one of the prince's servants was killed. How this occurred was never distinctly known, but Condé from that time had no doubt that the chiefs of the Fronde had determined to assassinate him, and separating himself from them he vowed against them vengeance to death.

The condutor and the duc de Beaufort were the chief objects of his wrath, and a petition was presented by him to the parliament, accusing them of a plot against his life. On the day appointed for the investigation Gondy, dressed in his archiepiscopal robes, coolly walked to the Palais de Justice, and took his seat in the chamber. Condé went in state, escorted by 1,000 gentlemen, who filled the halls and courts of the palace. When the accusation had been set forth and supported by the witnesses, the condutor rose to speak in his own defence. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'posterity will scarcely believe that we have been arraigned on the verbal testimony of infamous men just escaped from the dungeon—convicted felons. These persons—the witnesses of the prince de Condé—are licensed spies. They have licenses, signed by an august name, which ought to be employed only in upholding righteous laws. Cardinal Mazarin compelled M. Le Tellier to countersign them.' All eyes were turned towards Condé in dark suspicion. In vain Molé strove to lessen the effect of the condutor's announcement. The session broke up in tumult, and Gondy and Beaufort left the Palais de Justice arm-
arm, followed by admiring crowds. The two parties were now at open war. Skirmishes in the streets were frequent. Yet the coad-
jutor preached weekly at Notre Dame on the blessedness of Christian charity, and Condé meeting Gondy at the head of a religious pro-
cession, knelt to receive his blessing. Affairs were brought to a climax by Condé's own folly.

The young duc de Richelieu, the great-nephew and heir of cardinal Richelieu, and still a minor, had been brought up by his aunt, the duchesse d'Aiguillon. He was a handsome but timid boy, liking ladies' society and devoted to madame de Pons, a lively widow of thirty and the intimate friend of his aunt. 'How happy should I be,' said madame d'Aiguillon one day to madame de Pons, with a sentimental air, 'if that boy in a few years' time showed wisdom enough to persevere in his attachment.' 'Take care what you say,' was the reply of madame de Pons, accompanied by a coquettish laugh; 'I vow if my young duke were one day to propose marriage to me I should not have courage to resist.'

And madame de Pons did not resist. She engaged herself secretly to the duke, whilst at the same time she allowed madame d'Aiguillon to negotiate a marriage between him and the beautiful mademoiselle de Chevreuse, whom he really liked.

Madame de Pons told her secret to the duchesse de Longueville; by her it was communicated to Condé as an affair of political import-
ance, for the duc de Richelieu was governor of Havre, and would have it in his power greatly to aid the duc de Longueville, who was governor of Normandy. Condé at once seized upon the idea of the marriage, and having overcome Richelieu's timidity, invited the poor youth to spend a day at his country house, where madame de Pons also was a guest. He then brought forward his chaplain, and proposed that the marriage should take place on the spot. An hour after the young duke's arrival madame de Pons was made duchesse de Richelieu, the prince de Condé giving her away. To arrange the marriage of a wealthy minor without the sanction of the king or the consent of the legal guardians was a grievous offence, and so much did the prince anticipate that the first act of the queen would be to deprive M. de Richelieu of his government, that he sent an express messenger to Havre, with orders that if any officer from the queen arrived before the duke, he and his despatches should be forthwith thrown into the sea.

To madame d'Aiguillon, who sought an interview in the hope of obtaining redress, Anne gave full vent to her indignation. 'There is nothing that I would not do to avenge you,' she said, 'but I am powerless. In a few days you may return to me; we will then see.' The duchess had thrown herself at the queen's feet. 'Madame,' she said, 'if you would—' she hesitated, and added, lowering her
voice—"Restore your authority, madame; arrest the prince. The Frondé hates him, and would willingly be reconciled to your majesty." It was not a new idea, but it was fraught with peril. The queen sat lost in thought, when the cardinal entered, and was soon followed by madame de Chevreuse, her whole soul filled with the desire to revenge the insult shown to her daughter. The cardinal drew her aside, and, after a short conversation, madame de Chevreuse was left alone with Anne to exert her influence for the same object which the duchesse d'Aiguillon had so boldly suggested—a union with the Frondé and the arrest of Condé.

With some difficulty the queen was induced to consent so far as to allow madame de Chevreuse to see the Frondé leaders, and discover upon what terms they would be brought to unite against the prince. The following midnight the condutor, dressed like a courtier, was conducted by a back entrance to the little grey boudoir in the Palais Royal—the scene of so many political intrigues. Throwing himself at the queen's feet, he entreated her to pardon all that he had apparently done against her. The queen accepted his submission, and the question of union with the Frondé leaders was then regularly discussed, Mazarin appearing unannounced half an hour afterwards and taking part in the conversation. A cardinal's hat, to be obtained by French influence with the Pope, was the condutor's demand for himself; for his friends he desired certain offices. The interview was followed by another on the following night, and a written compact was then drawn up.

The prince de Condé was not without suspicion of the plot forming against him. "It has been reported to me," he said to Mazarin, "that you see Gondy in the dark; that he crouches along in a courtier's dress. Is this true?" "A charming figure the condutor would make in trunk hose and plumes, and a red cloak and sword," replied the cardinal. "Ah, monseigneur, if ever he visits me in this costume you shall have the pleasure of seeing him." And Condé was satisfied.

On the 18th of January the prince visited Mazarin, and found one of the under-secretaries of state, whom he personally disliked, writing at a little table near the cardinal's desk. The secretary contrived to hide his papers under the tablecloth. He had good reason to do so, for he was making out the warrants by which the prince de Condé and his brother were to be consigned to the prison of Vincennes.

That day the prince dined for the last time with his mother at the Hôtel Condé. The princess dowager was out of spirits. She had been to the Palais Royal in the morning and had been refused admittance, and she was oppressed by a foreboding of evil. After dinner, however she returned to the palace and was admitted, and
there Condé found her in the course of the afternoon sitting in the
queen's room and holding one of her hands. Anne received him
silently, and the prince soon left her and passed into the great gallery
in which the members of the council usually assembled. A few
minutes afterwards Guitaut, the captain of the guard, came up to
him. The prince, thinking he had some private business with him,
asked in a whisper if he could serve him?

'Monsieur,' replied Guitaut, 'I am ordered to arrest you, the
prince de Conty, and M. de Longueville.'

'You, M. Guitaut—you arrest me?' exclaimed the prince
proudly. 'I conjure you return to the queen and pray her to give
me a brief audience.'

Guitaut slowly withdrew, and Condé in great agitation repeated
to Conty and the duc de Longueville what he had just been told.
After a short interval the reappearance of Guitaut with a body of
guards made it but too clear that petition and opposition were alike
vain; and Condé, accompanied by his brother and the duc de
Longueville, descended a narrow, dark staircase leading to the garden
postern through which Anne of Austria only one year before had
made her escape from Paris by the prince's aid. Here a coach and
a squadron of light horse were in readiness.

'Comrades, this is not like the battle of Lens,' was Condé's ex-
clamation as he entered the coach, which at a rapid pace drove off to
Vincennes.

A dreary arrival that was—a damp room, no fire, a supper of
course bread and a draught of water, and beds of straw. Condé
jested at his misfortunes, threw himself upon the straw, and slept for
twelve hours, but the young prince de Conty wept bitterly, and was
joined in his lamentations by the duc de Longueville, who was
suffering from a fit of the gout. The following day, however, the
appearance of the prison was quite changed; for the queen, satisfied
with their imprisonment, sent handsome furniture, books, attendants,
and cooks from Paris. In many respects they had less to bewail
than their friends. Madame de Longueville was spending the
afternoon with her friend Anne de Gonzague, princess Palatine, the
clearest and the most beautiful woman in Paris, when she heard
of the arrest of her husband and brothers. No time was to be lost in
escaping herself, and by the aid of the duc de la Rochefoucauld she
found a hiding-place in the cellar of a small house in the Faubourg St. Germain, where she passed the night. The next day she fled
from Paris, and made her way to Dieppe, which was in the hands of
an old retainer of the Longueville family, and here, with her usual

1 Anne de Gonzague, daughter of the duke of Mantua, had married the
son of Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I. of England, electress Palatine
and queen of Bohemia for one year.
boldness, she caused the royal standard to be torn from the keep, and making every preparation for resistance, proclaimed that she would never lay down arms until her husband and her brothers were set free.

The arrest of the princes took place about three o’clock in the afternoon. At midnight the queen gave an audience to her new friends the leading members of the Fronde. Mole was received with peculiar graciousness, but his face was disturbed. The queen had broken her promise to make no summary arrests, and his confidence was shaken.

The following day Anne addressed a letter of explanation to the parliament. It was received with deference, but the duc de Bouillon, the duc de St. Simon, and other nobles retired from the court; numbers of gentlemen followed them, and prepared to set up the standard of rebellion in the provinces. The horrors of civil war seemed again imminent. The queen’s measures were brave and energetic. Twelve days after the arrest of the princes she was to be seen mounted on horseback, and followed by a troop of soldiers, on her way to Rouen, where she was received by the comte d’Harcourt. Before retiring to rest or taking refreshment, she wrote orders with her own hand to the commandants of the forts in Normandy to present themselves within three days before the king. Madame de Longueville received a similar command to resign the fortress of Dieppe.

Escape was for the duchess again a necessity. In the cold twilight of a February evening she made her way to a little fishing village two leagues from Dieppe. A large ship lay at anchor in the offing, and the captain was already prepared to take her, if necessary, to Amsterdam. The night was stormy; no boat, said the fishermen of the place, could live in such a sea, yet one was launched. A hurricane wave overset it, and the unfortunate duchess was borne back to the shore insensible. She recovered, and wandered three leagues farther on foot, and at last sought shelter at the house of a friend in the neighbourhood. A second attempt at escape was made the next night and stopped, because at the last moment the duchess was told that the boatman was a traitor and would land her at Brest. She then assumed a disguise, and for ten days wandered along the coast begging for food and shelter, till at length, through the aid of a friend, the captain of an English vessel at Havre conveyed her safely to Holland, from whence she joined M. de Turenne, who had thrown himself into the fortress of Stenay.

Normandy was soon tranquillised. The queen, with her handsome young son by her side, rode from town to town, everywhere receiving tokens of submission; but the suppression of the rebellion proved much more difficult elsewhere, and especially in Guienne, where the young wife of Condé, Claire Clemence de Brézé (Richelieu’s
niece), made the most vigorous exertions. Lively, graceful, but not handsome, the princesse de Condé had been treated with neglect by her husband and his family. She had seen but little of the world, and had given no indications of her real energy and prudence. But her political plans, formed in conjunction with her mother-in-law, and with the concurrence of the duc de Bouillon and the duc de la Rochefoucauld, and the aid of a parliamentary councillor named Lenet, ultimately excited universal admiration.

Popular discontent was rife in Guienne, and resistance to the royal despotism might be easily organised under the guidance of the princess. The journey thither was the difficulty. Clemence and the princess dowager were living at Chantilly; but Mazarin, already suspicious, had sent orders that they should retire into Berry, under the escort of the officer who brought the letters.

When the messenger arrived the young princess was ill and in bed. Lenet advised her to rise, and then directed an English girl, one of the princess's maids of honour, who strongly resembled her, to take her mistress's place. The gardener's boy was dressed up to represent the little duc d'Enghien, and the dowager duchess pretended illness and took to her bed. Clemence concealed herself behind the curtains, and the king's messenger was introduced. Madame de Condé excused herself from not at once obeying the royal commands on the score of indisposition, and the officer was then conducted to the apartment of the pretended young princess. The English girl acted her part well, and the deception was complete. For seven days the officer remained at Chantilly—kept there on the pretence that the princesses were too ill to move—while Clemence and her child, under the care of Lenet, were making their way to Guienne.

For they had started on foot at eleven o'clock on the very same night that the king's officer arrived. A carriage had been sent to meet them at the edge of the forest of Chantilly. The princess, three ladies, a physician, and some servants (one of whom carried the duc d'Enghien) formed one party, Lenet and a body of servants another. Keeping quite distinct, and lodging at different inns, they managed to avoid suspicion, and at length reached Bordeaux.

At this point, however, an unexpected difficulty presented itself. Murmuring was safe, insurrection dangerous. So thought the parliament of Bordeaux. The duc de Bouillon tried to rouse the mob against the parliament, but only succeeded in exciting a disorderly tumult, quelled by Clemence, who appeared upon the steps of the Palais de Justice, and waving her hand exclaimed, 'Let those that love me follow me!' and then walked quietly to her own house, followed by the mob, shouting, 'Long live the princess!'

The people were enthusiastic, and the parliament at length shared the enthusiasm. Bordeaux became a centre of rebellion, and
number of experienced officers joined the princess, and negotiations were opened with the court of Spain. The deception practised on the royal messenger had of course been discovered, but it was taken by the queen more goodnaturedly than could have been anticipated. No obstacle was put in the way of the princess dowager when she left Chantilly for Paris; but when she proceeded to petition the parliament for her sons, standing herself at the entrance of the hall, enveloped in a long black cloak, and holding out her paper to each member as she passed, the duke of Orleans, as lieutenant-governor during the absence of Anne in the provinces, took alarm, and the dowager princess was requested to leave the city.

A storm was by this time gathering, not only at Bordeaux, but in the north, where Turenne, who had espoused the cause of the imprisoned princes, was preparing to enter France with a force of 10,000 men, a body of whom were Spaniards. He would fain have marched upon Paris, but the Spanish troops refused to follow him, and leaving them behind him, Turenne, with a body of 3,000 horse, proceeded direct to Vincennes.

The captivity of the princes had been wearisome, but not altogether hopeless. The prince de Conty read Thomas a Kempis, and the prince de Condé cultivated flowers, and all three gambled, but their chief solace lay in constant schemes for escape.

The government were, however, on the watch, and all their efforts were frustrated; but the appearance of Turenne’s army brought hope. The queen sent orders to Monsieur that the prisoners should be removed to Havre. The coadjutor, however, urged in the council that Havre was under the control of Mazarin, who might at any moment make friends with Condé, and suggested the Bastille as a safer place. Finally Monsieur, upon his own responsibility, decided upon Marecousy, a magnificent house on an island in the centre of a lake, about eighteen miles from Paris; and thither, under a strong escort, the princes were removed.

Turenne’s object was frustrated, and he retired and rejoined his Spaniards. But all his movements at this time were failures. A body of troops had been placed by him in the strong town of Rhéted. It was besieged by the queen’s forces under marshal du Plessis Praslin.

Turenne advanced to succour it. The two armies met. Turenne, whose numbers were greatly inferior to those of his opponent, was completely defeated, and, accompanied by only 150 horse, fled to Bar-le-Duc. Hopes of further assistance were given by the Spanish archduke, but by this time the internal affairs of France had assumed a different aspect, and reconciliation with the court seemed again possible.

For Anne, once more triumphant, was willing to consider the
terms of peace, which she could dictate at her pleasure. Bordeaux had been besieged and taken, in spite of the brave efforts of the princesse de Condé, and whilst the regent and young king were preparing to make their triumphant entry into the city Clemence left it in a galley equipped for her use by the inhabitants.

Success, no doubt, was gratifying to Anne, but it had been attained at much personal inconvenience. To move from place to place, and live in small rooms in small towns, which had been her fate since the insurrection of the princes broke out, was utterly uncongenial to her taste for luxury; but more trying than this must have been the society of the Grande Mademoiselle, who accompanied her wherever she went. Having been disappointed in an expectation held out to her of a marriage with the emperor of Germany, Mademoiselle consoled herself with the hope of a marriage with her cousin Louis, though she was his senior by eleven years. The queen was but little inclined to further this wish, and Mademoiselle, in consequence, showed her temper unmercifully. Anne would have given up the entry into Bordeaux. She longed to get back to the spacious gardens, to say nothing of the excellent cookery, of Fontainebleau; but Mademoiselle insisted that the citizens of Paris would certainly resent any disrespect shown to the citizens of Bordeaux, by voting as they had done once before, that no foreigner should hold office in France. At this covert threat against her favourite Mazarin Anne was obliged to yield, and the entry into Bordeaux took place; but the unsatisfactory intelligence received from Paris soon compelled her to return there.

At the latter end of September a shot was one evening fired at the duc de Beaufort’s couch. The people attributed it to Mazarin, and seven effigies of the cardinal were in consequence gibbeted in the city, and two oil paintings representing Mazarin, in his robes, with a rope round his neck, and a list of his offences written below, were fixed on one of the bridges. Round these pictures crowds assembled, cheering and laughing uproariously; cries of sedition mingled with the merriment, and soldiers were ordered to disperse the mob. This news alone was sufficient to excite anxiety, but Anne was still more disturbed in mind by her jealousy of the duke of Orleans. Monsieur, as lieutenant-governor of the kingdom, had entered into negotiations for peace with the Spanish archduke, and had removed the princes from Vincennes to Marcoussy, against her openly expressed wish that they should be sent to Havre. Her displeasure was shown when she arrived at Fontainebleau.

In a stormy interview following Anne insisted that the princes should be removed to Havre. The duke remonstrated, argued, and finally yielded; but once more alone, he was angry and regretful. The next morning he sent for Le Tellier, the secretary of state, who
PRISONERS SENT TO HAVRE—NEW FRONDE. 483

found him walking rapidly up and down before the door of the inn where his train lodged. After storms against the queen for two hours Monsieur ordered his horse, mounted, called for pistols, and dashed away into the forest, greatly to the perturbation of the secretary.

Anne merely laughed when she received the account of this behaviour, and certainly she understood him, for at noon he returned, sobered but sad. But he revoked his consent, and asked for the paper which he had signed. It was not to be found. 'It must have been taken away,' said Mazarin, 'by M. Le Tellier.' The secretary was sent for, but he was out, and he remained out the greater part of the day. When he returned it was too late. The order had been despatched, and the princes were already on their way to Havre.

The queen's determined act excited loud indignation amongst the leaders of the Fronde, and Mazarin, doubtful of their fidelity, entreated the queen to hold her court at the Louvre, which was a kind of fortress. But Anne was ill and suffering, and the comforts of her own rooms at the Palais Royal were indispensable. She was unhappy also. The dowager princesse de Condé, once her trusted friend, was dying from the effects of anxiety for her sons. Her last message to the queen was affectionate, but she entreated Anne to think of death, and remember that no one was safe from the changes of fortune.

A fresh party—that of the New Fronde ('la Nouvelle Fronde')—was now springing up in distressed Paris. At its head was the coadjutor Gondy. The queen had refused to nominate him to the Pope for the next cardinal's hat, and Gondy, indignant, turned his mind at once to the liberation of the princes and the downfall of Mazarin.

Communications with Condé and his brothers were carried on chiefly through the medium of Anne de Gonzague, by means of small silver boxes exactly resembling large crown-pieces—the money then in use, and which the prisoners were permitted to receive. The answers enclosed in the false coins were either thrown across the moat or entrusted to one of the officers of the prison who had been bribed to lend his aid.

The cardinal only faintly surmised the plots again forming against him. A warning was, however, given him. The due de la Rochefoucauld paid him a midnight visit, and, after telling him of the rise of a new faction, said to him oracularly, 'Your eminence will soon be in mortal peril if you suffer me to descend this stair-case without a promise to release the princes.' Mazarin smiled placidly, and taking a dark lantern cautiously followed his visitor down the stairs, and as he let him out into the street said, 'Adieu,
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Louis XIV.

monsieur; at our next interview we hope our prospects may appear to you more cheerful.'

The duke went at once to the palace of the princess Palatine, where all the members of the New Fronde were assembled. A paper of conditions of agreement was drawn up, and names were affixed, but the great difficulty was to obtain the signature of Gaston of Orleans, who had a peculiar objection—dating probably from the days of Richelieu and Cinq Mars—to seeing his name at the foot of any document. The condutor's secretary walked about for days with a copy of the articles of agreement in his pocket, and at last meeting Monsieur unexpectedly, he dropped on his knees, presented the paper and a pen full of ink, and offered his own back for a writing-desk. The duke, in an agony lest he should be caught in the fact, signed the paper. 'He would have signed the arrangements for a meeting of demons,' said madame de Chevreuse, when she heard of it, 'if he had been afraid his good angel would catch him amongst them.'

The members of the parliament were equally determined that the princes should be liberated. President Molé went with a deputation to the Palais Royal to present to the queen a petition upon the subject. The queen was still ill, and was resting on her bed. The young king, who, being now more than thirteen, had nearly attained his majority, was seated in an armchair by her side; Mazarin and Châteauneuf were also present.

The president was reverential in his salutations, but his harsh voice gave an unpleasant emphasis to his enumeration of the faults of the government. 'Madame,' he said in conclusion, 'it is my duty to inform you, with all possible respect, that if your majesty does not promptly advise the release of the princes, the fidelity which we owe to the realm will compel us to interfere effectually for the saving of the kingdom and the welfare of the crown.'

The young king started up and whispered in his mother's ear, 'Say the word, madame; permit me to silence that man and to drive him with disgrace from our presence.' But Anne pressed his arm as a sign that he must be calm. The members made their parting salutation, and Louis frowned and turned aside his head, whilst Anne bore the rebuke she had received with apparent indifference. But the interview had a very decided effect upon her, for a few days after she sent a message to the chamber, stating that as soon as M. de Turenne should lay down his arms and give up Stenay the princes should be set free.

The parliament thanked the queen for her gracious clemency, but the members of the New Fronde were by no means so well contented. Mazarin's exile was their object, and this could only be obtained by the cordial support of the ever-vacillating Gaston of Orleans. Goury used the influence of Madame to rouse him to action. The indolent, un-
graceful, but handsome duchess was jealous of her husband’s position. ‘Who are you, monsieur?’ she would say when Gaston bemoaned the danger his friends wished him to incur: ‘are you not general of this kingdom? If you declare against this cardinal, I, for my part, engage, as your wife, to prevent the evils you fear.’ But Monsieur had less confidence than his wife in her power of averting evil. It was only a personal quarrel with the queen which at last brought matters to the desired point.

One evening, when visiting Anne in her little boudoir, the conversation turned upon the recent revolution in England. Anne blamed Charles for the sacrifice of his minister, Strafford, and said he had given way to popular clamour. Mazarin, who was present, remarked in an angry tone that ‘France would soon be on a level with England; the coadjutor was already a would-be Cromwell, and the duc de Beaufort was another Fairfax.’

Monsieur answered indignantly. ‘The magistrates of the parliamen, he said, ‘might oppose the designs of the cardinal, but they were loyal and devoted to the crown.’ Here the queen broke forth bitterly. ‘Gondy and the enemies of the cardinal,’ she protested, ‘should all ere long taste the power of the crown.’ Monsieur, in great alarm, hurriedly took his leave, and as he seated himself in his carriage exclaimed to the gentleman in attendance that ‘he would never again place himself in the power of that enraged fury.’

The very next day, supported by the urgent influence of Madame, the duke sent a message to the queen, stating that whilst the cardinal remained at the Palais Royal he should himself decline entering it. Mazarin’s expressions were at the same time diligently repeated to the parliament by Gondy; and, in the midst of a storm of exclamations, the members voted that cardinal Mazarin should be summoned forth to answer for his execrable administration, and to receive the punishment of exile.

The queen, completely overwhelmed by this announcement, sent for the duke of Orleans to come to her. But the duke, at length immovable. Once again in Anne’s presence, and he knew how weak he should be. He repaired to the parliament began an eloquent speech, which was interrupted by a message from the queen and some of the members to the queen herself. Mole departed, leaving Monsieur and his friends seated to await their return. Anne had written out a congratulation of Mazarin’s account of the scene at the Palais Royal. The duke of Orleans, having ordered to read it aloud to the parliamentary players, was embarrassed, and Anne clearly repeated every word he uttered over, ending with, ‘The said coadjutor has thereupon, he is an unprincipled and turbulent demagogue.’ As to the queen herself, she authorised the president to express her
desire to see him, and again she gave her word that the princes should be released when Turenne yielded.

The message was given and the answer came back. 'The duke of Orleans could not enter the queen's presence until after the departure of M. de Mazarin.' Another attempt was made. Henrietta of England was sent to expostulate with her brother, as in a state of great excitement he walked up and down his long gallery, fusty gentlemen with him, lauding his patriotism. An ironical cheer from one of the party, and a cry of 'Long live the Mazarin!' was all she obtained. Notwithstanding her illness, Anne now determined to visit the duke herself at the Luxembourg. Monsieur was told of the intended honour; and, in a violent passion, desired his informant to say to her majesty that as she entered his palace by one door he should leave it by another. Affairs were growing desperate; all Paris was crying aloud for the overthrow of Mazarin, believing his influence to be exercised against peace with Spain; and both Anne and the keen-sighted cardinal saw they must yield in appearance in order to conquer in reality.

On the 7th of February 1651, the queen held her evening circle. The wily minister approached, kissed her hand, and said quietly that, his exile having been voted, he begged permission to retire from France, though he should never forget his obligations to her majesty and the king. Anne with equal calmness accepted the proffered retirement, promising to continue her esteem for her fallen minister. Mazarin lingered in the council room, when a loud cry of 'To arms! to arms!' was heard without, and his chamberlain whispered a few words in his ear. The cardinal hastily left the room, put on the dress of a cavalier—a red cloak and a hat with plumes—and departed stealthily from the palace, two gentlemen accompanying him. Whilst the cries of 'Down with Mazarin!' 'Death!' 'Long live the king!' echoed in his ear he mounted his horse, and in the cold, foggy night rode off to St. Germain, from whence he soon after made his way to Havre. The queen in the meantime was preparing to carry the young king with her to the provinces, and put him at the head of an army, aided by the loyal feudal lords.

By the 10th of February Anne was ready for departure, having confided her intentions to three persons, one of whom was Châteauneuf. By him the secret was betrayed to Monsieur, who, however, refused to interfere. But on the night of the 10th Châteauneuf gave information also to marshal Villeroi, who rushed to the Hôtel Chevreuse, found there mademoiselle de Chevreuse, the special ally and supporter of Gondy, and took her with him to the coadjutor. Roused from his slumbers, and being shown the necessity of action, Gondy was soon on his way to the Luxembourg, mademoiselle de Chevreuse accompanying him.

Monsieur was found in bed, his head nearly hidden by the quilt.
ENDEAVOURS TO ROUSE MONSIEUR—ATTACK ON THE PALACE. 487

The duchess, leaning her elbow on the bolster, was haranguing him as to his duty of rising instantly to prevent the escape of the queen; whilst madame de Chevreuse, who had brought the alarm, sat breathless on the other side of the bed, having exhausted herself by her previous exhortations to Monsieur to bestrid himself.

"Ah!" exclaimed the duke as the coadjutor entered, "did I not tell you? What are we to do?"

"Seize the gates of Paris," was the reply.

"What! at this hour? impossible!" and Monsieur again disappeared under the coverlet.

The duchess called to Gondy to give her a writing-case, and wrote hastily the following order:—

"Coadjutor is ordered and authorised to make a call to arms throughout the city to prevent the accomplices of cardinal Mazarin, who has been condemned by the parliament, from conveying the king from Paris.—MARQUERTE DE LORRAINE."

The paper was no sooner written than Monsieur snatched it from his wife and tore it to shreds.

"I answer for Monsieur," screamed the duchess, as Gondy prepared to go.

"Coadjutor," shouted the duke, "remember I do not wish to quarrel altogether with the parliament, but to arrest——" Madame de Chevreuse closed the door, and Gondy departed to rouse the mob by the aid of his partisans.

From obscure streets and dark cellars came hordes of ruffians, shouting, "They are stealing the king! Help! help!" and by the time the clocks at the Palais Royal struck twelve the cries had reached the ears of the alarmed queen and her ladies.

A violent knocking at the door of the queen's bedchamber was now heard. The duc de Beaufort and the duc de Nemours had come to demand the queen's intentions as to her departure from Paris. They were indignantly sent away. A second alarm followed. M. Destouches, captain of Monsieur's Swiss guard, had orders to see the young king. Anne shrugged her shoulders and ordered that he should be conducted to his majesty's chamber, and Destouches went away satisfied.

A mob filled the streets. Destouches assured them he had himself seen his majesty asleep. They might do the same if they would. Thereupon the voices of the people rose in a great shout; they rushed on the palace, and the iron trellis-work of one of the outer gates was shivered.

The courtiers and ladies gathered round the queen. "What is it that the people wish?" enquired Anne quietly. "To see his majesty with their own eyes," replied the duc de Beaufort, who had returned to protect the queen.

The palace gates were instantly ordered to be thrown open, and
up the marble staircase rushed the rabble, the queen awaiting their approach in the gallery leading to the king's room.

Her stately presence awed them. They entered with reverence. 'My friends,' said Anne, 'it has never been my intention to quit Paris. I will myself show you the king.' She turned to her child's door, and the people followed her, whispering and on tiptoe, into the splendid bedchamber, with its tall mirrors and velvet hangings. Anne stood by the bed, her finger on her lips. The young king slept, or rather kept his eyelids closed, for Louis inwardly trembled with the indignation which was to abide with him for long years.

The people defiled through the apartment in silence, and then Anne, turning to two burghers of the city guard, asked if they would watch with her through the remainder of the night.

The men consented, and the queen exerted her utmost powers of fascination in conversation as she spoke to them of the oppressive conduct of the nobles and confidentially explained her difficulties, and before the night was over they were her devoted adherents. The hours till dawn were quiet. Anne sat by her son's bed, marshal Villeroy standing behind. Two of the attendants kept themselves awake by a game of piquet, and the two city guards looked on, greatly surprised to find themselves in such a position, and not a little proud at being for the space of three hours necessary, as they afterwards expressed it, to the comfort of the greatest queen in the world.

The next morning the city gates were, by the command of the duke of Orleans, seized and guarded, and an order was issued which virtually prevented the king from leaving the palace, as Louis was never to be allowed to go out except under his uncle's protection. The duke then repaired to the parliament, and announced that an order had been given for the release of the princes, and that the messenger was on his way to Havre. The authority of the regent was not referred to. President Molé rose in reply. 'The princes,' he exclaimed reproachfully, 'are at liberty; but the prince our master is a prisoner!'

'The king was a prisoner in the hands of Mazarin, but he is no longer,' was the ready answer of Mazarieu, and the excuse was for the time accepted.

While these events were passing at Paris cardinal Mazarin was on his way to Havre, with a vague idea in his mind (so he himself states) of carrying off the two imprisoned princes by sea to Dieppe. But the intelligence which reached him from Paris showed him, even before he reached Havre, that such a step would be impossible, and, with his usual adroitness, he prepared to grasp the circumstances in which he found himself and turn them to his own advantage. As the princes were to be released he would himself be the messenger of their freedom.
Great indeed must have been the astonishment of the prince de Condé and his brother when the door of their prison chamber was opened and his eminence cardinal Mazarin was announced. Greater still must have been their surprise when the cardinal, advancing, kissed the hand of Condé, and stated that the queen, in her gracious clemency, had been pleased to terminate the captivity of their royal highnesses. The prince suspected treachery. He invited the cardinal to dine with him; then, to test the reality of the alleged freedom, asked permission to go outside the walls.

The request being instantly granted, Condé was satisfied, and preparations were instantly made for departure. In a private audience Condé heard the cardinal's account of the course of recent events in Paris; but he was cold and disdainful.

When the recent prisoners drove off in exultation to Paris the defeated cardinal turned from the gloomy fortress and repaired to a small inn, close to the beach, from whence, if need were, he might escape by sea.

But the course of a few days brought him letters from the queen, friends, and money. Anne pledged him her undeviating trust, and Mazarin, cheered and willing to bide his time for restoration to power, pursued his journey to the castle of Brühl, which was placed at his disposal by the elector of Cologne. Here his nieces joined him, Paris being considered no safe place of residence for them.

Loud were the acclamations of the people, and earnest the congratulations of friends, when the princes, on the 16th of February, entered Paris; whilst the disappointed queen prepared for an interview as irritating as it was humiliating. She had been already seemingly reconciled to the duke of Orleans, who, accompanied by his daughter, had paid her a tardy visit. On that occasion she scarcely raised her eyes or spoke a word to the visitors, who, to quote the words of Mademoiselle, 'soon took their leave, as the company of a person into whose heart we know that we have just planted a dagger is neither pleasant nor easy.' Silence was again her refuge in the meeting with the princes, and Condé quietly repaired to the Luxembourg Palace, where all the members of the New Fronde awaited him.

Many complicated personal intrigues followed the return of the princes; but as regarded the country the chief subject of contention was the assembly of the States-General. To this the members of the parliament were violently opposed, dreading the meeting of an assembly with authority superior to their own.

The influence of the clergy, and of many of the nobles, compelled the queen at length to promise that on the 7th of September, when the king would attain his majority, the States should be convened at Tours, but no persuasion could induce her to forestall this period.
Anne had a good reason for her decision. The duke of Orleans, she believed, desired to prolong the regency. This could only be done by the States-General. If they were summoned, were it only two days before the majority of Louis, a petition might be presented and agreed to, and all hope of the restoration of Mazarin would be at an end.

It was for this that Anne still laboured. She held constant communication with her absent minister, receiving from him letters of most subtle advice, mixed with expressions of tenderness which savoured far more of personal affection than of political interest. And it was for this also that Anne ventured again to play a false part with the prince de Condé.

The prince, on his return to Paris, found himself disappointed, as all men must be who depend on selfish partisans. The duke of Orleans was capricious. The members of the New Fronde were disagreeably familiar. He was mixed up with humiliating plans. The duchesse de Chevreuse was bent on the marriage of her daughter with the prince de Conty. Condé was pledged to support this project, though it was extremely unpalatable; for mademoiselle de Chevreuse was known to be worse than frivolous in her conduct, and to be entirely devoted to the unprincipled coadjutor Gondy. Moreover, Condé had his own private wishes. He desired honour and lucrative posts; but these could not be obtained whilst he was out of favour with the queen. He became discontented, and Anne knew it, and determined to lure him back to her side—but for his ruin and the restoration of Mazarin. She worked by the aid of Lyonne, the under-secretary of state, who was in her confidence, at first letting the prince know her dislike to the proposed marriage, then inducing him to say what favours he would require as the price of his forsaking the Fronde, and consenting to dismiss his enemy Châteauneuf from the council and give a seat to his friend Chavigny, until Condé believed in her sincerity, and, to the consternation of his party, avowed himself her ally, and refused his consent to his brother's marriage.

Promises which are not to be kept cost little. All that the queen desired was to tide over the few months which must elapse before the king's majority. Then the recall of Mazarin would be secure. Condé, however, grew impatient. Several important provinces were to be his, but they were not given him. Some secret influence seemed to be working against him. An imprudent measure of some of his own partisans brought matters to a climax. It was stated in the parliament that large sums of money were invested in foreign securities for the cardinal's use, and a proposal was made by Conde's friends to enquire into the circumstances connected with this fact. The queen was indignant. The presumption of the Condé party
was becoming intolerable, and her anger was not lessened by hearing that the duchesse de Longueville, on her own responsibility, was working out a scheme with the Spanish archduke for a general peace. Once more Anne turned her thoughts to the coadjutor. With him on her side she might hope to triumph over every obstacle and secure the return of the cardinal. The coadjutor was to be gained by the influence of mademoiselle de Chevreuse, an avowed enemy of Condé since the breaking off of the projected marriage with Conty. An appeal to the young lady’s mother, the duchesse de Chevreuse, to join with the queen in taking revenge upon the prince de Condé was received eagerly, the duchess giving at the same time a suggestion of the possibility of assassination, which there is reason to fear the queen was not unwilling to entertain, and the dread of which, there is no doubt, drove the prince again to open rebellion.

The coadjutor had professed lately to retire from politics, and to be occupying himself in the duties of his sacred office, and especially in the penitential services of Lent, but by the influence of mademoiselle de Chevreuse he was induced to consent to an evening interview with the queen. Anne made him the offer of the post of prime minister and an apartment in the palace. Gondy refused it. ‘I saw,’ he says in his memoirs, ‘that Mazarin still reigned over her heart and mind, though she explained that she did not intend to ruin the kingdom for his sake.’ The only bribe he would accept was a cardinal’s hat, and, after some hesitation, the nomination was offered. ‘It is the price,’ said the queen, ‘of the efforts which you, monsieur, must make for the restoration of M. de Mazarin out of love for me.’

So Gondy was won, and his first promise was that in eight days the prince de Condé should be compelled to quit Paris.

The circumstances which followed are not clearly known. The coadjutor, there is no doubt, set to work by means of his usual emissaries—libels and satires, spread through the town by criers and hawkers—and in various ways the enmity of the queen and the intrigues of the coadjutor became so manifest that the prince, alarmed at his position, fortified his hôtel, walked about Paris followed by an escort of 400 gentlemen, and finally resolved to leave the city, and in the night rode off to St. Maur.

He was then out of the queen’s power. His friends gathered round him, and St. Maur became the focus of disaffection, though, as the result of some negotiation between Condé and the parliament, the prince himself was persuaded to return to Paris.

One thing was now evident to all. Mazarin and Condé were enemies, and one or the other must be overthrown. Anne had no doubt in her mind which it was to be. On the 17th of August, a
bill of indictment against the prince was presented to the High Court of Parliament, accusing him of treacherous negotiations with Spain.

Condé, who was present, instantly rose and gave a formal contradiction to the accusation, and begged that the debate should be suspended until the duke of Orleans, as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, could be summoned to the meeting. Monsieur had been warned by the queen of her intentions, and had discreetly absented himself. Now, being apprised that he was likely to be called to the parliament, he sent for his surgeon, ordered him to bleed him, and quietly took to his bed. The next day he retired into the country, but not before Condé had seen him, just as he was entering his coach, and compelled him to sign a paper containing a formal contradiction of the most important charges. Monsieur, trembling and expostulating, wrote his name as he rested the paper on the seat of his coach, and then sent a message of apology to the queen. Armed with the document thus signed, Condé appeared again in the parliament. A stormy scene ensued. Gondy made the most irritating remarks in the meekest of tones, and Condé laid his hand on his own sword and by this gesture drew forth 4,000 from the scabbards of his rabble followers, who filled the galleries. The prince appeased the outburst for the moment, but between that day—the 7th of August—and the 7th of September the two parties openly bade defiance to each other, not only in the streets but in the parliament, until Molé, shocked at the scenes which were taking place, begged the queen to prohibit the cadditor from appearing there till after the day of the king’s majority, which was now close at hand.

CHAPTER XLI.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1651.

It must have been a proud and glad waking for Anne of Austria on that 7th of September, 1651. The cannon of the arsenal, the Bastille, and the forts around Paris thundered forth their salutations to the young king; and at six o'clock in the morning the queen rose to prepare for the ceremonies and rejoicings of the day. At eight o'clock she was in her son’s room, the duke of Orleans and a train of nobles accompanying her. Louis, who was standing by the gilt balustrade which enclosed the alcove of his bed, eagerly advanced towards her, embracing her with many loving words, and assuring her that it was his duty, not hers, to render homage; so tender a mother and so
great a regent had she proved herself. The greeting might well have repaid her for many a past anxiety, and throughout the whole of that day, as she watched her handsome, graceful boy assuming with perfect self-possession the place which his birth had assigned to him, the proud satisfaction so dear to a mother's heart must have been well-nigh unalloyed.

For the young Louis was singularly well fitted to stand before the people as their king. Tall and majestic, he might well have been supposed to be eighteen rather than fourteen, and in the midst of the gallant array of nobles and soldiers who defied through the streets of Paris on their way to the Palais de Justice the youthful sovereign, reining in his horse with unequalled steadiness of hand, was pre-eminent in dignity and ease. Shouts of 'Vive le roi!' rose from the multitude as he passed along, and were echoed by the spectators on the roofs of the houses, and surely none then dreamed that a day so bright was to usher in a reign from which France might date the horrors of a revolution and Europe the uprooting of all her ancient landmarks.

To all appearance greatness and prosperity awaited the young king, but the scenes amidst which Louis XIV. passed his boyhood had been no preparation for the duties of a sovereign. The absence of all real principle, joined with the careful observance of outward religion, had early accustomed him to separate religion and morality, and paved the way for the vicious self-deception which marked his life, and the evil effect of which upon his country was but feebly counteracted by the nobler features of his character.

Mass in the Sainte Chapelle, adjoining the Palais de Justice, was the first duty of the day, and when that had been heard the procession was again formed, and Louis, arrayed in his royal robes, crossed the outer hall, the Salle des Pas Perdus, and entering the parliamentary chamber walked up to his throne with a composure which amazed all who beheld him. The queen followed and seated herself on a chair of state by his side. Louis rose and addressed the assembly.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I have summoned my parliament to inform its members that, in accordance with the laws of my realm, it is my intention henceforth to assume the government, and I pray that, by the mercy and protection of God Almighty, I may reign in justice and with prosperity. My chancellor will inform you of my will.'

A speech from the chancellor in praise of the queen regent followed, after which Anne of Austria assured the king with what satisfaction she gave up the government to him, and how earnestly she prayed that God would guide him and them.

Leaving the dais, she knelt before her son and kissed his hand. Louis embraced her with emotion. 'I thank you from my heart,
madame,' he said, 'for the trouble which you have taken with my education and the government of this realm. I pray you to continue your loving care, and it is my will that henceforth after myself you remain the chief personage of my realm.'

Leaving the queen back to her chair with profound reverence, he resumed his seat on the throne, and received the homage of the peers temporal and spiritual and of the presidents of the parliament. Various decrees were also read as the first acts of the king on assuming the government, and amongst them was a declaration in favour of the prince de Condé; but this overture towards reconciliation came too late. Condé had absented himself, and the terms of the apology which he sent aggravated his evident disrespect.

One week after the king's majority the prince was at Montrond, at the head of a devoted band of followers, and preparations for war were making throughout the provinces. Spain, it was well understood, would aid him with troops, and Turenne and his brother the duc de Bouillon would, it was expected, give up some of the fortresses held by them in the north and on the borders of Flanders. But in this hope Condé was deceived. Turenne determined to remain faithful to the court, and the duc de Bouillon having been offered the government of a large territory, including Auvergne, Epernay, and Evreux, followed his example.

The coadjutor Gondy was a mainstay of the government for the time, but his object was very far removed from that which Anne had at heart. In the absence of Mazarin he had rendered himself very essential to the queen, and in his wonderful self-conceit there is little doubt that, although one of the ugliest men in Europe, he flattered himself that he could so far win her affections as entirely to supersede the cardinal and become prime minister of France.

Anne deceived him by flattery, but she was not one whit the less resolved that Mazarin should return. The coadjutor was admitted to her counsels in Paris, but Mazarin still directed all her movements by the messages which were sent to her from his place of exile at Bruhl. Wise counsel was at this moment essentially necessary. The prince de Condé had raised the standard of revolt in Guienne, wishing to obtain possession of the places in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux. The comte d'Harcourt, a general greatly his inferior, was sent to oppose him, and the result could scarcely have been doubtful but for the want of discipline amongst Condé's troops, which in many instances caused their defeat. In the meanwhile the miseries inseparable from civil war were making themselves felt in every direction. 'No language can describe,' says a writer of the period, 'what we have everywhere to endure—famine, death, and unburied bodies, the living gathering up scattered grains of damaged wheat with which to make bread, and devouring lizards and dogs.'
RETURN OF MAZARIN—GENERAL CONFUSION—CONDÉ’S DANGER.

The queen placed herself nominally at the head of the army, and took the king with her to Bourges, and here the court remained for some weeks, whilst the progress of the comte d’Harcourt in Guienne greatly discouraged the party of Condé. Just at this time news reached the prince that the duke of Orleans, driven to desperation by the increasing prospect of the speedy return of the detested Mazarin, had resolved to join the rebellion. The parliament also was, it was said, in a state of great agitation upon the same subject, and the fears thus awakened were confirmed when, on the 29th of December, it became known that the cardinal, in accordance with the queen’s wishes, had actually passed the frontier.

A parliamentary edict immediately declared him guilty of high treason, and a large sum was promised for his capture or his death. The cardinal, notwithstanding, made his way into the country without any real opposition. A large body of the royal troops was with him, and the officers who were sent to raise the country against him were unceremoniously seized and severely punished; and when at length he approached Paris, Louis and his brother went out to meet him, and he entered the city by the young king’s side, whilst Anne of Austria waited at a window of her palace to see him arrive.

The climax of the confusion of these most confusing times was now reached. The duke of Orleans, lieutenant-general of the kingdom, had joined Condé, the first prince of the blood, and in alliance with Spain they were in open revolt against the king. But the prince and the duke were giving conflicting orders, the result of which was to cause dissensions between the duc de Beaufort and the duc de Nemours, who were engaged on their side; whilst the parliament one day besought the duke of Orleans to send troops against Mazarin, and the next refused to pay them and declared that no one could enlist soldiers except the king.

Condé’s position was rendered perilous by these uncertainties. His only hope of success was in placing himself at the head of his veteran soldiers, who were stationed near Châtillon and commanded by the duc de Nemours. With this view the prince, accompanied by the duc de la Rochefoucauld and six other gentlemen, undertook to cross the centre of France, passing through the midst of the royal army, the whole party being disguised as common troopers and assuming false names. The government were fully aware of the intentions of Condé, and sent out troops to take him alive or dead. But the journey was successfully accomplished. The prince arrived at a most opportune moment, the quarrel between the dukes of Beaufort and Nemours having reached such a point that the ruin of the army seemed imminent.

The king’s forces, in the meantime, had everywhere been making their way, and the fact that Turenne was now exercising a joint
command with the marquis d'Hocquincourt gave a sense of stability to the royal cause. Town after town on the banks of the Loire opened its gates to the young king and his mother; only Orleans, Gaston's special city, was undecided in its allegiance. Monsieur preferred remaining in Paris to going thither, but he sent his daughter as his representative, and Mademoiselle set out on horseback, accompanied by a number of ladies and gay cavaliers, the party being chaperoned by some grave members of the parliament.

The young lady's own account of her entrance into the city is too graphic to be given except in her own words. 'I was informed,' she says, 'that I need not hurry myself, for the king was already in Orleans; but I was not alarmed, having a good deal of resolution. About eleven o'clock in the morning I was at the Porte Bannière, which I found shut and barricaded. The people were told who I was, but they would not open to me, and there I remained for three hours in my carriage, till at last, being tired, I went to a little inn near the gate, feeling very sorry for the poor town, which I knew could do nothing without me. The weather was fine, and after looking over some rather unpleasant letters brought me from Bordeaux I thought I would take a walk. The governor of Orleans sent me a present of some bonbons, which I looked upon as an amusing way of showing me that he could send me nothing else. . . . The ramparts were crowded with people, who, when I appeared, shouted "Long live the king and the prince!" "Down with Mazarin!" to which I could not help replying, "Go to the Hôtel de Ville, and make them open the gates to me." . . . Still going on, I found myself by the river side. The boatmen came forward to offer me their services, which I accepted willingly; and seeing that they were well disposed, I asked if they could take me in a boat to the Porte de la Faux, which was close to the water. They replied that it would be easier to break down another gate by the quay, close by where I then was, and that if I wished it they would undertake to try. I agreed, gave them some money, and—scrambling like a cat, by the aid of roots and branches, and jumping over hedges—I managed to mount to a little hill to watch their proceedings. My ladies did their utmost to persuade me to return, but their entreaties provoked me, and I ordered them to be silent. Madame de Breauté, who is the most cowardly creature in the world, made a great outcry against me and all who followed, and I am not sure that she did not even swear, she was in such a state of excitement, but it was all fun to me. When I was told that the men were getting on well, I went myself to superintend the work. My presence animated the boatmen, and they worked still more vigorously to batter down the gate. The citizens inside in the meantime did the same. When at length the gate was broken through, and two
great planks in the middle were taken away, Gramont [one of the Orleans party] signed to me to advance. As the ground was very muddy, one of my footmen took me up, carried me to the gate, and thrust me through the hole; and my head was no sooner within the gate than I gave my hand to the captain of the guard, and said, "You will be very glad to be able to boast that you have aided me to enter;" and then the cries of "Long live the king and the prince!" "Down with Mazarin!" redoubled, and two men took me and placed me in a wooden chair; but whether I sat upon the arm or the seat I cannot tell, for my head was quite giddy with excitement and joy, and all the world were rushing forward to kiss my hand, whilst I was bursting with laughter at finding myself in such a position.

"After having been carried in triumph through several streets I . . . . begged them to put me down, which they did, and then I waited for the arrival of my ladies, who soon made their appearance, very dirty but greatly delighted. Halfway to my palace I met the governor and the town councillors, who were considerably embarrassed as they saluted me. I spoke first, and told them that . . . . being rather impatient by nature, I had grown tired of waiting at the first gate, and having found the second open, I had entered by it, and as I had done so without their help, no blame could attach to them. I, indeed, must be responsible for everything, for persons of my rank must always command, "and certainly," I added, "I ought to do so here, since the town is Monsieur's."

So Orleans was compelled to declare itself against the king, and Monsieur wrote to his daughter that she had saved Orleans and secured the safety of Paris.

It was at the beginning of April that Condé joined the headquarters of his army in the neighbourhood of Orleans, and wrote to Mademoiselle to congratulate her on her successful furtherance of his cause. Mademoiselle was most anxious to see Condé, and stretching her authority to the utmost persuaded the magistrates of Orleans to invite him to their city; but the prince was for the time otherwise engaged, as Mademoiselle learnt a few days afterwards from a letter which she received from him, giving an account of an engagement with the royal troops, in which Turenne and D'Hocquincourt had been defeated, their war stores and all their baggage taken, and a large number of prisoners made, while the loss of the prince was only thirty men.

Nothing could equal the consternation of the court on the day of this combat, which took place close to Gien, where the young king and his mother and Mazarin were residing. In the fear that the town might fall into the hands of the enemy, the courtiers and ladies hurried off in indescribable confusion and consternation, whilst the queen remained in her own apartment, directing her attendants to
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pack up all the valuables which it contained. Had Condé known the country better, the defeat might have been much more disastrous to the royal cause, for he would undoubtedly have pursued the enemy; but, ignorant of the locality, he mistook a canal for the river, and as night was drawing on, and he feared that it might not be fordable, his soldiers were stopped in their pursuit. The two armies now advanced in parallel lines towards Paris, whither Condé hastened in person, being anxious to discover for himself the state of parties. His especial source of anxiety arose from the intrigues of Gondy, now no longer known as the coadjutor-archbishop, but as the cardinal de Retz. De Retz had by this time lost his hope of becoming prime minister, and was striving to raise up a party which should hold the balance between the court and Condé, and thus secure his own influence. He was utterly selfish, but it is in vain that we look for disinterestedness in these troubled times. Condé himself was thoroughly insincere. Whilst declaring to the parliament of Paris that he desired only the expulsion of Mazaris, he had entered into a treaty with the court which was to secure the cardinal's return to power, on condition that the prince should receive certain advantages; and while thus deceiving others he was himself deceived, for Chavigny, his friend and ally, who undertook to negotiate for him, had interests of his own to further, and Condé's objects were in consequence put aside. It was a miserable period, and through all the complications and intrigues the calamities of civil war still made themselves felt. The royal army was at St. Denis, close to Paris. The army of Condé was in the neighbourhood, at Etampes, whilst the duke of Lorraine, who had allied himself with Spain and professed to support Condé, brought another army equal to that of Turenne and encamped under the walls of the capital.

Suddenly, however the duke of Lorraine retreated. Strong influence had been brought to bear upon him by two English princes—Charles II. and his brother James, duke of York—who were then exiles in France, and Condé was left to confront the enemy alone. He led his forces to St. Cloud, but he had no means of supporting them. The peasantry were in consequence plundered; and the country houses of the rich Parisians pillaged and burnt, until the people began to hate Condé and to cast upon him the blame of all the evils from which the country was suffering. St. Cloud proved an undesirable position, and fearing an attack from Turenne's forces, which were greatly superior to his number, Condé broke up his camp with the intention of marching almost through Paris to Charenton. Turenne followed at full speed, and overtook the troops of Condé as they were passing through the suburb of St. Antoine. A bloody engagement ensued, carried on from street to street. Condé
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and his friends displayed the most desperate valour; but it was impossible to withstand the overwhelming superiority in number of Turenne's forces, and the followers of Condé, faint and dispirited, having vainly endeavoured to defend themselves behind barricades, retreated slowly to the open space before the Porte St. Antoine. At this critical moment relief arrived from a most unexpected quarter.

The Grande Mademoiselle had returned to Paris after her achievements at Orleans, full of her own importance, devoted to the prince de Condé, and flattering herself that through his means she might one day find herself queen of France. The heroine of the day, her house was throned, and the honours shown her excited both the jealousy and the fears of Monsieur, who, after having striven so long to keep himself out of danger, now found himself likely to be brought into it by this development of military prowess in his excitable daughter. When the armies of Condé and Turenne approached Paris Mademoiselle, according to her own account, had a presentiment that new distinctions were awaiting her. 'I had,' she says, 'a kind of instinct that I should be the means of getting them all out of their difficulties.'

At six o'clock on the 2nd of July, 1652, I heard some one knock at the door of my room. I called to my women to open the door, and the comte de Fiesque entered. He told me that the prince had sent a message to Monsieur, to say that he had been attacked at Montmartre, and entreated him to mount and join him, but that Monsieur had replied that he was ill. The count said also that the prince ordered him to find me and to entreat me not to abandon him.

'I rose as quickly as possible and went off to the Luxembourg, where I found Monsieur standing on the top of the steps. I said to him, "I thought you were in bed. Comte de Fiesque told me that you were ill." "I am not ill enough to be there," he answered, "but I am so unwell that I cannot go out." It was in vain that I entreated him as earnestly as I possibly could to mount and ride to the help of the prince; the reasons which I brought forward had not the slightest effect upon him.'

At last M. de Rohan and M. de Chavigny came in, and having talked some time with his royal highness, they persuaded him to send to the Hôtel de Ville a demand for certain things which were needed, and to give them a letter in which he referred the magistrates to me to explain what he wished to have done. I set off... accompanied by madame de Nemours.

On arriving at the Hôtel de Ville, marshal L'Hôpital, governor of Paris, and M. Le Fèvre came to receive me. I said to them, "Monsieur is not very well; M. de Rohan will give you a letter from him." The letter was read. It expressed great confidence in me, because of my late experience. I told them that Monsieur desired them to give
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orders that the citizens should take up arms in all quarters of the town. This, they said, was done. I added that they must despatch 2,000 men to the aid of the prince, and that I required 400 men for the Place Royale. The most important demand I left for the last—that they should allow our army to pass through the city to Charenton. Thereupon they looked at one another, and I continued, "... You must not persuade yourselves that if the prince should be defeated the enemy would give quarter to the people of Paris. When cardinal Mazarin has it in his power to satisfy his vengeance you may be quite sure he will not fail to do so."

'Marshad L'Hôpital interrupted me. "You know well, mademoiselle," he said, "that if the troops of your party had not approached Paris those of the king would not have come hither—that, indeed, their only object is to attack you." Madame de Nemours grew angry, and a quarrel was imminent. I broke into the conversation. "Gentlemen," I said, "while we are accusing ourselves with useless questions the prince de Condé is in great peril. You must aid him, and that quickly."

'Upon this they left me and retired to deliberate, and I stood at a window and prayed—for mass was being said in the neighbouring church (l'Hôpital du St. Esprit). I did not hear it all through, though, for I went backwards and forwards urging the gentlemen to decide. At last they came back and gave the orders which I required.

'I drove off in my coach. In the Rue de la Tixerandie I came upon ... M. de la Rochefoucauld, who had been wounded by a musket ball, which entered by the corner of one eye and came out between the other eye and the nose, and it really seemed as if both eyes were going to fall out. His face streamed with blood. He was on horseback; his son supported him on one side, and Gourville on the other. I stopped and spoke to him, but he did not answer; it was all he could do to hear.

'A gentleman in waiting upon M. de Nemours now came up to his wife with a message, to say that he had been wounded slightly in the hand. The duchess immediately left me in order to go to her husband. ... On reaching the Porte St. Antoine I entered the house of M. de la Croix, close to the Bastille. The prince met me there. ... His face was grim with dust, his hair in disorder; his neckcloth and shirt were covered with blood, and he held a naked sword in his hand, having lost the scabbard. "You see before you, madame," he said, "a man in utter despair. All my friends are fatally wounded." I begged him to take shelter in the city with his forces. He replied that he could not do that, but I need be under no alarm; he only intended to skirmish with the enemy; but it should never be said that he had retreated in open day before the Mazarins.'

The determination to refuse shelter within the walls of Paris
was, however, soon relinquished. The royal forces under marshal de la Ferté had by this time arrived, and the prince, finding himself hemmed in between the enemy and the city walls, unwillingly gave directions to his infantry to effect an entrance into the capital if possible.

The attempt was successful, Condé being supported by the boldness of Mademoiselle, who issued an order to the governor of the Bastille to aid him by firing upon the royal troops. Once within the city, the feelings of the excitable Parisians were aroused to sympathy, and every kindness was shown to the wounded; but Condé's soldiers were ill-disciplined and ill-humoured, surly over their defeat, and quite prepared to fight their hosts on the first provocation.

The prince himself was equally out of favour. The party of the Orleanists, attached to Monsieur—that of the royalists, who desired the return of the king without Mazarin—and the party of the cardinal de Retz were all more or less insurrectionary, and might be termed Frondeurs, but amongst them there were no persons to form a party for Condé.

Under these circumstances the hope of the prince lay in exciting alarm. The contemporaneous accounts of his proceedings at this time are conflicting, but it would seem that one of his plans was to seize De Retz, under the cover of a popular tumult, and carry him away from Paris. About 200 soldiers, disguised as common workmen, were accordingly placed in a house opposite the Hôtel de Ville, and loopholes facing the windows of that building were made in the walls; and the wretched population of the neighbourhood were secretly stirred up by these men to a belief that a blow was about to be struck against the remaining adherents of Mazarin, in which they would be expected to take part. The sign of adherence to the plot was a bunch of straw worn on some part of the dress; and at a very early hour on the day fixed for carrying out the prince's schemes various people were seen hurrying about the streets offering packets of straw to the persons they met, but giving no explanation of their meaning. Many refused to take the straw, but others happily accepted it, and found the benefit of their choice later in the day.

It was the 4th of July. A general assembly had been summoned by the city provost to meet at the Hôtel de Ville. The duke of Orleans and the prince de Condé were to be present. The meeting had scarcely begun when a trumpeter interrupted it by an order from the king postponing it for eight days. At the news of this interference the tumultuous crowd who thronged the Place de Grève showed a strong disposition to violence, and Condé, mortified and angry with the authorities for submitting, briefly thanked them for having allowed his troops to enter, and then, followed by the dukes of Orleans, left the meeting. As the two princes passed to their
carriage their gloomy faces excited remark. Some one, it is said, asked what was the matter, to which Condé is stated to have replied, 'The hall is full of Mazarins, who are only seeking to delay matters. Do what you will with them.' The words, if spoken, were the signal of death. But at all events Condé's departure was in some way the signal for a frightful outbreak. It seems that there was a rush of the mob against the Hôtel de Ville, and Condé's followers commenced firing from the loopholes made in the walls of the opposite house.

One of the unfortunate persons thus attacked in the Hôtel de Ville—a partisan of the Fronde—went to the window and assured the mob he would answer for everything being as they would wish. He was instantly fired upon. Others, venturing outside the building, were massacred. A servant of one of Monsieur's most devoted partisans hurried to the Luxembourg, and found the duke quite tranquil and whistling; Condé and Mademoiselle were with him. 'Monseigneur, my master is being murdered!' he exclaimed. The duke took no notice. Another messenger arrived, quite out of breath. 'The Hôtel de Ville is on fire!' was his exclamation. 'My good cousin,' said Monsieur, turning to Condé, 'won't you go and put an end to all this?' 'Monseigneur,' replied Condé, 'I don't understand such matters, and I am rather afraid of interfering.' 'Well,' exclaimed Mademoiselle, 'then I will go. The governor and the provost must be saved;' and she set forth, accompanied by the duc de Beaufort.

In the meantime some of the mob had agreed to save the lives of the unfortunate members of the assembly at the price of about five, ten, or fifteen pounds a head; but the previous carnage had been most terrible, and a part of the Hôtel de Ville had taken fire. The flames were, however, extinguished by the time Mademoiselle and the duc de Beaufort appeared, which was not till midnight, for they had been compelled once to return, fearing the violence of the mob.

The Place de Grève was then solitary. The dead had been carried away in carts; only smoking rafters testified to the action of the fire, and little remained to be done. But the provost, who was found hidden in a closet, and some other persons who had concealed themselves were sent to their homes under an escort.

When morning dawned Paris began to ask the reason of the tumult. Everything pointed to Condé as its author. There was a general feeling of horror, and Mademoiselle herself allowed that it was the death-blow of the party. Yet the symbol of the massacre became a fashion; bunches of straw were displayed upon hats and caps, and imitated in jewellery, until everything to be admired was 'à la paille.'
Condé soon found the change in public opinion. He was, indeed, directly accused of the crime by one of his former friends, and could only reply, ‘Let no one dare to say that, or he shall perish.’ License spread amongst his troops, fatally fostered by a kind of duel which took place about this time, and in which the duc de Nemours, who had quarrelled with the duc de Beaufort, was killed. It was a combat—including the seconds—of five against five, and, besides the duke, two noblemen lost their lives.

Desertion had also by this time greatly reduced Condé’s army; and finding the feeling of the citizens so strongly against them, he sent them out of Paris.

The court party was evidently gaining ground, and the ‘paille’ was rapidly being displaced by the ‘papier,’ the symbol adopted by the royalist faction, and which was simply a piece of paper stuck in the hat. When an order reached Paris from the king that the parliament should remove to Pontoise, where Louis and his mother were residing, all the well-affected members obeyed, and left the capital and, under president Molé, proceeded to annul all the acts of the parliament of Paris.

The influence of the king and his mother was evidently still very great; whilst the citizens of Paris, weary of the continual demands for the maintenance of Condé’s troops, looked anxiously for peace. They were suffering also from a terrible fever, aggravated by scarcity of bread. Condé himself was attacked by it, and the comte de Chavigny died of it.

The only real obstacle was Mazarin. But just at this time the wily minister proposed, as once before, to quit the court, Sedan being chosen for his residence. He was driven to this step by unforeseen circumstances, which tended somewhat to restore Condé’s power. The duke of Lorraine, in conjunction with a Spanish army under count Fuenaldà, was threatening to join the prince; and whilst the king was offering an amnesty to his good citizens of Paris the troops of Lorraine were drawing near, and the duke himself actually entered the capital, and had interviews with Condé and with Mademoiselle, who could not resist the temptation to put herself forward on all occasions. Condé did not hesitate to join his forces with those of the duke, and various skirmishes with Turenne’s troops took place in the neighbourhood of Paris; but the parties were playing at war rather than making it in real earnest. The Spaniards cared nothing for Condé. Their only object was to exhaust France, and Lorraine himself was proposing negotiations with the court at the same time that he was attacking their general.

The king and the queen mother were now at Compiègne, where from all quarters they heard that the end of their own troubles was at hand, and that the people, and even the great demagogue...
Retz, desired their return; for the evils of the country were pressing on all alike; but the restoration of Mazarin was still unacceptable.

In order to strengthen the royal power Turenne and his army joined the king at Compiegne, and, after various negotiations with the Parliament and with De Retz, it was at length resolved to enter the capital on the 21st of October, the duke of Lorraine having withdrawn his troops from France, and Condé having retreated to Laon and joined the Spanish forces under Fuenalsdáña.

The Grande Mademoiselle under these circumstances found herself in great perplexity. A letter from the king quietly turned her out of the Tuileries—'the very pleasantest place in the world to live in,' as she assured her friend madame de Châtillon. The king declared he wanted it for his brother, and had no other palace to offer him. To add to the insult, the house to which she was to remove in the Rue Tournon was actually named. The friends of the prince de Condé advised her to 'spite the court' and take up her residence at the arsenal. Madame de Châtillon told her she had better think of retreat, for Monsieur was known to have made terms with the court and to be prepared to give her up. Monsieur himself would tell her nothing. 'He was not going,' he said, 'to mix himself up with her affairs. She had made matters very awkward for him, and he would have nothing to do with her.'

Very hard this was upon poor Mademoiselle, considering all she had done for him at Orleans; but she kept up her spirits—as down to dinner with her violin playing as usual; assured madame de Châtillon that she was not going to give up having her hair dressed, for, after all, it was quite possible she might see the queen; and finally took her place at a window in the house of a friend in the Place du Louvre to see the king's entrance, and called out to a man who was selling 'royal lanterns' for the illuminations, 'Have you no Fronde lanterns?'

Monsieur, though cowardly, was certainly prudent in separating himself from his daughter; but the young lady's bravado disappeared when the royal party had actually entered the capital and been received with acclamations; and giving up her idea of 'causing the court,' she repaired to the house of a very unobtrusive friend, who gave her a kind welcome and a comfortable home, and amused herself by writing to the prince de Condé and the duke of Lorraine, describing the dreadful prospect she had of having to pass the winter in the country, where she really felt it impossible that she could live, and urging them to exert themselves so as to be able to dictate terms of peace, and thus all spend a merry Carnival together in the capital.

And now the position of Louis seemed once more to promise
settled triumph over his enemies. Turenne was on his side, and Turenne was in himself a host. Resolute, cautious, economical, never excited, never surprised, the perfect self-command of the slow-speaking, common-looking general ensured universal respect. Frightfully indifferent to human suffering no doubt he was, but the labour which he bestowed upon the training of his soldiers, and the personal interest which he took in the officers of his army, counterbalanced many shortcomings in days when war seemed the natural work of man and cruelty his amusement;—when dead bodies of men and horses lay unburied in the suburbs of Paris, whilst in the provinces the soldiers of the insurgent army thought it a joke to roast a child in an oven, and scorrge a husband and wife with thorns to watch which would die first from loss of blood.

The prince de Condé could no longer be regarded in any light but that of a rebel, and Turenne, leaving Paris with all the troops he could collect, undertook himself to reconnoitre the position of a portion of the enemy's forces. The undertaking was rather hazardous, and one of Turenne's officers remonstrated against it. 'Don't be uneasy,' was the reply. 'The commandant of this division will send to Fuensaldaña to ask leave to attack us, and Fuensaldaña will consult the archduke, and the archduke will beg the prince to hold a council of war upon the subject. We have quite sufficient time before us.' It was an apt description of Condé's difficulties, and affairs were even worse when Don John of Austria, the son of the king of Spain, came to take the place of the archduke. Whenever the troops encamped Don John went directly to bed, and one of the most favourable opportunities for a battle was lost because no one dared wake him. The war was chiefly carried on in the north, where Condé had taken possession of several important places. Turenne pursued him closely. The prince often quitted a town only a few hours before the royalist general entered it, and at length was obliged to cross the frontier into Luxembourg.

Turenne, on his part, was troubled by the incompetence of his colleague, La Ferté, who held his post by Mazarin's influence, for the cardinal still secretly ruled the court, and not only gave military advice, but actually collected forces for the army and directed the movements of La Ferté. His one object was to recover the towns which France had lately lost, and thus to regain the favour of the Parisians; and with this view, even in the depth of winter, and when the soldiers on their march had been frozen to death, he insisted that Turenne should undertake the siege of Vervins.

This was on the 25th of January, 1653. The siege lasted only three days, and at the end the troops found themselves in comfortable quarters. The cardinal's share in this and other successes was circulated throughout the capital in exaggerated terms, and tended
to facilitate his return. Other events about this time contributed to
the same end.

It had been a cherished hope of Anne of Austria that De Retz
might be won over to be the friend of Mazarin, but the factional de-
gogue, though he had apparently welcomed the king's return, still
kept his house fortified, filled it with soldiers, and collected ammu-
nition in the towers of Notre Dame. Rebellion was evidently in his
thoughts, and his arrest was determined upon. Madame de Motte-
ville gives a most naive account of the circumstances attending it,
apparently not having the slightest idea that the king and his mother
could be accused of treachery.

1 After the king's return about Christmas,' says the lady-in-
waiting, 'cardinal de Retz, as a matter of courtesy, found himself
obliged to pay his homage to the king and queen. . . . His ap-
pearance relieved the queen from great uneasiness. The king and
herself had been waiting two months for a good opportunity to carry
out a design so necessary for their tranquility.

1 The famous disturber of the court having then resolved to pay
his respects to their majesties, went first to see marshal Villeroi,
and afterwards proceeded to the royal apartments. He met the
king as his majesty was leaving the queen's room. The king, with
that admirable calmness which has since so distinguished his every
action, greeted him graciously, and asked if he had seen the queen.
The reply was in the negative, and the king then courteously
directed the cardinal to follow him, at the same time giving a secret
order to Villeroi that the arrest should be made as the cardinal left
the queen's apartment. The command was punctually obeyed, and
thus ended the Fronde. The cardinal had been the leader and
origin, and he was the last overthrown.1

When De Retz was known to be safe within the walls of Vin-
cennes, the rival cardinal lost no time in returning to the capital.
He entered Paris in triumph in February 1658, and at once assum-
ing the reins of government, bent all his energies to the termina-
tion of the war with the prince de Condé. Whilst this lead
it was impossible successfully to confront Spain. His prime
interests also were on the side of peace with the princes, for he
ardently desired the marriage of his niece, mademoiselle de Mar-
tinozzi, with Condé's brother, and even whilst giving all due instruc-
tions for political and military movements he took measures for the
furtherance of this scheme. Conty was at Bordeaux, upholding an
insurrection. The cardinal's friends in the city showed him the por-
trait of mademoiselle de Martinozzi, and talked much of her vows.

1 De Retz escaped from Vincennes the next year and went to Rome. He was afterwards allowed to return to Paris, but he never again took part in public affairs. He died in 1670.
The curiosity and interest of the weak prince were excited, and when at length negotiations were entered into for the surrender of Bordeaux to the king, he asked and received the hand of Mazarin's niece, and from that time was again received into favour at court. With the prince de Condé there was no such hope of reconciliation. He was now a Spaniard in alliance, in interest, and in action, and for five years the miserable contest went on. Louis was by this time a man, if not fully in age, at least in strength of will and vigour of mind, and whilst his troops were fighting with the enemies of his country on the frontiers he was showing his determination to be an absolute monarch by carrying on, in conjunction with his mother and Mazarin, the contest with the parliament, which had before brought such suffering upon all concerned in it.

A show of resistance in regard to a new coinage was met by the sudden appearance of Louis himself in the midst of the members and an order that they were not to meet again. No address or reply was waited for, and the king departed as he came. This was in April 1654. Mazarin persuaded the king for the time to listen to the remonstrances of the first president, but when the dispute broke out again Mazarin exiled the most obnoxious members. "There are ten of them exiled or in prison," said Anne of Austria to madame de Motteville, with a smiling countenance, on the morning that the news reached her. "Your majesty must be very glad," was the answer of the sympathising lady-in-waiting. "I am glad, indeed," rejoined Anne, "but not entirely so. I would have had them all sent to the Bastille, but the cardinal is always so gentle; he has only sent one there." Urgent remonstrances from the parliament brought about the recall of the factious deputies, and public affairs went on more peacefully; but Mazarin's popularity was certainly not increased either by these proceedings or by the continuance of the war. The siege of Arras by Condé, which he was compelled to abandon, was the great event of 1654, but Condé and Turenne were too nearly equal in ability for either to have the permanent advantage. The hostilities of 1655 were of no great importance, but in 1656 Condé took La Ferté and 4,000 men prisoners at the siege of Valenciennes.

It was about this time (1656) that the French court was enlivened by the visit of Christina of Sweden, who had just abdicated her throne rather than marry whom she disliked; and having been converted to the Roman Catholic religion, had recently taken a journey to Rome. She was now anxious to see France, and the state of Guise was sent to receive her on the frontier. Christina, however, needed no protection. Dressed in an ill-fittingJet, a very short grey petticoat, mantle, boots, a collar fastened a pin, and with a black wig on her head, she appeared before Anne of Austria and all her court on the terrace at Versailles.
near Compiègne, and with the tone of an Amazon expressed her
thanks for the reception given her. It was a singular but not
wholly unattractive apparition. Christina's brilliant eyes, clear, dark
complexion, aquiline nose, and well-shaped though rather large
mouth produced upon the whole an agreeable impression; and the
court forgave her gloveless hands and her man's hat in considera-
tion of her decided talents and originality.

A queen who knew eight languages, could speak French like
a Parisian, was a good judge of art, and prepared if called upon
to dispute with the doctors of the Sorbonne, was not to be laughed
at, even if she did choose to wear a sword and a black wig, and in
the presence of the king and his court to seat herself in one chair
and rest her legs upon another. Louis was attracted by her from
the first moment of meeting, and they became firm friends. In
September she left France for Italy, but returned again the following
year, and at the king's invitation took up her abode at Fontainebleau,
a beautiful but far from lively resting-place. Very few persons
visited her, and she became extremely weary of it. An event which
shortly took place showed the real character of the woman who had
been looked upon simply as whimsical and clever.

Monaldeschi, one of her gentlemen in attendance, displeased her,
in what way is not perfectly known. Without examination or
warning Monaldeschi was taken by the queen herself into one of the
great galleries of the palace (la Galerie des Cerfs), and there told that
he was a traitor and should die. A few moments only were allowed
him for confession, and Christina left the gallery. Monaldeschi sent
a message by his intended executioner entreating for mercy, but the
only answer was, 'He must die. If he will not prepare himself for
confession, wound him, and he will be compelled to do it.' Then
followed a horrible struggle. The priest who was present, overcame
with pity, himself appealed to the queen, but still without success.
Monaldeschi was killed, his body taken away and buried privately,
and Christina remained in her room, laughing and talking as though
perfectly ignorant of what was going on. After this action France
was no longer a home for her. She went to Paris, but she was plainly
an unwelcome visitor, and a few months afterwards she once more
left the country, not again to return to it.

After the siege of Valenciennes the war still remained undecided,
and at length Mazarin resolved to seek the alliance of England,
then under the government of Oliver Cromwell. It was an un-
natural union, considering the relationship of the English and
French royal families. Policy, however, prevailed over inclina-
tion, and in 1658 Turenne and his English allies were blockading
Dunkirk, and Condé and the Spaniards preparing to attack them.

"Were you ever in a battle?" said Condé to the young duke of
Gloucester—son of Charles I.—who served under him as a volunteer. 'No,' was the reply. 'You will see us lose one in the course of half an hour, then,' continued Condé. And his words were verified. The Spaniards were obstinate and incapable, and Dunkirk was taken and given up to England. But the death of Cromwell, in September of the same year, and the restoration of Charles II., brought about a change in Mazarin's foreign policy. He began to think of peace, and of that which was, as he hoped, to cement peace—the young king's marriage.

CHAPTER XLII.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1658.

In the autumn of 1658 it was first publicly made known that Philip IV. of Spain, so long the enemy of France, had offered his daughter, the Infanta Maria Theresa, in marriage to the king of France.

The proposal cut the Gordian knot of many difficulties. The fancies of Louis were beginning to cause much anxiety. A transient feeling for one of the cardinal's nieces, Olympia di Mancini, had passed away, and Olympia accepted the hand of Eugene of Savoy, comte de Soissons; but another sister, Maria di Mancini, had since been introduced at court, and though remarkably plain, with a tawny complexion, a large mouth, dull black eyes, and long and very thin arms and neck, she succeeded in inspiring Louis with a feeling which threatened to interfere with the political plans for the future glory of France. Mazarin himself was inclined to further an alliance between the king and the princess Marguerite, sister of the duke of Savoy. Anne preferred the little Henrietta of England, who with her mother was still residing at the French court, but in point of dignity there was no one to compare with the Infanta of Spain.

The negotiations for a marriage with Marguerite had indeed gone so far that the princess had been brought by her mother to Lyons, and there introduced to the young king, but when, immediately after the arrival of the Savoy family, the alliance with the Infanta was proposed, Mazarin consoled the duchess of Savoy by the necessity of consulting the peace of Europe, and the hope that, should the Spanish marriage fail, the princess Marguerite would certainly be thought of. No remonstrance followed. Probably the duke of Savoy scarcely felt that he had been treated with indignity, so great was
the difference of rank in the estimation of those days between himself and the royal family of France. The last duke of Savoy had indeed married a French princess, but he always remained bareheaded in her presence, because she was a daughter of France ("fille de France"). Nevertheless, the dukes of Savoy were sovereign princes, and therefore not to be despised. So thought Mademoiselle—the Grande Mademoiselle—who was now again at court, and who, being at last convinced that she had no chance of being queen of France, would willingly have become duchess of Savoy, though nothing but the queen’s express command would have induced her to allow the princesses of Savoy to shake hands with her. At present, however, little was thought of but putting a courteous end to the proposed royal alliance. The duchess of Savoy (Madame Royale, as she was still called) carried back with her a written promise from Louis to marry Marguerite should the Spanish engagement be broken off, and received more definite consolation in the shape of a pair of diamond earrings—"a very handsome present," writes Mademoiselle. "The duchess talked much about it, and everyone marvelled at the change from tears after dinner to decided gaiety in the evening."

All this time Maria di Mancini and the king were inseparable. The young lady followed her royal lover wherever he went, and whispered to him even in the presence of the queen mother; and Mazarin began to think that, after all, it was not so improbable that he should one day see his niece on the throne of France. He hinted at the possibility one day, whilst laughing at his niece’s folly. ‘I can only say, cardinal,’ was the queen’s reply, ‘that France would then rise against both you and the king, and that I would put myself at the head of the rebellion.’

After this Mazarin had no alternative but to remove his niece from court. Louis, it is said, actually proposed to marry her—Mazarin’s moment of weakness was over, and his answer was that the queen mother had chosen him to aid the king by his counsels, and he would plunge a dagger into his niece’s heart rather than raise her to the throne by so great a betrayal of duty.

And so Louis and Maria di Mancini were parted, both shedding tears as they bade each other adieu, but Louis still having his feelings sufficiently under control to take no notice of Maria’s last bitter reproach—"You weep, yet you are the master." He was not in doubt for a time, but his thoughts were quickly diverted to other subjects, and especially, as madame de Motteville is careful to inform us, to the choice of some splendid new liveries for the occasion of his marriage. Marshal de Gramont had been chosen envoy extraordinary to demand the hand of the Infanta from the king of Spain. Amongst his followers was Madame de Motteville’s brother, who sent back to his sister a minute account of the form and features of th
future queen. Without laying claim to decided beauty Maria Theresa, with her fair hair, exquisite complexion, brilliant blue eyes, and beautiful mouth, far surpassed in beauty the likenesses sent to France. But of anything beyond her external appearance no one could judge; Spanish etiquette only admitted of a distant reverence. The king (Philip IV.) was also perfectly impenetrable. He put his hand to his hat when the marshal was first introduced to him, touched his hat again when the marshal took his leave, but he never moved nor spoke. Gramont, however, received a present of a beautiful cordon of diamonds, and returned with the full understanding that the marriage was to take place forthwith.

On the 7th of November the Peace of the Pyrenees was signed. The marriage portion of the Infanta was 500,000 crowns, in consideration of which she renounced all right of succession to Spain both for herself and her children. France received Artois and several towns on the frontier of Flanders, together with Roussillon and Cerdagne in the south; whilst Lorraine was nominally restored to its duke. From that time France rather than Spain, held the first place in Europe. So far Mazarin had gained his object, but he was obliged in return to consent to the pardon of Condé. The prince returned to France, and had an interview with the king and the queen mother at Aix, in Provence, whither the court had repaired for the winter. One contemporary account of the interview says that Condé's reception was cold and stiff; but Madame de Maintenon assures us that the king talked as freely to him about all that had happened as if the prince had been all the past years in his service. He spent but a few days at the court, and then went to Paris.

It was during this stay in Provence that the duke of Orleans died, after a short illness. Though reconciled to the king, he had latterly lived almost entirely at Blois, devoting himself, according to Madame de Motteville's account, to religious meditation and a quiet but indolent life. There was but little show of regret for him. Louis and his mother could not but remember his past conduct. The duchess of Orleans had always been kept so completely in the background that if she had any feeling it was unnoticed. Madame de Maintenon recalled her many grievances, and probably thought she showed her sorrow sufficiently by ordering grey furniture for her room and grey livery for her servants; and the young princesses, her half-sisters, were so weary of their life at Blois, and so passionately desirous of being taken to Paris, that they must have looked upon their father's death as the termination of exile.

The death of Gaston of Orleans resembled that of many of the same period, who, after a career of self-indulgence and political intrigue, devoted themselves, with perhaps somewhat of the same craving for excitement, to a life of devotion. For, side by side with the ev-
growing interests of the court, there was now in France a most earnest religious feeling.

Several years before, in Richelieu's days, a great reform had been effected in some of the luxurious convents in the neighbourhood of Paris. It was begun by Angélique Arnauld, commonly known as 'la mère Angélique,' the young abbess of Port Royal des Champs. She was supported by the abbot of St. Cyran and the celebrated Blaise Pascal—a man of remarkable powers of mind, a philosopher and mathematician, but yet more remarkable for his piety. Under such sanction Port Royal became the centre of a religious movement; and when the abbess and her nuns removed from Port Royal des Champs to a convent bearing the same name in Paris, the penitent and weary ladies of the court from time to time retired there, that they might withdraw their thoughts from the follies of time and fix them upon the all-important interests of eternity.

The duchesse de Longueville was amongst the most remarkable of those who openly gave themselves to works of repentance. She was about four-and-thirty when Condé's insurrection ended, and she then retired to the valley of Port Royal, where she lived in a small house, and occupied herself in charity and penance. In one year she gave freedom to 900 debtors, and 4,000 pensioners subsisted on her bounty. Her sincerity and humility were undoubted, and so won the hearts of Louis and his mother that their once dangerous enemy became their esteemed friend.

But with the reformation of monastic institutions, which began at Port Royal, there was also introduced a change of doctrine. Cornelius Jansen, bishop of Ypres, a Dutchman, put forth before his death, in 1638, certain doctrines which would be in the present day distinguished as Evangelical, and in some degree Calvinistic. St. Cyran, Pascal, and other distinguished persons accepted his views. The Jesuits bitterly opposed them. The Jansenists fixed their headquarters at Port Royal des Champs, in the monastery left deserted by Angélique, and their piety attracted the princes and nobles as that of Angélique attracted the ladies of the court, and the prince de Conty himself ultimately was one of their number. During the ministry of Mazarin, who favoured the Jesuits, two Popes—Innocent X. and Alexander VII.—pronounced a condemnation of certain propositions said to be extracted from the writings of Jansen. The Jansenists declared that those propositions were not to be found in the work referred to. The Pope insisted that the clergy should agree to the condemnation, and it was then that Pascal brought out his famous 'Provincial Letters' ('Lettres provinciales'), in which he exposed with keen satire the sophistry and lax morality of the Jesuits. At the time of the marriage of Louis XIV., however, Pascal's mental power was gone; he had long been ill, and after
carriage accident near a broken parapet on the bridge of Neuilly he always imagined he saw a deep abyss by his side, and would never sit down till a chair was placed by him for safety. He lingered for two years longer, till 1662, leaving the controversy between the Jansenists and the Jesuits still unsettled.

In May 1660 the betrothal of Louis and Maria Theresa took place at Fontarabia, in the presence of the king of Spain and all his court, the Spanish ambassador being proxy for the king of France. The ceremony was simple—the young Infanta making a profound curtsey to her father, and then timidly repeating the important ‘yes’ which was to make her queen of France; and when the word was spoken kneeling before him till he raised her, his eyes full of tears, and embraced her tenderly.

‘A little additional height and good teeth would have made her,’ says madame de Mottetville, ‘one of the most beautiful persons in Europe. But her dress was horrible—white, but of a very ugly material, with jewels set in heavy gold ornaments, and her beautiful hair hidden by a kind of white cap!’ Still more objectionable to French taste was the appearance of the Spanish ladies, whose bare, dark, thin necks and uncovered shoulders made poor madame de Mottetville actually ill to look at, to say nothing of their false hair and enormous hoops flattened before and behind, and spreading out at each side, which rose and fell like a great machine as they moved.

The young king first saw his bride on the occasion of an interview between Anne of Austria and her brother, the king of Spain, on the Ile des-Faisans. The door of the apartment was opened, so that Louis could look into the room. He confessed afterwards that he had been shocked by her ugly dress, but said that she had a good deal of beauty, and felt that it would be easy to love her.

The real marriage ceremony took place at St. Jean de Luz on the 9th of June, the chief preparation which was made for it on the part of the Infanta being the change from Spanish to French costume, a change very uncomfortable; for the long train of the royal robe, embroidered with ‘fleurs de lis,’ must have been a greater encumbrance than even the portentous hoop to which she had been accustomed. French ways were, however, becoming familiar to her, as she had spent some days before the marriage with Anne. When in the afternoon, after the ceremony, she retired with Louis, his mother, his brother, and Cardinal Mazarin to the queen mother’s apartment, and sitting down on the bed fell into an easy conversation upon various light subjects, the little queen could scarcely have regretted the ponderous ceremonies of the Spanish court.

Maria Theresa had indeed outwardly every prospect of happiness, for Louis had been the idol of her day-dreams. On one point she
was, happily for herself, blind. The marriage was a question of policy. The feelings of Louis were not brought into the question. His young bride was no doubt attractive to his fancy for the moment, but his love was yet slumbering, and the important point both for himself and for France was, would his wife be able to awaken it?

The return to Paris in September was rendered yet more joyful to the royal family of France by the restoration of Charles II. of England to his throne, which took place about the same time. Henrietta Maria prepared to visit her son, but before her departure a marriage was arranged between her daughter Henrietta and Philip, the brother of Louisa. Another marriage was in her mind when she departed for England. Hortensia di Mancini, the younger sister of Maria, would, if largely dowried, be, it was thought, an acceptable bride for Charles II.; but Charles was not yet in a condition to be induced to sell himself to France. Henrietta Maria found on her arrival that it was not the time to propose such a marriage, and Mazarin submitted with a good grace.

The interests of ambition must indeed now have begun to wane. Gout and dropsy were threatening serious consequences, and Mazarin could scarcely have been ignorant that his days were numbered. Yet in his moments of ease he still liked to count his treasures, putting aside any money of light weight gained at cards, that it might be staked again, and so watchful was he over the royal expenses that the young queen was not allowed enough even for charitable purposes. 'Alas!' he exclaimed, when speaking of a new year's gift made by Anne to her daughter-in-law, 'if the queen did but know from whence this money comes—that it is the blood of the people—she would not be so liberal!' Yet he himself had actually robbed the country for his own advantage. The disposal of his vast riches after his death was carefully considered. The marquis de la Meilleraie was made his heir, on condition that he should take his name, with the title of duke, and marry his niece Hortensia. His nephew, Mancini, was put in possession of several important governments, and, with the king's consent, made duc de Nevers, and his ecclesiastical preferments were likewise given to his relations.

At the end of February 1661 the marriage of Hortensia to La Meilleraie took place, and about the same time Maria di Mancini married Lorenzo Colonna, constable of the kingdom of Naples. Marianna, the only unmarried niece, was provided for by a gift of 200,000 crowns and the promise of the government of Avignon to the man who should marry her. She afterwards became the wife of the duc de Bouillon.
On the 5th of March prayers for the cardinal were ordered in all churches of Paris, and from that time Mazarin made his preparations for death with the utmost calmness. On the 7th, summoning his servants around him, he owned to them that one of his sakes in God's sight had been harshness of temper, and asked their pardon. He then told them what he had left in cash, and took his leave of them. The rest of the day was spent chiefly in offices of devotion. On the following days the king and his mother were constantly with him, receiving his instructions for the ordering of public affairs. After this his sufferings became intense, but his endurance was wonderful, and the last absolution which he entreated for having murmured against his physicians. It was about the past two on the morning of the 9th of March, 1661, that he died.

Madame de Motteville's comments upon the character of Mazarin likely to be as just as those of any of his contemporaries; if not so, for she certainly had the opportunity of an intimate acquaintance with him in his relations with the queen and the court. Cardinal Mazarin,' she says, 'was suspected of not having much judgment. His youth was stained by the bad reputation which had gained in Italy, and he had never shown much reverence for the most sacred mysteries. His life did not appear to be guided by the maxims of evangelical wisdom, and it is to be wished his latter years, when he certainly did do some virtuous actions, that he had been entirely regulated with reference to his eternal interests; God alone knows what is in man, and we are bound to accept all as appears good, since we can be no judges of the inward thoughts and motives.'

After such a cautious judgment from a contemporary we can only venture at this distance of time to speak of Mazarin except as a clever but unscrupulous statesman, a careful, energetic, and gifted ruler, and a benefactor to his country from his encouragement of learning and art. The Collège des Quatre Nations, which the Institute of France, the magnificent Mazarine Library, the Academy of Painting and Sculpture were founded by him.

'The king,' according to madame de Motteville, 'grieved for loss of his minister, and shed many tears. The queen, his sister, stronger than he, felt less. She was the first to say to those who were always talking of the cardinal's death that nothing more need be said about it, or the king would be quite ill.'

The sorrow of Louis was doubtless indeed real, but the consciousness of absolute power was a great sweetener of regret. When ministers asked him, after the cardinal's death, to whom they were thenceforth to turn for direction, he replied, 'To myself.'

It was a bold declaration at the age of two and twenty, but...
Louis had been educated in self-confidence, and in that which is often the main element of self-confidence—ignorance. He feared nothing, because he knew nothing.

One thing he had learnt from Mazarin—that a king, to be rich, must keep the keys of his own treasury and be his own steward. That conviction impelled him to his first independent act of government. Mazarin, on his death-bed, had warned him that Fouquet, the superintendent of finance, was extravagant and dishonest. Now the superintendent was summoned and informed that, unless his course of action was changed, his dismissal was certain.

Fouquet listened, but did not believe the threat. Yet his successor had been named by Mazarin. 'Sire,' said the dying cardinal in one of his last interviews, 'I owe to your majesty everything, but I believe I can repay you in a great degree by giving you M. Colbert.' Colbert was now introduced into the king's cabinet every night by a back staircase, and Fouquet's false and confused accounts were then examined and made clear, so that the king might meet the superintendent the next morning with a perfect knowledge of all the intricate and dishonourable subterfuges by which he had endeavoured to conceal his peculations.

Mazarin's enormous fortune had been accumulated under Fouquet's management. So much larger was it than that of the king that the superintendent did not hesitate on one occasion, when Louis applied to him for money, to reply, 'Sire, the exchequer is empty, but his eminence the cardinal will lend you what you want.' A large portion of this wealth Colbert now placed in the hands of the king. It had been collected in specie and hidden in various fortresses. Fouquet said nothing about it to the king, but Colbert told him of it.

The cardinal's family took possession of the apparent fortune. Louis seized the hidden treasure, and found himself the only rich monarch in Europe.

Fouquet's days of office were numbered, but the accusations against him were delayed, in order to discover the exact conditions of the finances. In the meantime Louis gave himself up to pleasure, and Fouquet found the money.

On the 30th of March of this year (1661) the marriage of Philip, duke of Orleans, and Henrietta of England, sister of Charles II, took place.

The comments of the king on the young princess were not flattering. 'Brother,' he said to Monsieur, 'you are going to marry the bones of the Holy Innocents.' The princess certainly was sick and had a crooked spine, but her intellect was cultivated, her manners were gentle, and she dressed so well that the defect in her figure was hidden. 'The Palais Royal, which was given up to his
sieur, soon became the centre of a lesser court. Henrietta, now called Madame, attracted thither the most distinguished men in Paris. The celebrated Molière managed her private theatre, and his own comedies were represented there, and in the attractive Henrietta in the 'Femmes savantes,' the outline of the fascinating Henrietta of Orleans may be traced.

The attentions of Louis had for some time been paid to the comtesse de Soissons, who had lately reappeared at the court; but now, in spite of his criticism, he bestowed them upon Henrietta. The young duchess at seventeen could scarcely have failed to prefer the society of Louis to that of his silly brother, who had been brought up almost like a girl till he was nearly thirteen, and at twenty spent his time and thoughts upon self-adornment.

It was a sorrow, however, for Maria Theresa, who saw herself neglected, whilst Henrietta was not only personally but politically influential, being entrusted to carry on the secret negotiations by which her brother Charles II. was persuaded to marry the Infanta of Portugal, Catharine of Braganza, and to support the Roman Catholics, on condition of receiving money from France for his own purposes. This was a grave matter of State intrigue, but little concerning it appeared on the smooth surface of court amusement.

It was the 17th of August. Fouquet invited the king to a fête at his château at Vaux-Praslin, the type of Versailles. The château was a marvel of sparkling fountains and cascades, long green alleys, bowers, grotoes, and terraces. Actors, musicians, and games were prepared for the general amusement, and when the guest, weary with the dance or the gaming-table, went to his own room, he found on his dressing-table a purse full of gold, supplied by Fouquet. Louis was startled by this extravagant ostentation. He would have arrested Fouquet on the spot but for the interposition of Anne of Austria.

The superintendent was not wholly ignorant of his danger, but he buoyed himself up by false hopes. The end came suddenly in September, when the court was at Nantes. He had left the king, after an interview in no way remarkable, when he was followed and arrested by Artagnan, a man of low character, formerly in Mazarin's service.

A carriage was in waiting to take him to Angers. At the moment of seizure he turned to one of his attendants and said, 'Ah! St. Mandé!' It was the name of one of his many houses, and the exclamation was a warning, but, though repeated to his friends, it was unheeded.

At St. Mandé were discovered papers dishonourable to his own dignity, and letters which revealed a startling amount of corruption amongst his friends at court. They were hidden in a closet reached by a subterranean passage, and he had taken every precaution against
discovery in the way of written directions for his friends in case of his arrest. But these instructions, which would have led to an insurrection in his favour, now told against him, and Louis, when he read them, would faint at once have sentenced him to death.

Certainly there were proofs of ambitious projects—a plan of war against the king, orders for procuring cannon, oaths of allegiance to Fouquet taken by military officers—and all this influence gained by an enormous system of bribery.

Fouquet's defence was that the plans were made long before, when Mazarin was ruling in France; whilst, with regard to the public money, he showed that he had merely followed the cardinal's example. The enquiry into his guilt was carried on very slowly, but on the 20th of December, 1661, Fouquet was found guilty of peculation, though not of high treason. The sentence was perpetual banishment. Louis changed it into most severe imprisonment, no communication with any human being except his gaolers being allowed him, and no writing materials given him.

A strong feeling in favour of the superintendent existed amongst the higher classes in Paris. The letters of the brilliant madame de Sévigné show that she was one of his firmest friends. Hénault, the president of the parliament, attacked Colbert in violent language, and mademoiselle de Scudéry, the chief romance-writer of the age, employed her pen in the superintendent's defence. But the king persevered in his animosity. This fact, and Fouquet's long imprisonment, with the singular precautions taken to prevent him from communicating with his friends, have given rise to the idea that he knew of some important political secret; and his name has been suggested—though without sufficient reason—as the clue to the mystery of the celebrated prisoner in the iron mask.

Colbert was now the king's confidential minister, but Louis would not give him the power which Fouquet had so misused. He instituted a council of finance, and placed at its head marshal Villeroi, a man who is said to have borne throughout his life the most honourable titles without performing the functions attached to them. Certainly Colbert, as controller-general, was the moving spirit of the council.

The new minister was chiefly remarkable for common sense and quickness of observation. His manners were stately, and in public he seldom laughed. But in private he was a totally different person, and Louis, when he sought to gratify his love of pleasure, found Colbert fully able to sympathise with him. The difficulties in the way of the new administration were increased by a scarcity almost amounting to famine; but Colbert, having compelled many persons connected with the revenue office to refund what had been unjustly obtained, was now able to buy foreign corn for the people and to remit
a certain portion of the taxes. He also introduced a new system of collecting the revenue, and managed to pay off a large portion of the debt incurred during the war, which, under the name of 'rente,' or annuities, had been a source of profit to individuals at the expense of the state.

Agriculture, manufactures, commerce, were alike benefited under Colbert's rule. For the latter a port upon the northern coast was greatly needed, and Colbert cast a longing eye upon Dunkirk, which had been given up to England by Mazarin in return for Cromwell's assistance. Charles II., who from extravagance and profligacy greatly wanted money, was prepared to sell it, and after careful negotiations the purchase was completed, and in October 1662 Dunkirk became a French town—much to the satisfaction of the French, and the dissatisfaction of the English, who had not yet learnt that to keep a footing in a neighbour's territory is often as great a source of weakness to the invader as of injury to the invaded.

The purchase of Dunkirk was but the beginning of a long series of disgraceful negotiations with Charles II., intended by Louis to further his great aim of humiliating Spain and annexing the Low Countries to France. With this view also he entered into an alliance with the United Provinces of Holland, which since the termination of their long struggle with Philip II. had occupied the position of a free republic; and having thus strengthened himself, it only remained to stir up a Spanish quarrel. This was not difficult; it had, in fact, already begun, though the actual outbreak of war was delayed.

The comte d'Estrades, the French ambassador in England, had received special directions to take precedence of the Spanish ambassador, and in consequence a struggle took place with their respective carriages on the occasion of a public reception. The Thames boatmen and a London mob excited a tumult, in which the carriage of the French ambassador was broken, his horses were killed, and he himself and his sons were injured. The indignation of Louis threatened war, but the ample apology of Philip IV., made at Paris by his ambassador, mollified him for the moment. A great gratification, indeed, it must have been to his pride to be able to say to the papal nuncio and assembled envoys, 'You are witnesses, gentlemen, that the king of Spain gives precedence to me before all the world.'

A similar act of humiliation the same year on the part of the Pope, Innocent X., proved his influence at Rome. In a squabble with some of the papal Corsican guards the French ambassador's servants were wounded, and one of them was killed, it is said, on the spot. The Pope ordered the offenders to be hung, and dismissed the governor of Rome; but Louis was not satisfied, and actually marched his troops towards the Italian frontier. The Pope then yielded to
all his demands—dismissed his guard; exiled his own brother, who was thought to have instigated the quarrel; sent his nephew cardinal Chigi to make a formal apology; and finally raised a monument in Rome to record the offence and the reparation.

Louis was despotic in his foreign relations, but at home he was the victim of intrigues, caused by his own conduct. The birth of the Dauphin in the month of November 1661, though it was hailed by him with pride as securing the succession, had but little effect in improving his relations with his wife; whilst his likings—they cannot be called affections—were so transitory as to give rise to continued schemes for attracting his favour. Henrietta of Orleans had comparatively ceased to attract him, and he now gave himself up less innocently to Louise de la Vallière, one of the queen's attendants. Henrietta and the comtesse de Soissons, both alike neglected, revenged themselves by exciting the jealousy of the young queen; whilst Anne of Austria, whose health was failing, in vain strove to bring about a better state of feeling between her son and his wife, and to check the selfish profligacy which was fast corrupting the court, and making it a scene of constant miserable squabbles. The king listened to his mother in his better moments, and so far preserved appearances that his wife still received his attentions in public, but his indomitable pride and the selfishness which had been fostered by his education made him regardless of the feelings of others when opposed to his own. He could be kind, and generous, and noble, so long as no personal sacrifice was demanded, but he was blind to the fact that worship of self was his ruling principle.

There was little room for like blindness in the heart of Anne of Austria, who was now rapidly approaching the end of her life, whilst suffering from an agonising disease. Patient, penitent, and resigned, she made her preparations for death; but it was long in coming, and before her last hour arrived the storm which was to cause a rupture between her native and her adopted country was rapidly and clearly gathering.

Philip IV., like herself, ill and suffering, had yielded precedence to Louis in the hope of finding in the French king a protector for his young son Charles, but Louis was already seeking for a pretext to seize the long-coveted portion of the prince's inheritance in the Spanish Netherlands. According to the ancient but almost obsolete laws of Brabant, the children of a first marriage, whether male or female, succeeded to hereditary siefs in preference to the children of a second marriage. Maria Theresa was the daughter of Philip IV. by his first wife (Elizabeth of France); therefore, it was contended, she ought to succeed to the Spanish possessions in the Low Countries, to the exclusion of her brother Charles, who was Philip's son by a second marriage.
Maria Theresa, on her marriage, had indeed made a formal renunciation of all her claims to the Spanish succession; but Louis declared that the renunciation was null, as it had been made on condition that his wife should receive a large dowry, which had not been paid. Even if these were so, however, it was difficult to see on what pretence the whole of the Netherlands could be claimed in right of an ancient law of one province which had not been acted upon for more than a century.

The claim had been discussed during Anne of Austria's illness, and she had exerted herself to send a message to her brother the king of Spain, entreating him to consider fairly the right of Louis to the succession of the Netherlands.

Philip was naturally much annoyed, and his suspicion and anger were yet more roused against Louis by the news that the Portuguese troops in rebellion against Spain had, under the command of a French general, just gained a decisive victory. Already weakened by illness, his mortification and anxiety proved fatal; and on the 17th of September, 1665, Philip IV. died. The young queen of France was heart-broken. Anne of Austria also wept, but all she said was, 'I shall follow him soon.'

Philip had left but one son, Charles, a boy of four years old, so sickly that it seemed impossible he should live. In the event of his death, who was to stand between the king of France and the much-coveted Spanish succession?

Projects of ambition filled the mind of Louis, and doubtless tended to steel his heart against personal sorrow. The court was given up to amusement, though his mother was dying in agony.

Anne of Austria lingered till the 20th of January, bearing her sufferings with exemplary patience. The Grand Mademoiselle gives a minute account of the preparations made when it was known that the last hour was near. 'The king,' she says, 'the queen, Madame (the duchess of Orleans), and I were in the royal cabinet, waiting till we were told that the Host was brought. We settled the mourning, and how everything was to be arranged—that the king should go to Versailles, Monsieur to St. Cloud, and that I should remain to do whatever might be necessary. The carriages were ordered, and, in short, all was put in readiness. After the Eucharist the queen mother desired to receive extreme unction. Her feet were growing cold, and she feared lest it might be too late. On being told that there was no cause for such haste, she replied that they would not have far to send, for all that was needful was in her oratory. 'The beautiful chandelier of crystal, ornamented with diamonds,' adds Mademoiselle, 'and the cross which my grandmother had had made for herself, and with which this queen had adorned her oratory, certainly did not look like preparations for a death scene. There was
indeed great matter for reflection in it all, and I have often thought of it since, though at the time everyone was so troubled that it was impossible to think of anything.'

Anne lived through the night, and the idea of recovery was not quite extinct. An astrologer had predicted that if she did not die on Thursday she might be restored. She often asked what o'clock it was, and was impatient when midnight had passed. 'At six o'clock in the morning,' continues Mademoiselle, 'the king heard mass. The great bell of Notre Dame sounded. It tolls only on great occasions. We thought the queen must be dead, and a moment after Monsieur uttered a cry, and the physician entered. The king said, "Is she dead?" "Yes, sire." He wept bitterly. The comtesse de Fleix (one of the attendant ladies) brought the king her keys; her will was sought for in her cabinet, and the king said, "I think it ought to be read before all the royal family." Monsieur went away. After the reading, which was done by M. Le Tellier, the chancellor, the king ordered his coach and I went home to bed.'

Such is the chilling narrative of the princess. Madame de Motteville speaks strongly of the faith and patience of the dying queen, and it would indeed seem that the discipline of God's providence and His grace had purified the heart of Anne of Austria, and by showing her the nothingness of Time had taught her to prepare for Eternity.

She was buried at St. Denis, according to her own wish, with but few ceremonies. Mademoiselle describes the 'horrible cold,' the interminable waiting in the church before the procession arrived, and the lengthy discourses of the ecclesiastics—all of which so overcame her with weariness that at length she rested her head against the bier, and it is to be supposed went to sleep, for she confesses that she knew nothing of what was going on for some time.

The service was over by two o'clock, and then the scene and the tone changed. Everyone, we are told, repaired to the court. Monsieur and Madame came back from St. Cloud, and the king being no longer under any restraint from his mother, openly showed his devotion to mademoiselle de la Vallière. Louis was no hypocrite, but he shrank from suffering, and in his sorrow self-gratification is the form of pleasure and ambition came to his aid.

On the 16th of January, only four days before his mother's death, he had declared war against England. The quarrel had been threatening for the last year. England and Holland were at war, and Louis, the ally of both, had been pressed by both for succour, and had determined in favour of Holland. Having in view as his ultimate object the seizure of Flanders, Louis could not afford to make an enemy of the Dutch, and he desired to see his nephew the prince of Orange their stadholder. 8,000 troops were sent to
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Holland. The contest was chiefly carried on by sea, and the English and Dutch fought naval battles; but Louis had very few ships, and his support was little more than nominal. His secret intentions were still veiled by a show of friendship to Spain. 'The young king,' he said to Nithard, the Jesuit confessor of Anne of Austria, 'is my brother-in-law. I will protect him. I will show him all the marks of friendship and tenderness in my power.'

From that time he made his preparations to despoil Charles of his inheritance! By the month of April 1667 he had brought over to his side the various princes on the Rhine, and had bribed Portugal by an enormous annual subsidy never to make peace with the Spanish crown.

On the 20th of the month matters were so far advanced that the king went to review his troops in the neighbourhood of St. Germain, and remained three days, living with his suite in magnificent tents, constructed by the officers at great expense. A campaign in Flanders was then spoken of openly. It was said that the king would march with his troops in the middle of May. On the 1st of May a reassuring message was sent to the Spanish court, and on the 8th war was declared.

The Flemish war was, in the eyes of the courtiers of Louis XIV., a kind of tournament. Princesses and duchesses, splendidly dressed, accompanied the king in gilded carriages when he set out for the seat of war. Laughing, chattering, eating, drinking, and gambling—for the gaming-tables travelled with them—so they journeyed by slow degrees to the scene of suffering and death. The king followed them on horseback, sometimes dismounting and entering a carriage, sometimes amusing himself with watching their meals and making remarks upon them. The queen followed also, but with bitterness of heart, for with her, by the king's compulsion, came mademoiselle—now the duchesse—de la Vallière, and the grossest insults from pretension and neglect were from necessity submitted to.

Amiens, Arras, Douai, were sufficiently comfortable resting-places, but the village of Coutiché, the head-quarters of Turenne, offered only a carpeted barn. The queen and her ladies took possession of it. The queen sat down to cards. Mademoiselle chose to write in Turenne's apartment, that she might have the pleasure of dating her letter from the camp. A rough repast, spoiled by the kitchen chimney taking fire, was more amusing than satisfying, but cards were at hand to make them forget all troubles, and the game went on half the night. Then the queen retired to rest in the king's coach, and Mademoiselle settled herself in a chair, with her head resting against one of the posts of the barn.

Tournay was the extreme point of the court journey. The king then went on alone with the army, sending news from time to time.
of his progress. His letters were addressed to the queen, but there was no real comfort to her in them, for the report had reached her that he was growing indifferent to the duchesse de la Vallière, and had taken a fancy to madame de Montespan, who up to this time had been apparently the queen’s faithful and affectionate attendant, and one of the first to be shocked at the conduct of Louise de la Vallière.

Hitherto there had been little or no fighting. Douay, Tournay, and several other towns had surrendered almost at the first summons. They were unprepared for resistance. So little, indeed, had the Spanish government expected the attack upon Flanders that when the governor of one of the Flemish towns sent to Madrid, seeing reason for suspicion, to know if he might fortify, so as to be ready in case of attack, he was reprimanded for having any such doubts of the intentions of the ‘most Christian king.’

The only really military act of the campaign was the siege of Lille, undertaken by Louis himself. The governor resisted for some weeks, but the inhabitants were timid, and when at length they were threatened with assault they insisted upon surrender (the 28th of August, 1667). ‘

To the great surprise of everyone, the victorious king, now stopped in his career, withdrew his troops, and agreed to a truce of three months. Spain, it seems, in alarm, had proposed to the Dutch to give up several towns to them if they would turn against France; and with Holland as an enemy the conquest of Flanders would become much more difficult. It was true that Louis had no longer anything to fear from England. The boldness of the Dutch fleet, which had sailed up the Thames and threatened London, had so alarmed the English that a peace had been concluded in July, in which France was included; but, on the other hand, Charles II, distrusted by his people and impoverished by his own profligate extravagance, was not likely to become an ally of France in a new war, and Louis was not yet prepared to make his venture alone. He paused, therefore, in his views upon Flanders, biding his time for new political combinations.

But there was another project which might be undertaken without dread of the interference of Holland. The province of Franche Comté, forming part of Burgundy, and still belonging to the Spanish crown, had professed a desire to remain neutral in the war. Not fearing attack, the inhabitants had asked for no troops to protect them, but, supported by the Swiss, their near neighbours, thought themselves perfectly secure. The plan of Louis was imagined with secrecy and carried out by the half-disgraced, moody, and disappointed prince de Condé, who now lived constantly either at Chantilly or in a château near Dijon, the ancient capital of
Burgundy, and who was therefore likely to be well acquainted with all that concerned the neighbouring province.

It was in the depth of winter that the expedition was planned. Condé collected an army of 20,000 men with unexampled rapidity and marched towards the frontier. The king hastened to follow him. Frost and wind had set in, but he was ready to defy them, and on the 2nd of February, 1668, in the midst of a frightful storm, after hearing mass, he set out for Dijon. On his arrival he received the keys of Besançon, which had already been taken by Condé. Louis passed on to Dôle. It resisted, and he threatened to kill all the habitants; and Dôle surrendered. It was all so rapid that Monsieur, who had waited a few days in Paris, believed the king had only reached Auxerre when he heard that the war was over, and that his brother and the army were returning. Franche Comté was, in fact, conquered in fifteen days.

Thirty-six towns and a vast number of castles taken in a fortnight, and in defiance of the rigours of winter, satisfied the national thirst for so-called glory. The success was attributed entirely to Louis, and his praises were everywhere heard. It was he—so said his courtiers, and so echoed Paris and the provinces—who had guided Condé to victory, as before he had guided Turenne. It was he even who, by his genius, inspired authors as well as soldiers, and the brilliant scenes of Molière’s comedies were attributed to his suggestions.

Louis was, in short, the hero of the day; but the man to whom he owed his popularity, who made it possible for him thus to overrun and take possession of the dominions of another, was Colbert, the indefatigable, prudent, economical minister, who provided the money—the ‘sinews of war’—without which conquest would have been impossible.

Already, by the stimulus given to commerce, Colbert had increased the manufactures of the country, and consequently its riches. The silk trade of Lyons was becoming enormous; the wool trade was spreading; the Gobelin tapestries were exciting universal admiration, and companies were forming to carry on an extensive foreign trade. The canal which was to unite the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean, and thus to facilitate the transport of merchandise through the centre of France, was begun; whilst the ports of Brest, Rochefort, and Dunkirk, already prepared for merchant vessels, expected shortly to be filled with the captured galleons of Spain.

The despotism of the king no doubt made all this possible. What he ordered was at once carried out. The French people had no voice in the government. A declaration was issued that all seamen belonging to the merchant ships must be ready at any moment to give up their lucrative employment for the severe and poorly-paid service of the navy. No one thought of remonstrating.
Absolute submission to absolute will was the principle of the day, and for the moment it worked well; but there was a falsity at the bottom, and the day of reckoning, though delayed, was ultimately sure to come.

Already there was the appearance of a check to this all-devouring, all-absorbing, absolute will. When Louis, after his rapid conquests of Franche Comté, returned to St. Germain, the ambassador of Holland appeared before him with the notification of a recent alliance formed between England, Holland, and Sweden, for the avowed purpose of bringing about peace between France and Spain. The Triple Alliance—so it was called—had been signed at the Hague on the 23rd of January, 1668. Louis was addressed with respect, for De Witt, the grand-pensionary, governor of Holland, desired to be his friend; but the Dutch were resolved that Europe should have peace, and if the French king persisted in war, the Triple Alliance announced its intention of turning against him.

The declaration was startling, and Louis would fain have escaped the alternative put before him; but he had no friends. Even Portugal, which he thought he had bought over to his interests by an enormous subsidy, had abandoned him, and after considerable deliberation the articles of peace were signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on the 2nd of May, 1668.

Spain surrendered her conquests on the Sambre and the Scheldt, and France kept Flanders, but restored Franche Comté, though in a defenceless state, as its principal fortresses were dismantled.

The Dutch republic had committed an offence which could never be forgiven. It had robbed Louis of his conquest, checked his ambition, and, adding insult to injury, had caused a bombastic medal to be struck in commemoration of the peace.

Louis signed the treaty, but there can be no doubt that he was fully resolved it should be broken. Peace was, however, for the moment necessary, and he took advantage of it to give his attention to the internal affairs of the church. By the efforts of madame de Longueville and the management of Pope Clement IX. the Jansenists had been brought to denounce as heretical the five propositions which had been condemned at Rome; but as regarded the question whether these propositions were to be found in the book written by Jansen they gave no definite answer, but merely said that they would not contest the papal decision.

The Pope professed himself satisfied. Medals were struck to record the happy termination of the dispute, and Louis, who had entered warmly into it, gave solemn audience to the leaders of the Jansenists. The reconciliation was nevertheless hollow, and the contest between the two schools of religious thought must, it was evident, before many years were over, be renewed.
And now once more Louis turned his attention to Holland and revenge.

England was first to be gained as an ally; and for this purpose who could be so successful a negotiator as the attractive Henrietta of Orleans—always ready for intrigue, always prepared to extract amusement from it, and exercising an influence over her brother scarcely inferior to that which she had exercised over Louis?

As early as the month of August 1663 Charles said to the French ambassador in London, 'Madame passionately desires an alliance between France and myself, and, as I love her tenderly, I shall be glad to show what great weight her wishes have with me.'

Henrietta had no doubt that she was acting for the good of both countries. The sea for England, the land for France: this was her idea of what was right and best, and Louis seems in some sense to have agreed with her; for, contrary to the projects of Colbert, he stated plainly that he would give up trade to the English—three-fourths at least. He only wished for conquests.

The first thing to be done, however, was to reconcile the religion of the two countries. Protestant England could not be expected to oppose Protestant Holland.

England was therefore to be converted, and Charles was to set the example. There is very little doubt that the king had always been a Romanist at heart, and before many months were over he shed tears in public before his Roman Catholic council because he did not dare at once openly to declare his faith. Turenne also, a stern Protestant, was converted, not only secretly, but publicly, about the same time. He had read an exposition of the Roman Catholic faith put forth by Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, a man of earnest piety and large mind; and though the bishop's arguments did not please the Pope, they satisfied Turenne, and enabled him conscientiously to undertake the command in a war which was to be carried on by a Roman Catholic kingdom to the detriment of a Protestant republic.

Political preparations having been thus made, Louis trusted the more definite arrangements of the war to his minister the marquis de Louvois, a rough but shrewd man, the son of the late chancellor Michael Le Tellier. Two things were demanded of Charles. He was to abandon the Triple Alliance and join Louis in making war upon Holland; and he was to make an open profession of the Roman Catholic faith and to propagate it to the utmost in his dominions.

For this aid Louis was to give Charles an annual subsidy of 120,000L during the war, and the island of Walcheren and two fortresses on the Scheldt as his share of the spoils of Holland. Men and money also were to be forthcoming from France in case the
Louis XIV.

English should rebel in consequence of their king's change of religion.

Henrietta of Orleans had been the chief negotiator in this treaty, and a visit to England was deemed necessary before it could be completed. The young duchess was by this time very unhappy. She had never cared for her husband, and he had never cared for her; but he was jealous of her. When she proposed to go to England he offered to go with her; but difficulties were raised, which he attributed to her, and in his discontent he said to her one day threateningly, 'It has always been predicted that I should be married a second time'—words which after events caused to be painfully remembered.

Henrietta's secret hope in undertaking the expedition seems to have been that her brother would obtain from the Pope the dissolution of her marriage, and that she would be able to remain in England really governing in the king's name.

Disappointment was, however, in store for her. She crossed over to Dover in May 1670, and the treaty was concluded; but she was not popular with the court and the nation, whatever she might be with the king. A cabal was formed against her, and she was compelled to return to France.

There also trouble awaited her. Her husband was angry with her and gave her no welcome. The king was very cold in manner; he had obtained all he wished from her, and he did not even take the trouble to meet her. She had many enemies in France, as well as in England, persons who professed to be devoted to Monsieur; and they had taught her little girl, a child of eight years old, to dislike her. And now she was very lonely, for Monsieur, using his authority as a husband, forbade her to remain at the court, and in consequence she returned to St. Cloud.

The season was very warm. A bath which she took made her ill; but she recovered, and for two days seemed to be well, and was able to eat and sleep. On the following day, June 28th, she asked for a glass of succory water, drank it, and at the same moment uttered a cry and became first red and then pale with agony, while her eyes filled with tears and she exclaimed that she was dying.

Cholera it was said to be, but the symptoms of the illness were unlike those of cholera. Monsieur was summoned, and ordered as antidote. Much time was lost in preparing it, and the medicine which Henrietta proposed for herself was refused her.

Mademoiselle, who came to see her, found no signs of grief; only Monsieur was rather surprised. The unhappy duchess was lying on a little bed with her hair streaming about her, her dress unfastened, and with the appearance of a corpse, except that she was weeping.
ILLNESS AND DEATH OF HENRIETTA OF ORLEANS.

She was thoroughly aware of her danger, and marked carefully the symptoms of her illness.

Still those around insisted that it was nothing; the doctors had said so. Some even laughed. Mademoiselle was indignant, and declared boldly that at least it was necessary to save the soul, and a confessor must be sent for. A messenger was despatched for Bossuet, and in the meantime the canon Feuillet was admitted to see the duchess.

Feuillet was prudent; he entreated Henrietta to offer up herself to God a willing sacrifice, and not to accuse anyone; and she obeyed. To marshal Gramont, who came to see her, she merely said that she had been poisoned by mistake. To the English ambassador, who also visited her, she spoke in English, begging him to conceal from her brother that she had been poisoned. Feuillet, who was in the room at the time, caught the word poison, and stopped her directly, saying, 'Madame, think no more of this; think only of God.' Bossuet arrived and held the same language. He was no stranger, and Henrietta, who deeply revered him and had lately often spoken to him of her spiritual condition, now said in English that after her death she wished him to have an emerald ring which she had put aside for him. At last she was left nearly alone. The king, much moved by her condition, had taken his leave of her. Monsieur also had departed, weeping. She felt a wish to sleep, but started up suddenly, called for Bossuet, who put a crucifix into her hands, and embracing it she breathed her last sigh just as the first glimmer of dawn was breaking over the sky. It was the 29th of June, 1670.

The English ambassador insisted upon being present when an examination was made of the body of the unfortunate princess. The doctors declared the disease was cholera; but Charles II. was not deceived. He refused to receive the letter written to him by Monsieur. Yet he could not afford to be lastingly angry, for that would have been to give up his French pension. Explanations were offered and received, and it was shown that Monsieur was not a party to the actual crime. The poison was traced to Italy, and there appears little doubt that Henrietta's death was contrived by some of her household, who dreaded lest she might use her influence with the king to their injury. They were, however, left unpunished. Louis himself was grieved, but not sufficiently so to deny himself a cold-hearted pleasantry. When Mademoiselle went to see him on the day of the duchess's death, he said to her, alluding to the possibility of her becoming the wife of Monsieur, though she was old enough to be his mother, 'Cousin, there is a vacant situation now; are you inclined to take it?' And that same evening he spoke to the Duke of Bavaria as a fit choice for a second marriage.
FUNERAL SERMON—WAR WITH HOLLAND.
Louis XIV.

Bossuet, the only person who knew all the higher qualities of the murdered duchess, preached her funeral sermon before the assembled court; and selfish as that court was there could scarcely have been a heart untouched when he burst forth, 'Madame is dying—Madame is dead. Six months ago would she herself have thought it possible! But she was gentle towards death, even as she was gentle towards all the world.'

CHAPTER XLIII.
LOUIS XIV. (continued.)
A.D. 1672.

Long before the war with Holland broke out the hasty-tempered Louvois exclaimed to the envoys of the German Protestants, 'There is a fixed plan. The king will destroy the pretended Reformed religion wherever he comes in contact with it.' And in setting out for the war Louis himself said nearly the same thing—'It is a religious war.' And it was true in one sense. In attacking Holland Louis no doubt wished to revenge the Triple Alliance, but he also considered that Holland was a Protestant country, and that in subduing it he was subduing the enemy of the Roman Catholic Church. His conscience, therefore, was at ease. And now the time had arrived when it was safe to put his plans in execution.

Four years had been occupied in preparation, promises of neutrality from Sweden and the emperor of Germany had been obtained, and by clever negotiation with some of the lesser German princes a footing had been obtained on the Rhine, which would give comparatively easy access to Holland—two towns being given up to France for the purpose of forming magazines and collecting the munitions of war.

The Dutch saw their peril, and demanded the intention of those warlike preparations.

Louis haughtily answered that he should use his troops as his dignity required, and would give account to no one. His minister being asked if Holland had committed any offence, cited some idle paragraphs in the newspapers of the day, in which the king of France was called the king of reviews, and complained of a medal commemorating the Peace of Aix la Chapelle, which it was said bore the figure of Joshua, with the legend 'Sstare facit solenum' ('He made the sun to stand still'), the sun being the device of Louis.

The medal was really quite different, but explanations would have been useless. And the Dutch found themselves face to face
with an inevitable war. It could not have come at a more inopportune moment. Unanimity was above all things to be desired, but their government was divided. The young prince of Orange (afterwards William III. of England) was laying claim to the office of stadtholder, which was almost hereditary in his family, whilst the influential burgomaster John de Witt, and his brother Cornelius, were urging upon the people the danger of trusting too great power in the hands of any one man.

The struggle was eager, and its effects were deplorable. A compromise was indeed at length effected, and the prince of Orange, though refused the title of stadtholder, was made captain-general of the forces and admiral of the fleet; but in the meantime the defence of the country had been neglected, and decayed fortresses and feeble garrisons under the command of inefficient officers were all that Holland could oppose to the magnificent troops of the French king, 112,000 in number.

To the last moment the Dutch endeavoured to divert the blow by negotiation. As late as January 1672 a very submissive letter was presented to Louis by the States of Holland; but submission is useless when offence is predetermined, and in the month of April war was declared.

England had already begun the contest. Whilst nominally at peace with the United Provinces admiral Holmes had attacked some Dutch ships of war which were convoying a rich merchant fleet from Smyrna. Six of the merchant vessels were taken; the rest escaped. This act of injustice was the first move, and the advance of the French troops across the Dutch frontier followed.

Louis took the chief command himself, and as a matter of form the duke of Orleans was declared generalissimo; but Condé was appointed commander-in-chief, next to the king and Monsieur; whilst Turenne, as marshal-general of France, was to be the leader after Condé.

Town after town surrendered with scarcely any resistance. Louis was lavish with his gold, and the Dutch were quite willing to be bought over. The Meuse was crossed near Maestricht, and the army then followed the course of the Rhine, seeking a ford. A handful of Dutch cavalry and two regiments of infantry appeared upon the opposite bank. Louis crossed in a boat. Condé, who had the gout, and was more afraid of cold water to his feet than he was of musket balls, did the same; so did many of the chief officers.

The Dutch opened fire, and several officers were killed, amongst them Condé’s nephew, the young duc de Longueville. Condé himself was wounded by a pistol shot in the arm. The Dutch were, however, quickly dispersed, and the French pursued their march without difficulty, whilst the news of the passage of the Rhine was
received in Paris with the greatest enthusiasm, and Louis was pronounced by his subjects the bravest as well as the most fortunate of monarchs.

In consequence of Condé’s wound the real command now devolved on Turenne; but Louvois, who accompanied the army, arranged for the provisioning of the forces. The king wrote out the orders of the day and thought that he directed the war.

It was now fifty years since Holland itself had had any experience of war, and in that time it had become cultivated like a garden, and was filled with treasures of art. The sudden appearance of a war monster in the form of 120,000 men spreading over the little country brought a terror beyond all imagination to the peaceable inhabitants. The false and the true patriots instantly showed themselves in their real colours. The Roman Catholics of Utrecht were anxious to submit to a prince of their own religion. The Jews of Antwerp offered thousands as the price of escape.

William of Orange, a young prince of twenty years of age, clever indeed and very prudent, but having as yet had no experience in war, was not in the least prepared for such an emergency. He left the Hague and Amsterdam defenceless, and—what was yet more important—he overlooked the possibility of defending the country by opening the dykes and flooding it.

Louis took possession of Utrecht, which surrendered without opposition, and made a triumphal entry into the town; and the advice of Condé then was to advance to Amsterdam and seize the dykes at Muyden, about four leagues from the city. Turenne, however, objected to despatch a sufficient number of troops. 150 dragons rode off in the direction of Amsterdam, but were too prudent to go far; four of them entered Muyden, and professed to take it, and the inhabitants turned their invaders out of the town and closed the gates.

Delay was saving Holland; yet it was difficult as yet to think this. The combined fleets of France and England had indeed been totally defeated by De Ruyter, and a naval descent on Holland was thus rendered impossible; but the republic, with the exception of Zeeland, the Hague, Amsterdam, and two or three towns, had, as it were, disappeared. Louis looked upon it already as his own, and treated its inhabitants as rebels. A party favourable to France sent the son of the famous controversialist Grotius to ask for grace, but the answer they received brought them only despair.

‘Holland,’ said Louis, ‘must be contented to confine its limits strictly within those of the Seven United Provinces. All the outlying country towards the Rhine must be given up to France; great commercial advantages must be conceded; the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion must everywhere be permitted, and the priests paid by the state; 20,000,000 livres must be forthcoming.
for the expenses of the war, and every year an envoy extraordinary must be sent to thank the king of France for his mercy, and present him with a gold medal in recognition of it."

England joined in demanding equally arrogant terms, insisting that the Dutch should give up the honour of their flag without reserve, whole fleets being expected, even on the coasts of Holland, to lower their top-sails to the smallest ship under British colours.

The outcry in the country when these overwhelming pretensions were made known was fatal to the party who hitherto had been inclined to concession. The populace, attributing their peril to the want of forethought of their rulers, rose against the pensionary De Witt and his brother, and in an hour of frenzied excitement murdered them under circumstances of most painful barbarity.

William of Orange was elected stadtholder, and the determination was taken to cut the dykes and flood the country. Should this fail the whole population might, it was said, embark for India, and giving back Holland to the sea, from which it had been rescued, found a new state in another quarter of the globe.

The example of self-sacrifice was given by Amsterdam. The floodgates were opened, and the ocean rushed over the land. Not meadows alone were given up to the waves, but villas, gardens, hot-houses, exotic plants brought by the Dutch from their eastern colonies, all the treasures which years of peace and successful commerce had accumulated. The thirst of one man for so-called glory demanded the offering, and the patriotic firmness of a whole nation yielded it.

Two years Holland remained under water. It was a breathing time. The armies of France were compelled to retreat, and Louis went back to Paris, leaving his forces under the command of his generals.

William of Orange might, if he had chosen, have become the viceroy of Louis. Propositions with that object were made to him, but he held the position he desired; the pageantry of a mock royalty had no charms for him, and the offers of Louis were rejected. There was now a ray of hope for unfortunate Holland. The emperor of Germany, Leopold II., showed himself inclined to enter into an alliance with the Dutch, and the powerful elector of Brandenburg (known in Prussia as the Great Elector) was prepared to arm for the defence of the downtrodden country, and before Louis reached Paris 40,000 Germans, commanded by general Montecuculi, were on the march to the Rhine, there to confront the forces which Louis had left behind him.

The future prospects of the war were, however, lost sight of by the French people in the rapturous enthusiasm with which they greeted their victorious monarch. Forty towns and fortresses taken,
30,000 prisoners captured, in six weeks! Such success had never before been known. The real merits of the king—his indefatigable industry, his undoubted courage, the strict discipline maintained in his army, and the great care which he took to act justly towards the peasantry of the invaded country—were comparatively little thought of. Military glory was their idol, and they prostrated themselves before it.

Louis himself had been heard to say, when looking at the enemy's flags, 'There will be so many more for Notre Dame.' But he was not so dazzled by success as to be insensible to danger.

The intelligence quickly reached Paris that not only the emperor and the elector of Brandenburg, but also the Spaniards in the Netherlands were resolved to arrest his progress; and though Turenne, Condé, and the due de Luxembourg had successfully withstood the advance of the Germans, and the elector had retreated and been pursued by Turenne to the banks of the Elbe, there could be no doubt that a European war was at hand. Louis could nowhere look for support. England was professedly on his side, but the English people were murmuring against the French alliance, and nothing but the secret pension which Charles received from Louis could be depended upon for keeping the 'merry monarch' to his engagements.

It was on the 1st of May, 1673, that the king again left Paris to rejoin the army, and for the invaded countries the prospect of his presence must have been a blessing.

His generals were not as merciful as himself, and a few months before, in the depth of winter, two small Dutch towns which had been seized after a march over the ice, undertaken by the due de Luxembourg, had been set on fire by the French soldiers, who perpetrated such atrocities that more than 100 years after the Dutch inspired their children with a hatred of France by teaching them to read books recounting the cruelties then committed.

This was the reality of war. The French saw it under very different colours. The king set out, as before, carrying his court with him. It was thought that he would attack the Spanish Netherlands, but on receiving a humble message from the governor of Flanders he turned aside to besiege Maestricht, being assisted by Vauban, the celebrated military engineer. The queen and the court remained at first in the neighbourhood at Tournay, but moved, according to order, to Amiens, Verdun, Metz, and Nancy. The queen was ill and needed medical advice; and Louis, in the midst of this siege, arranged each day's journey. His life was a strange medley of war and domesticity.

Maestricht was taken after thirteen days, and then he rejoined
the queen, and several places in Alsace 1 were visited. Mademoiselle speaks of the pleasant time that was passed travelling from place to place, and paying a visit to the Jewish synagogue at Metz, and making the Jews dance for the queen’s amusement. Her own anxieties at the time were all centred in the conte—afterwards due—de Lauzun, a Gascon nobleman, reckless and vain, with whom she had fallen violently in love. She had even proposed to marry him, and the king’s consent had been obtained. Suddenly, however, it was retracted, and the count was arrested and sent as a prisoner to Pignerol, it is said at the instigation of madame de Montespan, whom he had grievously offended by hiding himself in her apartments in order that he might judge whether she kept a promise made of interceding for him with the king. He could not forbear reproaching her when he found she was insincere, and captivity was his punishment, and Mademoiselle was bent on obtaining his release.

The king now returned to Paris, and on the 15th of October declared war against Spain, which he was fully assured would prove a formidable support to Holland. His position with regard to the latter country was becoming every day more unsatisfactory. The prince of Orange and the emperor had joined forces, and the Rhine as far as Bonn was in the hands of the enemy, now that the Spaniards took part with them. Turenne, who commanded in Cologne and Münster, was unable to prevent them from seizing those territories, and thus punishing the two electors for giving up their towns as storehouses for Louis at the beginning of the war.

Colbert was more alarmed than the king at the prospect before him. Money was increasingly demanded, whilst the means for supplying it were every day diminishing. He had dreamt of destroying the commerce of Holland, and thus enriching France; but though Holland was submerged, her ships were still the great traders of Europe. When Louis required an addition of 60,000,000 livres for the expenses of the war, the requisition was made with the accompaniment of these ominous words:—‘If you do not find the money some one else must.’

The minister would fain have given up his post on the spot; but the country required his services, and, tied as he was to the fortunes of a military gambler, he could only, like a gambler, stake the prospects of the future for the needs of the present. The way to destruction was easy, and, closing his eyes, he rushed head foremost into it.

For Louis had not the slightest intention of giving up the contest. At the beginning of the year 1674 he found himself, indeed,

1 Alsace, ceded to France at the close of the Thirty Years’ War, was restored to Germany after the Franco-German war of 1870.
compelled to abandon Holland, reserving only the towns of Grave and Maastricht, and to fall back upon his own frontiers, whilst at the same time he was forsaken by Charles II. of England, who, in the month of February, was compelled by his own subjects to give up his degrading connection with France and to make peace with Holland; but Louis merely changed the theatre of war, and Franche Comté was once more suddenly invaded by himself in person, and, as before, rapidly conquered. He had Vauban by his side, constructing warlike machines and attacking and defending according to strict rules of engineering, and the towns of Franche Comté fell with startling rapidity.

The miseries of war were increased by the new inventions of the day. Bombs and shells were thrown into the besieged towns, and the miserable people, fearing to be buried under the ruins of their houses, insisted upon surrender to save them from the prolongation of such horrors.

Of course such a system of destruction cost money, but so also did the extravagant follies of the king's favourites, more especially those of madame de Montespan, who now occupied the position once held by Louise de la Vallière. Being a woman who ate and drank like a man, and gambled till she lost in one evening 700,000 crowns, she was an expensive person to provide for. The king gave her all the money obtained from the lucrative tax on tobacco, whilst the poor were ground to the very dust to supply the deficiencies of the revenue, and even the small vendors who displayed their goods in the market were obliged to pay for the space they occupied.

The English philosopher Locke, who visited France at this time, says, 'The merchant and the workman give half their profits in taxes. A poor bookseller at Niort, who never touches meat himself, is obliged to board and lodge two soldiers, giving them three meals of meat a day. In Languedoc the estates of the nobles, being exempt from taxation, fetch more than double the price of those of the middle class. The latter, indeed, are really worth nothing.' In Brittany the duty on tobacco caused an insurrection, and the king remitted the tax, but in its stead he made the people support a perfect army of soldiers. The port of Bordeaux was ruined; 200 foreign vessels let it unladen. The government was, in fact, eating up its own resources.

As yet there was no appearance of any diminution of the power of France. Whilst Louis was overrunning Franche Comté Turenne was keeping the forces of the empire in check on the Rhine. It was perhaps the most remarkable, but at the same time the least praiseworthy portion of Turenne's military career. Opposed to him was a force vastly superior to his own under Montecuculi, one of the most renowned commanders of the day. Turenne crossed the Rhine, attacked, and drove the enemy back to the Neckar. But when he
victory was gained, the territory known as the Palatinate of the Rhine was given up to the ferocious license of his soldiers. The land became a desert; the houses were burnt, the inhabitants murdered. Even at this day the effects of the terrible destruction are to be seen in the stately desolation of the exquisitely beautiful but ruined castle of Heidelberg, the palace of the elector Palatine.

Turenne's excuse for this barbarity was that it injured the enemy by making the country untenable, but it has left an enduring stain upon his reputation.

Condé in the meantime had been placed on the frontiers of Hainault, to oppose the imperialist and Dutch forces under the prince of Orange. The position which he occupied at Charleroi was unassailable, and the enemy, perceiving this, moved in the direction of Mons. In so doing they gave Condé the opportunity of attacking them with advantage. He fell upon them at the little village of Seneffe, on the 11th of August, 1674, and for the whole of the day and on into the night the battle raged. At its close 20,000 corpses lay heaped upon the field. William of Orange throughout the conflict showed himself possessed of the calm judgment, the deliberate and indomitable courage, of a veteran commander, whilst the prince de Condé, though suffering severely from the gout, never displayed greater military talent than on this—which proved to be his last—battle. The victory was claimed by the French, but it was so doubtful that the Dutch ordered a thanksgiving for their defeat.

Condé, crippled by disease, returned to Paris, and visited the king at Versailles. Louis met him at the top of the principal staircase. The prince, as he slowly mounted the steps, apologised for making his sovereign wait. 'Cousin,' replied the king with a smile, 'when one is so loaded with laurels it is of course difficult to walk.'

The prince de Condé had gained great honour, but the chief interest of the war still lay with Turenne. Loved by his soldiers with a devotion which has seldom been equalled, Turenne was able to carry out tactics which in others would have been madness. His men moved as with one mind and one will; the perfection of their obedience whilst on duty being rewarded by unlimited license to pillage after victory. After ravaging the Palatinate he dispersed his forces with the order to scatter themselves, so as to allow their enemies to establish themselves securely in Alsace, and then, on the 27th of December, to meet him again at Belfort, at the point where the mountains of the Vosges come to an end. The command was implicitly obeyed.

In the midst of a most severe winter, over precipices, through snow and torrents, the scattered troops reassembled, and the imperialists, who were resting in security, found the army of their foes reunited, a vast mass, ready to fall upon them. They retreated, but
was only to be pursued and defeated, and by the 11th of January, 1675, the troops of the Empire were again beyond the Rhine. This campaign in Alsace is considered the masterpiece of Turenne's military genius. He returned to Paris to receive a perfect ovation from all quarters, and they again took the field, supported by an overwhelming army.

The contest between him and Montecuculi, to which the eyes of almost all Europe were directed, was carried on within the narrow limits of a few leagues between the Rhine and the Black Forest. The Austrian general manoeuvred for weeks to bring his enemy to action, but in vain. At length, on the 27th of July (1675), Turenne, having crossed the Rhine, met his foe near the entrance of the defile of Sasbach. 'I have them!' was his exclamation, as he saw the advantage of his position, and rode along the front of his lines to make his final disposition for the attack. A spent cannon-ball from the enemy's batteries struck him, and he fell dead on the spot.

His army may be said to have died with him. 'Silence, broken only by the cry 'Our father! We have lost our father!' reigned in the camp, and the generals, in their despair and disunion, would even have trusted to a blind fate to decide their next movements. 'Let loose the piebald mare,' said some; 'she will lead us where her master would have taken us.' Two days went by, owing to the illness of Montecuculi, before the enemy dared attack them. On the third a battle was fought, which cost France 3,000 men. The remainder of the French forces recrossed the Rhine into Alsace, bearing with them the body of Turenne, who was buried at St. Denis with the deepest manifestation of public sorrow.1

The king had claimed for himself the glory of former victories, and his people had professed confidence in his invincibility, but Turenne was taken from them, and they were in consternation. Especially was this so in Champagne, close to the seat of war. 'M. de Turenne being dead,' said a farmer who wished to give up his lease, 'the enemy will at once enter France.'

Condé was immediately sent for from Flanders, the duc de Luxembourg being left to supply his place. The king entreated the prince to take the command in Alsace. 'I would give the world,' replied Condé, 'for a few minutes conversation with the ghost of Turenne, that so I might learn his plans.' But he accepted the responsibility, and controlling his own natural impetuosity followed the calm, deliberate example of his great rival. Montecuculi, who had crossed the Rhine by the bridge of Strauburg, watched the French in Alsace for two months, trying to starve Condé out of his camp which the prince could with difficulty supply with provisions.

1 The remains of Turenne were afterwards transferred to the church of the Invalides at Paris.
Then finding his enemy immovable, he again retreated across the river.

This was the end of the year's campaign, and also of Condé's command. Worn out with fatigue, and a martyr to the gout, he besought the king's permission to withdraw from military service, and from that time he lived in comparative retirement at his splendid palace at Chantilly. Montecuculi retired at the same time, and the field of distinction was left open for a new race of generals.

Louis XIV. at this time imagined himself the greatest monarch of his day, being in reality the greatest slave. Louise de la Vallière, deeply penitent, had retired to a convent, and now madame de Montespan reigned triumphant. The king yielded to her fascination. Louvois and his colleagues dreaded her unscrupulous tongue. On one occasion she took from the king's pocket a list of seven marshals of France, newly made, and observed, 'My brother is not amongst them.' The king and Louvois looked at one another, hesitated, said that it was forgetfulness, and the name of madame de Montespan's brother was immediately inserted as the eighth marshal.

Père la Chaise, the king's confessor, was too timid to interfere, though it was plainly his duty, but there were others about the court more bold who were eagerly watching for the opportunity to supplant the favourite; and the opportunity at length offered itself.

Madame de Montespan, though depraved in her own life, paid court to persons of respectability, and desiring to find a governess for her illegitimate children, she consulted persons of known piety and high character with regard to her choice. By them she was introduced to the widow of the comic poet Scarron. Frances d'Aubigné, madame Scarron, had married at sixteen a man crippled and suffering, and old enough to be her father. The D'Aubigné family were Huguenots, but madame Scarron had been brought up by a Roman Catholic aunt, and professed to hold the same creed. She was a woman remarkable for talent, but still more for discretion; not regularly beautiful, but graceful in manner and agreeable in conversation. Vain and ambitious there can be little doubt she was. Yet she never allowed these faults to get the better of her virtues. If they were not conquered, at least they were kept in check, so that they might not lessen the world's respect, and the widow of the comic poet was greatly esteemed by persons of the highest reputation at the court of France.

With less ambition madame Scarron would probably have declined the post proposed to her by a woman whom she must inwardly have despised. But the advantages it offered were too great a temptation to be resisted, and the sensible, dignified, and professedly religious young widow became one of the household of the beautiful, clever but degraded madame de Montespan. So it was
that she was introduced to the king. Her good sense and quiet, serious manner struck him. He had a great appreciation of good judgment, and sympathised with literary tastes. Madame Scarron's conversation was interesting to him; her opinions were valuable, and he could not fail to estimate her judicious management of the children given into her charge. The influence she thus acquired was used well.

It was through madame Scarron (soon known as madame de Maintenon, from a small estate given her by the king) that Louise de la Vallière, who had made an effort to retire from the court, but had been brought back by the wish of Louis, was ultimately allowed to take the veil in the convent of the Carmelites, and now she used every effort to separate Louis also from madame de Montespan.

The Jesuit père la Chaise seconded her efforts. The Jesuits had once been the ruling Roman Catholic order in Europe, but their influence had been much lessened by the publication of Pascal's 'Provincial Letters.' Neither the king nor his people looked up to them as formerly, and before the Jesuit confessor could hope to touch the conscience of Louis it was necessary to reawaken the king's reverence for the church as represented by his order. A reported miracle was seized upon as the instrument of a general revival throughout the country.

The details of this supposed miracle have been brought before the public even in our own days. Marie Alacoque, a young woman living in the village of Paray le Monial, and suffering from an illness which produced hysterical and nervous excitement, declared herself to have been favoured by a vision, during which, in token of heavenly love, the Sacred Heart of the Redeemer was actually given to her in exchange for her own. The declaration was accepted, the miracle adopted. Devotion to the Sacred Heart became a new and enthusiastic form of Roman Catholic worship. It was upheld especially by the Jesuits, who connected with it the suppression of heresy—the Huguenot worship being prohibited at Paray le Monial the same year that the reported miracle took place.

A secret crusade against Protestants was now resolved upon; England was especially to be won over. The English king was in heart a Romanist—his brother was so avowedly—and now this unexpected miracle seemed to offer an opportunity for awakening enthusiasm and converting the whole country. Père la Chaise made the king a sharer in the religious excitement, and Bossuet was only too thankful to use this as a means of arousing Louis to a sense of the state of shameful degradation in which he was living. Separation from madame de Montespan was, in the eyes of the bishop, the first step towards a religious life. Père la Chaise and the Jesuits agreed with him,

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1 A pilgrimage to Paray le Monial was undertaken from England in 1873.
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but that step being taken, the conversion of England would, they thought, be a satisfactory expiation for the king's past offences. Louis, however, was not as yet prepared for any act of self-sacrifice. He was still the successful monarch, acknowledging no will but his own, and feeling himself superior to all laws.

After Turenne's death the war in Flanders had been carried on successfully by his generals the duc de Luxembourg, marshal Créquy, marshal Schomberg, and the duc d'Estrades; whilst his fleet, under admiral Duquesne, had encountered the Dutch, and fought a terrible battle near Catania, in which the great De Ruyter was slain. The cause of this conflict in the Mediterranean was an attempt made by the French to possess themselves of the island of Sicily. The people of Messina had invited the aid of France to free them from the yoke of Spain; and this aid had been granted, and forces sent to Messina under the command of admiral Duquesne and the duc de Vivonne, brother of madame de Montespan. The behaviour of Vivonne and the soldiers, however, disgusted the Sicilians, and when the Spaniards and Dutch as allies sent a naval force to resist the French in Sicily they were supported by the very persons who had previously desired to put themselves under the protection of France. The French were obliged ultimately to evacuate Sicily, but this was but a minor loss. In the chief seat of war—Flanders—Louis was triumphant, and in the spring of 1677 he personally superintended the siege of Valenciennes, and as usual took to himself the credit which really belonged to his general Luxembourg and his great engineer Vanban.

With his head full of such successes he was not likely to listen to any remonstrances which involved the need of personal humiliation. As regarded England he was more open to persuasion; and whilst the Jesuits worked diligently for the conversion of the nobles, the king gave money to Charles, and offered favourable terms of commerce to the people. But though Charles might be bought, his subjects could not be deceived. Whilst Louis was conquering Flanders, and marshal Créquy was gaining victories in Alsace and Lorraine, they looked upon him with dread. The English king, overawed by his parliament, was at length compelled, against his will, to give up the French alliance, and once more enter into a treaty with Holland, by which he engaged to send forces to the United Provinces, with the understanding that no peace should be made without the concurrence of both England and Holland. This treaty was signed on the 10th of January, 1678. The prince of Orange, its great supporter, was now nearly connected with the English monarch, having in the previous autumn married the princess Mary, daughter of the duke of York, and his one object was to detach his wife's country from France. Louis, thus threatened,
was compelled to think of bringing the contest to an end. He was
resolved, however, first to show that he was still powerful, and when
he heard that the two maritime powers had united against him he
revened himself upon the Spanish Netherlands, and besieged and
took Ghent and Ypres. Finding him so near their border, the
Dutch were alarmed. A second invasion of their country was an
evil to be avoided at any sacrifice, and the fears which such an idea
suggested were intensified by the discovery made just at this
moment that the faithless Charles of England was as usual deceiving
them, and that his support could in no way be relied upon.

Driven to extremity, the Dutch, though entirely against the
wishes of the prince of Orange, decided upon making peace with
France for themselves, whether with or without their allies. Eng-
land, however, was of the same mind; a treaty was proposed, which
brought no loss to Holland, except that of two unimportant
foreign settlements. The conferences took place at Nimeguen. Louis
still hesitated, and raised difficulties, so much so, indeed, that
the English and Dutch ministers plainly warned him that if he
did not agree to the terms by the 11th of August they would once
more engage themselves against him. To the great surprise of all, on
the night of the 10th, at midnight, the peace was signed.

The prince of Orange knew it, yet on the 14th he attacked the
French under the due de Luxembourg, and 3,000 lives were lost on
each side. The French, however, held their ground, whilst William
of Orange gained for himself the reputation of a dishonourable act
and the reproach of needless bloodshed.

Peace between Holland and France was quickly followed by
peace with the other allies. Spain was the first to come to terms,
although compelled to yield Franche Comté and eleven towns on
the Flemish frontier. The emperor of Germany held back longer,
but by him also the Peace of Nimeguen was finally signed on the
5th of February, 1679.

The king of France was apparently the victor in the contest,
yet he had really been obliged to give up the object he had most at
heart. Colbert had planned to destroy the commerce of Holland, but
the Dutch retained their power in the Indies, and were still the
general merchants of Europe. The religious question also had
ended in defeat. Holland remained the asylum for all who sought
for liberty of conscience, whilst England, uneasy and suspicious, was
taking measures for the repression of the Roman Catholic faith and
endeavouring to exclude the duke of York from the succession to the
throne. Triumphal gates erected in Paris—the Porto St. Martin and
the Porte St. Denis—recorded the military glory of Louis, and a
gallery was begun at the new palace of Versailles, in which the
painter Lebrun was to commemorate his victories. And Louis was
proud; and Louvois, the minister of war, was satisfied; but Colbert, the minister of finance, saw himself defeated.

For the time Europe was dazzled. It looked only upon the exterior of France—its acknowledged power, the military skill of its generals, the splendour of its court, the encouragement given by its sovereign to art and literature, and the riches lavished upon the gardens, statues, and waterworks of his palace. But the picture so perfect from afar could not endure inspection. The example of the king was in itself a plague-spot of corruption, and the hidden depravity which was fostered under the sanction of a profligate society was destined soon to exhibit itself in the most repulsive and alarming form. French interests in Europe were, however, for the present strengthened by the marriage of the young Marie Louise, the daughter of the duke of Orleans, with Charles II. of Spain. It was an advantageous marriage politically, but a disappointing one to the young lady, who had set her heart upon being the wife of the Dauphin and becoming queen of France. 'I could do nothing better for my daughter,' said Louis, when speaking to her of the proposed marriage. 'Ah, sire,' she replied, 'but you might have done something more for your niece.'

The marriage took place with a fair prospect of happiness, for the queen of Spain was dearly loved by her husband, although the absurd Spanish etiquette interfered with anything like free enjoyment; but the circumstances which almost immediately afterwards transpired in France had a terrible influence upon her fate.

The death of the young duchess of Orleans, under circumstances which gave rise to a suspicion of poison, had been followed by other deaths equally mysterious, and the rumour had for some time been spread that poisoning was by no means an uncommon crime. The attention of the government was at length called to the subject, and an Italian was arrested on suspicion and committed to the Bastille. In the same fortress also was imprisoned a young man of good birth, named St. Croix, who had certainly not without cause excited the jealousy of the marquis de Brinvilliers. St. Croix held communication with the Italian, and madame de Brinvilliers kept up a correspondence with St. Croix. Through his means she learnt the horrible art which the Italian murderer had practised.

What were the inducements to the crimes which followed has never clearly been understood. It is only known that the marquis de Brinvilliers poisoned her father, her two brothers, and her sister, and was accused of causing the death of many other persons with whom she had no connection. The discovery was made by an examination of the papers of St. Croix after his death. Madame de Brinvilliers escaped from Paris, but was overtaken at Lille, and

\[ \text{Lille, and} \]
being brought back, was tried, condemned, and sentenced to be burnt alive.

The terrible punishment failed to put a stop to the crime for which it was exacted. Poisoning became a systematic art, practised by all classes. Persons of rank and talent lay under grave suspicion, and the sale of poisonous drugs was a regular trade amongst the lower orders. The traffic was hidden under the pretence of skill in divination, and for nearly three years impostors who pretended to have power over spirits, and to be versed in astrology, were consulted by the reckless and unprincipled of every rank, and under the shadow of these secret arts gave instruction in the deadly art of poisoning.

The sudden death, without any apparent cause, of a number of persons of high rank and great wealth at length brought on a crisis. Some of the individuals most fully suspected of selling poisons were arrested, and the government, especially urged on by Louvois, established a tribunal, called the ‘Chambre Ardente,’ to investigate the whole business. Witchcraft, impiety, sacrilege, profanation, and coinage—a very singular medley of crimes—were all tried by the new court, and the confessions of the vendors of poisons involved persons of the very highest distinction in the country.

Chief among them was the niece of Mazarin, Olympia di Mancini, comtesse de Soissons. Suspicion had fallen upon her when the unfortunate Henrietta of Orleans met her untimely death. She was known to be unscrupulous, and Henrietta had been her rival in the king's favour, but the accusation had never been substantiated. Now, when it was known that she had held intercourse with the poison-vendors, though of what kind was not discovered, the king—perhaps with some remembrance of his former feelings—sent a message to her that if she felt herself guilty, it would be well for her to leave the country. The countess replied that she was innocent, but that she was not fond of being questioned, and, following the king’s suggestion, she fled from Paris and sought a refuge in Spain. The queen of Spain had once been her professed friend, but the countess’s presence under such circumstances was far from satisfactory. The young king Charles was especially uneasy, and the event proved that it was not without cause. The comtesse de Soissons remained at Madrid, and after a time was received upon terms of intimacy with the royal family. One day the young queen ventured to take a cup of milk from her hand, and death followed suddenly. Orders were instantly issued for the arrest of the countess, but everything had been prepared for her departure beforehand, and she was gone.

From that time, for seven-and-twenty years, she wandered about
Europe, shunned, feared, and hated, and in her old age died in poverty, if not in want. 1

Another of Mazarin's nieces, the youngest, who had married the duc de Bouillon, was cited before the 'Chambre Ardente.' It was proved that, in company with the duc de Vendôme, she had visited two of the most noted vendors of poison; but this was evidently merely from idle curiosity to try their power of divination. When questioned, she answered with a freedom which soon convinced everyone of her innocence of crime. The examination was ended by a question put to her by one of the judges—whether in any of her visits to the astrologers she had seen the Devil? 'I see him now,' replied the duchess, looking steadily at the judge. 'He is very ugly and horrible, and disguised as a councillor of state.'

Another still more distinguished person summoned before the 'Chambre Ardente' was the duc de Luxembourg. The charges brought against him were clearly unjust, though he had been tempted to apply to the diviners for the recovery of some papers which he had lost. The trial is thought to have been urged on by Louvois, with whom the duke, like many of the other French generals, had quarrelled. It ended in the duke's acquittal, but not till after he had been kept in prison in a miserable dungeon for fourteen months.

Several of the poisoners and their accomplices, whose guilt was clearly proved, were burnt in the Place de Grève, and from that period the crime for which they suffered ceased to be in any way common. A stop was also about this time put to the practice of duelling, which had reached a height hitherto unknown. A famous combat of four against four, in which some of the most important persons about the court were engaged, seems chiefly to have excited the king's displeasure, and he publicly declared that he would never pardon a duellist who took the life of another.

The terrible discoveries connected with the poisoners had not long ceased to engage public attention when, in the winter of 1680, a new subject of interest was brought forward—the marriage of the Dauphin. Christina, the daughter of the elector of Bavaria, was spoken of as the most fitting bride. Her portrait was sent to the young prince, who appeared satisfied with it, and the king, when showing it to the queen and Mademoiselle, remarked that, 'although she was not beautiful, she certainly was not unpleasing, and she had great merit in other ways.' The approval of the neglected queen was apparently of little consequence, but Mademoiselle expressed herself highly satisfied, being on very good terms with Christina's mother, who was of the house of Savoy. They had exchanged 1

1 The son of the comtesse de Soissons was afterwards the famous general prince Eugene.
letters and presents, and the electress had taken the trouble to send Mademoiselle a book of verses of her own composition for all the ballets in which she danced; but, more than all, she had addressed Mademoiselle as 'your royal highness,' and signed herself 'your very humble cousin and servant.' Recognition of her rank as a 'daughter of France' ('fille de France') was a sure way to the heart of the Grande Mademoiselle, who especially notes in her memoirs that the queen of Spain always seated her in an arm-chair—the highest mark of distinction which could then be given—whilst the other princesses of the royal family had only chairs with backs. 'Charles II. of England,' she says, 'showed her the same attention; but Henrietta Maria only gave her a stool.' Henrietta was, however, Mademoiselle's aunt, and for that reason the neglect was overlooked, and Mademoiselle showed her every imaginable respect, thinking far more, as she says, of a 'daughter of France' than of the queen of any country, whatever it might be.

The arrangements for the marriage being made, and the ceremony by proxy gone through, the Dauphine made her entry into France. Louis went to meet her, but Maria Theresa was left behind; and when the wedding presents were exhibited they were laid out in the apartments of madame de Montespan, who had chosen them, and who said to the ladies of the court, 'The Dauphine will no doubt give many of these pretty things to you. It will be a great pleasure to her to distribute these "bijoux."' The ladies were, however, disappointed. The young Dauphine, who seems to have been melancholy in disposition, and engrossed in the thought of the home she had left, saw and admired each ornament, but said directly, 'Lock it up,' and gave nothing away to anyone, not even to the queen, who, as Mademoiselle informs us, would have been very glad of some trinkets, and who remarked, 'My presents were not so beautiful, though I was a princess of much greater distinction than she is; but no one cared for me as they care for her.'

It was a jealous outbreak; but the unhappy queen's disposition had been embittered by neglect and insult, so that even when she sat down to dinner she used to complain that they would leave her nothing to eat, at which the king often laughed. She had, in fact, only one real friend left, a very ugly attendant named Molina, whom she had brought with her from Spain. Molina gave herself great airs, and the queen's ladies were very attentive to her, in order to ingratiate themselves with their royal mistress; but Mademoiselle was far too proud to take any notice of her, and was especially indignant because the Spanish waiting-maid scoffed at the comte de Lauzun, and said openly that in Spain, if a subject pretended to the hand of a princess, he would have his head cut off. Molina became at last so disagreeable that Louis insisted she should be sent back to Spain.
and the poor queen then found her consolation in a little Spanish girl whom she called Philippa, and who took care to gratify her mistress’s Spanish taste by making chocolate for her, which was always eaten privately, for the queen of France dared not show that she retained in any way a predilection for her native country.

But the position of Maria Theresa was soon to be—outwardly at least—greatly improved. The king’s visits to madame de Montespan grew less frequent, whilst with madame de Maintenon he would converse alone for four hours at a time, and after these almost interminable conversations he always paid greater attention to his wife. At the same time the aspect of the court became graver; light and frivolous conversation was discountenanced, and the king, who became sharper and more imperious in his manner, showed that he cared chiefly for women of talent.

This remarkable change augured ill for the duration of madame de Montespan’s influence, more especially as it was known that Bossuet was using all his efforts to persuade the king to separate from her. Her downfall was, however, gradual, and whilst she possessed influence she used it without scruple for her own advantage, flattering the vanity and self-importance of the Grande Mademoiselle until she persuaded her to bestow a large portion of her vast possessions on theduc de Maine, madame de Montespan’s illegitimate son.

It would have been well for the country if the change which was passing over the mind of the king had affected his ambition as well as his outward morality; but the conclusion of peace had left him still bent upon aggrandising France by conquest. The Treaty of Nimeguen had ceded to France several important cities and districts, with ‘the dependencies belonging to them.’ The expression was vague. Louis resolved to make it certain. Courts of enquiry (‘chambres de réunion’) were set on foot, ostensibly for the object of deciding precisely the limits of these dependencies, but at the same time a claim was made to all territories which could be proved to have belonged to France at any previous period. In the lapse of years, when so many wars had taken place on the frontiers, towns and districts had changed hands continually; but all which had ever been French even for a short time were now to be French for perpetuity. The small German princes were called upon to give up their possessions on the Rhine. The bishops of Metz were declared to have alienated in former days territories which must now be regained. The elector Palatine, and even the kings of Sweden and Spain, were summoned to give an account of the lordships which for years they had held on the frontiers of France.

The free city of Strasburg was not only claimed, but seized by a hostile demonstration. Louis entered it himself in state on the 23rd of October, 1681, and Vauban exhausted all his engineering.
resources in rendering it, as he hoped, an impregnable bulwark of France against Germany.

Ecclesiastical affairs in France fared no better. Though professing the utmost reverence for the Pope, Louis took to himself the patronage of the church, insisting that when a bishop's see was vacant it belonged to the king to dispose of the episcopal revenues, and to present to all the benefices in the diocese, until the new bishop had taken the oath of allegiance. This was the beginning of a long struggle between the French or Gallican church and the papal power.

In January 1681 Pope Innocent XI. excommunicated all those whom the king had named to fill vacant benefices, and the parliament of Paris in return pronounced a decree against a certain libel which was attributed to the Pope.

So the contest began, whilst Louis satisfied his conscience as regarded his faith by setting on foot a persecution of the Huguenots. In April a squadron of dragoons was sent into the Huguenot provinces and quartered upon those who would not profess the Roman Catholic faith, and terrible scenes of violence and cruelty ensued.

Louvois upheld the 'dragonnades,' as the persecution was called, but Colbert's influence prevailed to suspend them for a short time. The great minister was, however, sinking under the pressure of work, anxiety, and disappointment. Vast sums of money were required for the expenses of the buildings at Versailles. Louis on one occasion reproached him for not following the example of Louvois, who contrived to erect fortifications with comparatively little expense by making the soldiers do the work. The conversation ended by a quarrel as to the price of the iron gates at Versailles. Colbert went home, took to his bed, and never rose from it again. He died cursed and detested. They buried him at night, to avoid the insults of the people; but he was the victim of the faults of others. Mazarin had left the country impoverished, and the wars and personal expenditure of Louis XIV. had increased the necessity of taxation. Colbert had no alternative. He restored order to the finances, but it was only by exactions. The people suffered and laid their sufferings at his door. The worse the unpopularity under which he laboured troubled him on his deathbed. A letter was brought to him from the king, and he would not read it. 'If I had done for God,' he said, 'what I have done for this man, I should have been sure that I should be saved, and now I know not whether I am going.'

1 The feelings of the people against Colbert were expressed by satire and epigrams, of which, perhaps, the best is the following:—

Carol voyant Colbert sur son rivage,  
Le prenait et le note amable,  
De peur qu'il ne mette un impôt.  
Sur la barque et sur la passega.
died, the Huguenots lost their best friend, and the Pope might have been somewhat appeased by the king's inveterate persecution of them. But the independent spirit of the Gallican church showed itself also in the prelates. In the month of November an assembly of the clergy was opened by Bossuet, who in an eloquent discourse ventured to assert that St. Peter was only the first amongst equals, and that the unity of the church was in its bishops, not in the Pope, and then proceeded to bring before the assembly four articles to which they were expected to subscribe. Their substance was as follows:

1. The Pope can have no authority in temporal matters.
2. He can do nothing against the decisions of councils,
3. Nor against the liberties of national churches.
4. His decisions, when not sanctioned by the church, may be reformed.

These propositions, when sent to the Pope, were ordered to be publicly burnt; and such an outburst of indignation proved ultimately too much even for Louis XIV. to resist. The propositions were in the end, and after the lapse of some considerable time, so far withdrawn that Louis did not insist upon their being considered the law of the land, but they have always continued to be appealed to as a declaration of the principles of the Gallican church in opposition to those commonly known as Ultramontane, and which forbid the sovereign to exercise independent control over the temporal affairs of the church.

The territorial usurpations of Louis were as offensive to the European powers as his ecclesiastical usurpations were to the Pope; but they stood more in awe of him than did Innocent.

The emperor of Germany was engaged in resisting the Turks, who were invading Austria, and the king of Spain, although he put forth a declaration of war, made no attempt to send an army into the field. Louis, on the other hand, felt no scruple in seizing by force what was not yielded to him upon demand. His armies poured into Flanders and Brabant in 1683. The fortress of Luxembourg was invested and taken in the spring of 1684, whilst at the same time Mons and Brussels were threatened. Then the States-General of Holland interfered, and in the autumn of the same year another vain attempt to secure the peace of Europe was made by a truce of twenty years concluded at Ratisbon between France, Spain, and Germany. Again Louis triumphed. The province of Luxembourg and a number of the towns which he had so urgently claimed were given up to him, and amongst them Strasbourg, destined to be the subject of such fierce contention and such bitter regret to France in the Franco-German war of 1870.
The position of the king's domestic affairs at this period may be best understood by his own words. 'I find it,' he said, 'more easy to restore peace to all Europe than between two women; they take fire at trifles.'

The two women were madame de Maintenon, or, as the courtiers called her, madame de Maintenant (the lady of the present), and madame de Montespan. There could indeed be no peace between them, for their interests were utterly opposed. The influence of madame de Maintenon was steadily but perceptibly on the increase, and the death of the queen, which took place in the month of July 1683, removed every obstacle to the full expression of the king's feelings. It was to madame de Maintenon that Maria Theresa looked for support in the sudden illness which might not have proved fatal but for the incapacity of the first physician in attendance, and it was in her arms that she died. When the last breath was drawn, and madame de Maintenon would have retired, she was stopped by the duc de la Rochefoucauld, who met her at the door of the apartment, saying, 'This is not the moment to quit him; he has need of you,' and took her to the king.

Louis was very miserable. The recollection of the suffering he had brought upon the wife whom in her youth and innocence he had received with such fair promises must have brought with it a reproach of conscience almost unendurable.

It was madame de Maintenon who had urged him to the late reparation, which was the only recollection that could now comfort him, and to her he naturally turned as to his best and dearest friend. There is little doubt that from that time the advantages which her situation offered fully presented themselves to the mind of the self-controlled but far-seeing and ambitious widow of the old comic poet.

A fragment of a letter which there is every reason to believe belongs to this period of her life affords a tolerably clear idea of her expectations. In it she says, 'He gives me the fairest hopes; but I am too old to reckon on them. . . . I send him away always afflicted but never in despair.'

And the king had no reason to despair, for a few months after the queen's death—in the beginning of the year 1684, as it is said—madame de Maintenon consented to be his wife, though evidently with the understanding on both sides that she was not to assume the position of royalty.

The fact of the marriage is asserted without hesitation because it has never been doubted, although no authentic record of the ceremony is extant. The precise time is, however, uncertain, but the marquis de St. Simon, writing in the next reign, says, 'It is very certain and very true that . . . . in the middle of the winter which
followed the queen’s death . . . père la Chaise, the king’s confessor, performed mass at midnight in one of the king’s cabinets at Versailles, where the monarch and Maintenon were married, in the presence of Harlay, archbishop of Paris (as diocesan), of Louvois (both of them had, they say, exacted from the king that he would never declare this marriage), and of Montchevreuil as the third witness.

CHAPTER XLIV.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1684.

Madame de Maintenon had obtained the secret object of her ambition, but it could only have been to find herself more a nurse than a queen. The king’s health was far from good; he required constant soothing and care. Every personal inclination was to be sacrificed to his whims, and his wife, whilst holding a higher position than any lady in the land, was yet obliged to keep herself so much in the background that her life must in many respects have been one of perpetual humiliation. But the exercise of power was, apparently, her one delight, and this she now privately enjoyed to the fullest extent. Whatever might be her public position her personal influence over the king was such that she ruled France, and the effects of this influence were soon fatally seen in the continued and increasing persecution carried on against the Huguenots. Efforts were indeed made for their conversion by gentle means; pamphlets and books were written, and money was spent for the furtherance of the desired object, but when all this failed recourse was once more had to severe measures. The Huguenots were excluded from holding public offices and were forbidden to intermarry with Roman Catholics, and many of their churches were shut up, and those which were left open were often so distant from their dwellings that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to reach them.

In the bitter winter of 1684 a number of new-born infants were taken by their Huguenot parents to be baptised at Bordeaux and at La Rochelle, which still remained in their hands, and were found dead—frozen to their mothers’ breasts—at the entrance of the church. A great cry of lamentation arose; men and women alike wept, and sobs took the place of psalms. Louis heard of it and his heart was touched. He gave orders that the harsh measures should be relaxed;
but the suspicion was ultimately forced upon him that the Protestants, although outwardly so submissive to law that no just pretext for violence could be found against them, were in reality bound together politically in a way adverse to his authority. This idea, fostered, as it is said to have been, by madame de Maintenon and the Jesuit party, and nourished by the king's natural narrowness and bigotry, led him at length to an act fatal in its consequences alike to the prosperity of France and to his own character for wisdom and humanity—the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

By that edict Henry IV. had placed the Huguenots on a footing of civil equality with their fellow-countrymen; by its revocation on the 17th of October, 1685, the Huguenots became a proscribed people. The exercise of their religion was prohibited throughout the whole kingdom with the exception of Alsace. Their churches were levelled to the ground, their ministers exiled, whilst the people who depended on the ministrations of the pastors were forbidden, under pain of condemnation to the galleys, to leave the country. The children also were now required to be, without exception, baptised by Roman Catholic priests, and brought up in that faith.

The revocation, though it had been long in preparation, took the Huguenots by surprise. Even as late as the 15th of September they had been made hopeful of toleration by the fact that some obstacles in the way of Huguenot marriages had been removed, and thus the blow struck on the 17th of October found them stunned and motionless, totally ignorant how to act in the great calamity which had overtaken them. Even those charged with the execution of the edict did not at first fully comprehend it. Application was made to Louvois as to the exact meaning of the orders given, and the reply was, 'The king desires that you should deal severely with those who obstinately persist in incurring his displeasure.' The meaning of these words was made clear by a renewal of the 'dragonnades.'

The soldiers thus launched upon the south to terrify the Huguenots into submission carried out their task with a horrible mixture of cruelty and absurdity. The Roman Catholic population set them the example of levity. At La Rochelle they took down the bell of the church used by the Huguenots, buried it, and dug it up again, and then, having, as they said, reconciled it to the church and baptised it, they made the bell promise by its sponsors that it would no longer summon the people to the 'prêche' (the Huguenot service), and honourably restored it to its place in the parish belfry.

These profane follies, repeated to the king at Versailles, served to deceive and mislead him. The persecutions of his dragoons probably seemed to him to be carried on in the same light spirit. The soldiers entered the houses of the Huguenots, lived with the family, fright-
en the children, sometimes stunned the timid women by beating four drums, and at other times forced open the chests and wardrobes and took out the finest linen—the pride of the industrious wife and mother—to make with it litter for their horses; and cruel as such things were to the sufferers, they might probably have excited a smile when heard of at a distance. But when these lesser barbarities were exchanged for imprisonment in loathsome dungeons, the infliction of torture and of every outrage short of actual murder, it would have seemed impossible but that the public indignation should have been aroused and efforts made to stop a persecution so unjustifiable.

The king, it is said, knew little or nothing of the horrors perpetrated in his name. He was living in an atmosphere of flattery and adulation, which blinded him to all thought except his own greatness, but it can scarcely be doubted that Madame de Maintenon was aware of them.

A casuistical proverb, however—'A little evil for a great good'—seems to have satisfied her, and she resigned herself to these almost unparalleled atrocities, saying, 'God makes use of many means.' And so the horrors went on increasing, the officers giving more and more license to their soldiers, until at length, driven to desperation, the unhappy Huguenots had no resource but flight. Rigorous precautions were taken to prevent emigration. Yet, notwithstanding, at least 200,000 of the persecuted sect sought refuge in foreign lands. The consequences of that expatriation can plainly be traced at the present day in our own land. An entire district of London, inhabited by the Spitalfields weavers, owes its origin to the persecuted silk-weavers of France who took refuge in England upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The majority of the Huguenots belonged to the working classes, and were noted for probity and industry. Their loss was an irreparable calamity to France. But the evil was not confined to them. Men of the highest eminence professing the Huguenot faith found themselves driven to seek safety in exile, and marshal Schomberg, one of the first generals of his day, fled to Holland and proffered his services to the prince of Orange.

No offer could have been more welcome. The one unceasing desire of William of Orange was to overthrow the despotism which was fast encroaching upon the liberties of Europe, and to revenge the outrages from which Holland had so deeply suffered. But the hour of this revenge was not yet arrived. Another work was previously to be accomplished. Whilst Louis in France was gaining converts to his church by terror, James II. in England was seeking its restoration by perfidy. The English people, indignant and alarmed, summoned to their aid the Protestant prince upon whom,
as the son-in-law of James, they seemed to have most claim. Before William could devote himself to the affairs of Europe it was necessary to settle those of England, and when the emperor of Germany, the electors of Bavaria and Saxony, the elector Palatine, and the kings of Spain and Sweden proposed a new league against France, William, though the most bitter enemy of Louis, was compelled for the moment to keep aloof from the coalition.

The League of Augsburg was signed without him on the 9th of June, 1686. But war was not immediately declared. Various disputes, however, arising from time to time, strengthened the determination and power of the league. Pope Innocent XI.—naturally the ally of Roman Catholic France—who had been irritated by the insolence of Louis in insisting that the residence of his ambassador in Rome should be an asylum for criminals, was at length converted into an open enemy by the seizure of Avignon, which had hitherto been part of the papal territory, and in the beginning of the year 1688 the eyes of Louis and his minister Louvois were fully opened to the fact that the whole of Europe, with the single exception of Savoy, was prepared to resist the pretensions of France.

It was the advice of Louvois that Louis should strike the first blow, and a pretext was not wanting. The duchess of Orleans, sister of the late elector Palatine, laid claim to a considerable part of her brother’s possessions. The emperor disallowed the claim; Louis supported it. This was one definite cause of quarrel; another was the fact that a Bavarian prince had been chosen elector of Cologne, whilst Louis had furthered the pretensions of cardinal de Fürstenberg.

But if these causes had been wanting, others would easily have been found. The struggle between ambitious France and resisting Europe was inevitable, and when a French army of 80,000 men, under the command of the Dauphin and marshal Duras, entered the Palatinate in the month of October 1688, there might even have been a sense of relief amongst the expectant nations from the mere cessation of suspense.

Manheim, Mayence, Worms, Kreuznach, Spires—indeed, the whole of the Palatinate on the left bank of the Rhine—soon fell into the hands of the French. It was comparatively easy to seize the country, but it was difficult to keep it. To prevent the re-occupation of the territory Louis again had recourse to devastation. The inhabitants of the Palatinate were warned to retire, and the cruel work began. The palace of Heidelberg, so fatally injured before, was now set on fire. Towns were blown up or burnt. Trees were cut down, vines torn up by the roots, crops trampled down, and the imperfect ruin of the Palatinate under Turenne in 1675 was as nothing compared with its utter destruction in 1688. The mis-

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LEAGUE OF AUGSBURG—CLAIM TO THE PALATINATE.

Louis XIV.
able inhabitants of the desolated country wandered about in despair, calling for the vengeance of Heaven upon the ruthless conqueror. And the cry was not unheard.

William of Orange had by this time made good his footing in England. James II. had been compelled to abdicate, and the stadtholder of Holland and his wife, Mary, had been proclaimed joint sovereigns of England. William thus found himself at liberty to join the powers who had signed the League of Augsburg, and to form a new coalition against Louis, known as the Grand Alliance. James II. fled to France, where he was received by the king with splendid hospitality, and allowed to reside at the palace of St. Germain.

These events had a singular influence upon the fortunes of the duc de Lauzun, the aspirant for the hand of mademoiselle de Montpensier. His release from imprisonment had been obtained by the intercession of the lady, who gained the king’s consent, when she gave a large portion of her possessions to the duc de Maine. Lauzun was not, however, allowed to present himself at court, and he went over to England. He was there at the time of the abdication of James, and was able to give such assistance to the queen and her infant son in their escape that he entirely regained the favour of Louis. He was privately married to the Grande Mademoiselle, but they lived a miserable life. Lauzun was ungrateful, and she was ill-tempered, and at last they separated, and Mademoiselle retired to a convent, where she died in 1693.

The English exiles became the centre of attraction at the court of France. But the sympathy thus awakened had one great disadvantage. The king was only the better prepared to acquiesce in the devastation of the Palatinate, by which he hoped to take revenge upon William of Orange and the Grand Alliance. Some great effort was necessary, for the allies were becoming more and more powerful. Three distinct armies, under the command of lord Churchill (afterwards the duke of Marlborough), the duke of Lorraine, and the elector of Brandenburg, were in the field, and their first efforts were successful. The French were driven back, and the German troops established themselves for the winter in the unfortunate Palatinate, where it was found still possible to procure food for the soldiers.

But the object nearest to the heart of Louis was not the war in Germany, but in England. Only by the overthrow of William could there be any prospect of destroying the Grand Alliance. Ostensibly, and no doubt sincerely, the French king sought the restoration of James; but in this restoration his own interests were materially involved.

In March 1689 a French squadron conveyed James, with a body of French troops, to Ireland, whilst a French fleet set sail for England.
William hastened to Ireland, and, assisted by marshal Schomberg, now fully recognised as one of his generals, fought and gained the famous battle of the Boyne (July 1, 1690). Schomberg lost his life in the engagement. Cheering on his troops, who were chiefly Huguenot refugees, with the cry, ‘Now, gentlemen, now! here are your persecutors!’ he dashed across the river and was shot as he reached the opposite bank.

On the same day a naval battle took place off Beachy Head, in which the French admiral, the comte de Tourville, claimed a decided victory, and sailing up the Channel attacked and destroyed Teignmouth.

But the reverses on the Boyne in Ireland had been too severe to allow James and Louis to profit by this naval success. Undecided and wanting in courage, James had fled from the field of battle as soon as the tide of victory turned against him, and reaching Kinsale immediately crossed for safety to Brest. The struggle was continued in his absence; but by the summer of the next year William III. was the acknowledged sovereign not only of Great Britain, but of Ireland.

In the meantime the contest with the Grand Alliance in the Netherlands had been carried on by France with greater success. In the great battle of Fleurus, fought just before the battle of the Boyne (June 30, 1690), marshal Luxembourg completely defeated the German general, prince de Waldeck, with immense loss; and in the spring of the following year, 1691, the French army, accompanied by the king himself, laid siege to Mons and took it in nine days, although William of England made vigorous efforts to relieve it.

This achievement was mainly due to the careful military preparations of Louvois. Yet the minister of war was hated by the king, the court, and above all by madame de Maintenon. It is said that Racine even ventured to depict him as Haman in the drama of Esther, and in that character to put into his mouth the words addressed to Ahasuerus—‘He owes me everything’ (‘Il me doit tout’)—which were calculated to wound to the quick the pride of Louis. There can, indeed, be little doubt that the downfall of Louvois was the subject of many of the secret political intrigues which were carried on under the guise of devotion by madame de Maintenon and her friends. A chief centre of these intrigues was St. Cyr, the school for young ladies of noble birth, but without money, which was a special object of interest amongst the party known as ‘devot.’ The house at St. Cyr had been built expressly for the purposes of retirement and education. It was large, but not cheerful. The gardens even were sombre, though not without flowers. The governesses adopted a special costume, in colour black, but elegant in make; the hair was dressed fashionably, the face shrouded by a kind of scarf finished
under the chin. The young pupils also were in costume—brown, with white collars, and a border of some particular colour, according to the school class to which they had attained. A little lace round the neck marked the social position. The cap was considered ugly; it was too much like that of the Béguines, and the king requested that a coloured ribbon might be added to it.

In this home of seclusion and piety the young ladies were to be brought up as models of Christian virtue. Their one object of idolatry was the king. They were for the most part orphans, and he had done everything for them. They could not but be grateful, and though when first he visited St. Cyr they were too much overpowered with awe even to look at him, yet when he again appeared there, after recovering from a serious illness, they welcomed him with an enthusiasm amounting to adoration, as they greeted him with a song composed by madame Brinon, their superior, and which was set to music by Sulli, one of the first musicians of the day. Madame de Maintenon’s letters give the idea that the education at St. Cyr was thoroughly religious. It had at least the outward appearance of it. The young ladies learnt hymns and acted sacred dramas, written for them by Racine, but in other respects their minds seem to have been left vacant. Madame de Maintenon amused herself with them as with dolls, dressing up the prettiest with bows of ribbon and pearls; and the young girls, weary of their objectless lives, naturally sought and found their amusement in dreams of court life and grand establishments, and expended their undirected energies in the excitement of their one grand recreation—private theatricals.

The king believed, and often said, that madame de Maintenon was very judicious. When important affairs were discussed in the council he would sometimes stop and ask, ‘What does your “solidité” think of this matter?’ But ‘solidité,’ or good judgment, certainly was not shown in the life of the pupils of St. Cyr.

An inconsistent education must be barren in results. The teaching at St. Cyr was external; it did not touch the heart, and it made the laws of worldly society important above all others, and the young pupils of madame de Maintenon’s celebrated institution were in after life the most unsatisfactory, and some of them the worst specimens, of Parisian fashion.

Politics, fashion, and religion were indeed singularly mingled at St. Cyr. At the time that the drama of Esther was performed many of the young actresses, knowing that it had reference to the cause—sacred in their eyes—of the exiled English king, who was to be present with Louis, were known to kneel and repeat the Veni Creator before they appeared on the stage, in order that they might

1 Michelet says, ‘It was the celebrated song “God Save the King,” which the English have most unceremoniously taken from us.’
have grace given them to recite worthily; and so beautiful and touching was the feeling which the little canoness madame de Maisonfort, the especial darling of madame de Maintenon, threw into her acting that the audience were entirely carried away, and Esther and the Persian costume became the rage of the day. Such worldly results from a supposed religious effort in an almost consecrated place rather startled madame de Maintenon. Everyone was talking of it, and in order to stop the gossip the king's confessor, père la Chaise, Bossuet, the great Jesuit preacher, Bourdaloue, and several other persons of high reputation—amongst them madame de Miramion, one of the most charitable women of the day—were summoned to St. Cyr to be present at a repetition of the piece. With their sanction madame de Maintenon's conscience was satisfied. But the reputation of the educational establishment would probably have suffered more from this outbreak of fashionable popularity but for the introduction of a new element derived from madame Guyon, the founder of what is generally known as the sect of the Quietists.

The youth of madame Guyon had been sad. She had been ill-treated by her mother and beaten by her sisters. From home she passed to a convent, which she left at fifteen to become the wife of M. Guyon, a harsh, selfish invalid, and to live in the house of a mother-in-law who kept so strict a watch upon all her movements that the young wife scarcely dared to lift her eyes from the ground, whilst she was insulted with impunity by a servant who was considered to be a saint, but who had no hesitation in pulling madame Guyon's hair. To add to the misery of her position her children were taught to disobey her, and were made even to act as spies upon her.

Prayer and meditation were the sole refuge of the unhappy wife and mother, and these soon became the one occupation of her life. She had, indeed, a considerable talent for business, and when her husband's affairs required it she could engage in worldly matters with success, but her heart was far away from all earthly interests, and a state of intense religious feeling became her normal condition.

It may seem presumptuous to censure devotion so saintly and unusual, but there can be no doubt that madame Guyon's vivid imagination and nervous susceptibility worked with her religious feeling to produce effects which, though natural and simple for herself, were not safe for others.

Visions which awoke transports of religious ecstasy took a different form to her from those of the coarser-minded peasant girl.

Madame de Maisonfort was only a child. The title of 'madame' was given her in right of her rank as canoness, which involved high descent for many generations.
MADAME GUYON'S DOCTRINES—FIRST INTRODUCTION TO FÉNELON. 257

Louis XIV.

Marie Alacoque. Madame Guyon was a cultivated Jansenist, whilst
the foundress of the order of the 'Sacré Cœur' was completely in
the hands of the Jesuits. But the origin of both states of mind would
seem to be the same—the removal of those outward checks upon
excitable feeling with which the Almighty, in His great wisdom, has
seen fit in ordinary cases to surround the human heart, and the
entire concentration of the mind upon one peculiar phase of religious
contemplation. Divine Love, in its exalted spiritual nature, was the
constant theme of madame Guyon's thoughts, writings, and conversa-
tion, and in the midst of such worldliness as that of Paris the
subject was singularly attractive to serious minds. When expounded
by a woman who added the simplicity of a child to the charms of
grace, beauty, and talent, the influence which accompanied it was
irresistible. Even the stern mother-in-law succumbed to it and
learnt to love her daughter, whilst the old servant became so deeply
attached to her young mistress that she died of a broken heart when
in after years madame Guyon left France.

The success of the new teaching was, however, at first unobtrusive.
It could only be received and understood by highly spiritual minds.
Some objection had indeed been raised to it by the archbishop of
Paris, but madame Guyon, who was a cousin of madame de Maisons-
fort, was still received as a visitor at St. Cyr, and the arrival of
the fascinating guest with her hands full of fruits and flowers was
hailed with delight in the home of solemn ennui. The young girls
expanded under her influence, opened to her their hearts, gave them-
selves up to her wishes. There was doubtless an idea that the doc-
trines inculcated might not be entirely pleasing to the king, but a
powerful supporter of them was found in the saintly abbé Fénelon,
as high in reputation for his talents as for his piety.

Fénelon and madame Guyon had been invited to St. Cyr at the
same time by some ladies of high rank and great religious profession,
and sent back to Paris together in a carriage with another lady.
Madame Guyon talked earnestly, expounding her views of religion.
Fénelon said little. Many of the ideas were novel, and he prob-
ably thought they might be dangerous. Madame Guyon grew a
little impatient at his silence. 'But do you not understand?' she
exclaimed at length. 'Does it not enter into you?' Fénelon roused
himself. 'Yes, madame,' he replied; 'it enters by a "porte cochère"'
(a great gate), and after this he talked a little more. But he was by
no means at once attracted by the Quietist opinions. It was the
ardent piety and spirituality of madame Guyon herself which seems
first to have won his interest, and which at last induced him to over-
look those points of her teaching which were likely to lead to error.
Madame de Maintenon also at one time regarded Quietism with a
certain amount of sympathy. It had one great charm, for it was...
novelty, and the wife of Louis XIV., isolated in the midst of the
gaieties of a court, needed above all things to be excited and aroused.
Madame Guyon amused her. It was a treat to hear her talk. She
was both touching and comic, a mixture of St. Theresa and Don
Quixote, and her friends amongst the ladies of the court were kind
and caressing. In their society there was doubtless a sensation of
living in a kind of velvet world which was infinitely delightful.
Madame de Maintenon, flattered and enticed, seems almost to have
believed herself a convert. She began to consult Fénelon, who had
lately been appointed tutor to the little duke of Burgundy, the
Dauphin's eldest son, and who was becoming more and more en-
grossed with madame Guyon and the Quietist doctrine. It was a
pleasant excitement to visit a circle of Quietist friends incognito
on a Sunday, and to dine with them and Fénelon quite alone,
Fénelon presiding, and the conversation being quite free, as they
allowed no servants to be present, but waited upon themselves.

But devotion did not preclude politics, and the latter in madame
de Maintenon's case proved the stronger influence. There is
very considerable evidence to prove that a proposal was made at
this time by an officer named Grandval to rid the ex-king of England
and the king of France of their great enemy, William, by assassina-
tion. James is said to have accepted the offer, saying, 'If you
do me this service you shall be provided for for life.' Louis, it
is believed, only tacitly agreed, whilst madame de Maintenon, who
had knowledge of the matter, was so miserable that she one day
sent half over Paris to find madame Guyon, and beg her to come
to her, so that her thoughts might be distracted and her mind
soothed by saintly conversation and intercourse with calm innocence.
The affair was left in the hands of Louvois, who apparently had
no scruples. But Louis probably disliked his minister all the more
for doing what he himself shrank from. At any rate he showed that
Louvois was no longer in his favour. The cruelties committed in
the late wars were attributed to the minister who had urged and
even insisted upon them as absolutely necessary. His insolence was
complained of bitterly, and the increasingly threatening aspect of
military affairs was declared to be the result of his counsel.
Louvois is said to have deeply felt the king's displeasure. He still
held his position, but he knew not how soon it might be taken from
him. He was conversing with Louis on public affairs, when sud-
denly he threw down his papers, rushed from the room, and return-
ing to his home was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died almost in
a few minutes.

The king was walking in his gardens of Versailles and talk-
ing with one of James's officers when the intelligence of the
death of his minister was brought to him. 'Our affairs will not
the worse for that,' was his remark; and it would seem that he must have referred to the descent upon the English coast, which Louvois had always declared was not prudent; for personally he did suffer serious inconvenience from the death of his minister. Barbezieux, the son of Louvois, a young man of five-and-twenty, was called to occupy his father's post—probably because he already knew the state secrets—but Louis took upon himself the real management of affairs. He spent four hours every day writing alone in his cabinet, whilst all the harsh and painful necessities of a despotic government—the system of interference with private letters, the mysteries of the Bastille and of the police—which devolved upon him, were frequently discussed with madame de Maintenon.

All the more did the uncrowned wife endeavour to escape from the burden which her ambition had brought upon her by seeking refuge either in her oratory or at St. Cyr. But even in her own cherished institution disappointment awaited her. The interest she had taken in Quietism, madame Guyon, and Fénelon, proved but a passing fancy. After a time her Jesuit confessor, Godet, resumed his influence, and as bishop of Chartres was entrusted with the spiritual management of St. Cyr, and the first use which he made of his position was to inform madame de Maintenon that heresy existed in her favourite institution.

The intelligence was received with assumed surprise, though the fact was perfectly well known. It was not possible openly to denounce opinions which had lately been listened to with favour, and madame de Maintenon merely signified to madame Guyon that her doctrines were too high for all, and that the young inmates of St. Cyr required more simple teaching.

From that time, however, she bent all her efforts to convert the educational establishment into a regular convent, of which it can scarcely be doubted that she looked forward to being one day herself the head. Madame Guyon's teaching had allowed an indulgent freedom of action. This was now checked. The giddy laugh of a pupil who was called upon to listen to one of madame de Maintenon's long exhortations, and the fact that one of the best of the young actresses in Racine's play of 'Athalie' had shown herself conceited and undisciplined, seemed convincing proofs that stricter laws were necessary.

The vow of religious obedience involved all that was needed. Madame de Maintenon urged upon her favourite Elise de Maisanfort the duty of renouncing the world and devoting herself to a cloistered life. The young girl hesitated. She had imbibed the doctrines of the Quietists, and her spirit revolted from the severe requirements of a convent. Madame de Maintenon turned to her companions. A similar sacrifice was to be demanded of them; all were to take the veil. Yet...
she dared not insist on it herself; and on a day when she was to have paid one of her usual visits to the institution the king appeared in her stead. The young ladies were summoned to his presence and informed that it was his will that they should be nuns.

Trembling and awe-struck, they remained silent, not daring even to shed tears; one only—mademoiselle La Loubère, who was four-and-twenty years of age—ventured to resist, and was permitted without taking the veil to retire to an Ursuline convent, where she remained engaged in education till her death.

Madame de Maintenon now brought to St. Cyr some Augustinian sisters, unrefined and uneducated, but accustomed to an austere life, who were to teach endurance to the gently nurtured, spoilt pupils.

Kept on their knees for hours together in the great heat of summer, the poor girls fainted, and even madame de Maintenon owned that the discipline was too severe; but in a mitigated form it answered its purpose. Many of the pupils took the vows in the winter of 1698. Elise de Maisonfort delayed till the following year, when she also submitted to the will of her protectress, and in 1698 there remained only one to be received.

Yet even now madame de Maintenon had not gained her object. The nuns of St. Cyr were absolutely under her power, and as the foundress of their institution they regarded her with trembling respect, but the one thing she craved—their heart—was denied her.

Elise de Maisonfort indeed loved her, but she had refused to obey her, and madame de Maintenon, exasperated at this independence of action, vented upon her cherished darling all the secret bitterness caused by the unrecognised position of grandeur of which she tasted only the misery.

The king's devotion to public affairs was now a source of anxiety as well as of annoyance. More especially madame de Maintenon disliked that he should at any time accompany the army. It diverted his attention from herself, and interrupted the regular life which she had established for him at Versailles. Naval expeditions were much more to her taste, and the idea of a descent upon England being supported by her influence, was, in consequence, set on foot. An army of 30,000 men was assembled on the coast of Normandy near Cherbourg, and James, with marshal Bellefonds as his general, held himself in readiness to embark with this army in the French fleet, commanded by admiral Tourville, as soon as the Channel could be cleared of the English and Dutch ships. Unhappily for France the naval affairs were the worst managed of any in the country. A false economy and a division of interests amongst those who regulated them necessarily resulted in weakness and irresolution. Had Tourville attempted to cross the Channel in March, he would have
found only a few English vessels to oppose him; but partly in obedience to orders, and partly because needful preparations had not been made—even the powder being found at the last to be bad and insufficient—he waited till May, with how little prospect of improvement in the condition of his affairs may be judged from the fact that when he complained that the powder would not carry the balls far enough, the answer he received was, that 'in that case he would only have to approach nearer to the enemy.'

At length came a direct order from the king. At all hazards the enemy's fleet was to be sought and attacked. And on the 9th of May the French admiral sailed from Brest, and on the 19th met the English and Dutch fleet, under admiral Russell, in mid-Channel between Barfleur and the Isle of Wight.

Louis appears to have given his order with the conviction that there would really be no battle at all. England—so said the court of St. Germain—was weary of William; the fleet would at once yield to the rightful sovereign, and the prayers of the young pupils of St. Cyr would assuredly be answered. So thinking, Louis had set out for Namur to join the army; but he travelled slowly, to accommodate madame de Maintenon and her ladies, who went with him. A courier, despatched by Ponchartrain, the minister of finance, was sent after him. The truth was beginning to dawn upon the country. Tourville had forty-four vessels, the English and Dutch ninety-nine. To risk an unequal combat would be folly, and another messenger was despatched by the king to Tourville, revoking the previous order. But it never reached him. On the 28th, when a thick fog shrouded the Channel, the commander of a Swedish vessel passing the French fleet accidentally revealed the strength of the enemy's fleet, and informed Tourville that it was immediately before him.

With the royal order in his pocket the French admiral had no alternative, but at once confronted the enemy. Notwithstanding his immense inferiority in number a struggle was kept up till night, without a decisive advantage on either side. The next morning the French fleet was found to have dispersed. Some ships gained the roadstead of La Hogue, and were thus under the protection of the French army of invasion, which was stationed on the heights above the sea.

Here they were attacked on the 23rd by the English, under admiral Rooke. Approaching the French ships of war in small boats, they set them on fire. All night the bay appeared in flames, while from time to time a powder magazine blew up or a loaded cannon exploded. Want of ammunition is said to have prevented the French army on the heights from assisting their unfortunate compatriots, and James and marshal Bellefonds looked down upon the
scene as upon a display of fireworks. But James could not resist expressing his admiration of the brave English sailors, who not only burnt the ships of war in the harbour, but made their way into an inner basin, and after setting fire to some of the transport vessels, eight of which were destroyed, triumphantly carried off others in tow, thundering forth as they slowly retired the national anthem, 'God Save the King.'

The news of the disastrous battle of La Hogue reached Louis slowly. He was then with his army before Namur, fully believing that the place would be taken without delay, and the first courier who arrived was a man who had heard on the road a false report that the French had gained a victory. The disappointment when the truth became known was proportionately great. Louis, however, retained his dignified equanimity in public, quietly remarked, 'We shall lose fifteen vessels,' and then began to speak of something else. Nevertheless the battle of La Hogue was the great event of the day. From it dated the confidence of England in her naval superiority, whilst the national pride thus fostered materially strengthened the trust of the people in the political measures of William of Orange.

Namur was taken, though William in person did his utmost to save it. Louis returned to Versailles triumphant, in spite of La Hogue, and his success, with a victory gained by Marshal Luxembourg at Steinkirk in Hainault rather more than a month afterwards, did much to restore the general confidence in the invincibility of France. This last victory was more than glorious; it became fashionable. The French had been surprised by the enemy early in the morning. Some of the royal princes—the dukes of Bourbon, Chartres, and Vendôme—rushed forth and mounted their horses half dressed. The young prince de Conty took up a scarf and wrapped it round his neck. The story went abroad with details of his bravery, and as he was handsome and popular, the Parisian ladies went into raptures about him, and the Steinkirk scarf worn lightly upon the neck became the approved fashionable adornment.

Eight days after Steinkirk the project for the murder of William of Orange was made known. Grandval, who had been employed for the crime, was seized by William, and confessed everything. James, Louvois, and Barbezieux were convicted of having planned the crime. The confession was printed and published, and no one at Versailles dared to contradict it. Happily, however, for the honour of France, public attention was soon diverted from this which, though planned, had never been put in execution, and war was still all-engrossing.

The campaign of 1693 was marked by another French victory—

1 Son of the prince de Conty, of the French.
gained by marshal Luxembourg, on the 29th of July, at Neerwinden or Landen. William of Orange fought with his usual valour. Three times he was touched, though not wounded, by the balls which flew on all sides; but his courage was unavailing, and he was at length compelled to retire, conducting his retreat, however, with such skill that he was regarded as greater in defeat than others would have been in victory.

But all parties were suffering grievously in the protracted conflict. If Germany was devastated, France was impoverished. Marshal Catinat, who was now next to Luxembourg the most distinguished of the French generals, might gain, as he did, a brilliant victory over the duke of Savoy in the neighbourhood of Turin, and the naval disaster of La Hogue might be deemed in a measure retrieved by the capture, made by Tournelle in the month of June, of a richly laden convoy of English merchant ships, under the charge of admiral Rooke, but the enormous expenses which such contests involved entailed upon France an amount of misery for which triumph could be no compensation.

England was also crippled, but yet more exasperated. Notwithstanding her naval superiority, she was unable to blockade the French ports. Jean Bart, a seaman of Normandy, defied all her efforts. The Barts had long been settled at Dunkirk; the sea was their element, the study of its perils their profession. They knew the difficulties of the Channel, every rock and current. They could tell exactly how far they might venture to approach its hidden shoals, and at what hour the tide would permit them to pass over them. Half fishermen, half smugglers, they carried on a profitable trade, and handed down their traditions of the sea for the profit of their own family. Jean Bart was the representative of the race. A large man, fair-complexioned, blue-eyed, immensely strong (for on one occasion, escaping from the English shores, he had rowed two days and two nights), he made it his business to attack, but he was equally ready to protect. Now, when the country was in trouble, Jean Bart, who at the age of twenty-one had served under the Dutch admiral De Ruyter, and had a perfect acquaintance with the coast of Holland, urged upon the French government the formation of a fleet of small light vessels, which might be ready at any moment and at any port to confront the English men-of-war. There was hesitation at first, but Jean Bart prevailed, and from that time the English and Dutch ships of war were in constant peril. Jean attacked them unexpectedly and under all circumstances. No less than 700 Dutch vessels are said to have been burnt by the Northern Bear, as he was called, and the seizure of a large convoy of merchant vessels laden with corn made the price of wheat in France sink from thirty francs to three francs the bushel.
SUCCESS OF THE ALLIES—DUC DE MAINE’S COWARDICE.

Jean Bart kept off the enemies of France, but he could not destroy their power. The great fleets of England still had the mastery of the sea, and their warlike engines menaced St. Malo, destroyed Dieppe, and did injury to Dunkirk and Havre. Brest would certainly have been taken but that the duke of Marlborough, who was politically hostile to William, gave early intelligence of the intention to James, and through him to Louis, so that when a landing was attempted the French were ready to resist it.

The events of the year 1695 showed that William and the allies were able also to prove their superiority by land. Luxembourg had died at the end of the campaign in 1694, and the king replaced him by the friend of his own childhood—marshal Villeroy—a man at the age of fifty pronounced charming and irresistible in society, but unfortunately not irresistible on the field of battle. He had indeed one excuse for his failure. He took with him the young duc de Maine, who was to gain a military reputation without exposing himself to any risk. An opportunity favourable for a battle presented itself. Success seemed sure. The attack was to be made not upon William of Orange, but upon Vaudemont, one of his officers. The effeminate young duke, who was supposed to be in command, was asked for his orders. In reply he insisted upon seeing his confessor, and in the meantime the army of Vaudemont escaped.

The disgrace touched the king most keenly. No one, indeed, dared tell him of it. He learnt it through a Dutch newspaper, and was so overcome by it that he could only give vent to his irritation by caning a servant who was waiting upon him at dinner at Marly, and who was seen putting a biscuit in his pocket just as the king rose from the table. To the extreme astonishment of the courtiers and ladies, the dignified Louis ran after the culprit, chased him through several rooms, abused him in no measured terms, and at last, when the man was out of sight, found his own refuge in madame de Maintenon’s room.

William now turned his forces against Namur, hoping to retake it. He was partially successful. The French governor, Boufflers, shut himself up in the castle, hoping for relief from Villeroy. The marshal drew near with a force of 80,000 men. Boufflers watched his movements from the citadel. A battle seemed inevitable, and in expectation of it Louis and madame de Maintenon went through special devotions at Versailles. By the 19th of July everything was ready, but Villeroy perceiving that the army of William occupied a good position, decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and beat a retreat. Boufflers, in despair, made an effort to repulse an assault, and then gave up the castle.

Peace had now become a necessity, but before entering upon any general negotiation Louis desired to reach the duke of Savoy.
from the allies. Concessions were proposed. Nice, and all other conquered possessions of Savoy, were to be restored. Pignerol, which had remained in the hands of France for seventy years, was to be given up, and, to cement the good feeling between the two countries, a contract of marriage was proposed between the duke of Burgundy, eldest son of the Dauphin, and one of the princesses of the Savoy family. The bait was accepted. The contract was signed in May 1696, and Savoy withdrew from the coalition. Several smaller states followed the example, and William of Orange being thus left cooperatively alone, and urged by the clamour of the English and Dutch merchants, who had been nearly ruined by the war, at length consented to discuss terms of peace.

Sweden offered to mediate, and the place of deliberation chosen was Ryswick, a village near the Hague. Here the ambassadors met, and a treaty was signed on the 30th of September, 1697. France, England, Spain, and Holland were parties to it. The emperor Leopold held back for a short time longer, but afterwards yielded, receiving for his recompense all the acquisitions that France had made since the Treaty of Nimeguen, Strasburg excepted, which was ceded absolutely to France. Alsace also was retained by Louis. Restitution was at the same time made to Spain. The duchy of Luxembourg, the conquests made in Catalonia, and several important towns on the Flemish frontier were restored. After these long years of bloodshed France had gained but a comparatively small increase of territory, and—more humiliating than ought else at the moment—Louis was compelled to recognise the claims of his rival and deadly foe, William of Orange, to the throne of England.

The taxes in France were now so enormous that they absorbed everything like profit for the lower classes, who paid in proportion no less than a hundred times more than the rich. The obstacles placed in the way of labour by the various restrictions which Colbert had introduced paralysed the exertions of the industrious peasants, whilst the heavy custom-house duties impeded the commerce of the middle classes. With whom lay the fault? Such was the question proposed by Pesant de Boignvillebert, the judge of a small local court in Normandy, in a volume published about this time, entitled 'The Awakening of France.' The answer was an accusation first of the financiers, who it was said taxed the country for their own profit, not for the good of the state; then of the princes and great lords, who upheld the financiers and shared their gains; and—as a remote cause—of the clergy, who, owing to the regulations of former ages, paid no taxes except those which they fixed for themselves, and thus compelled the king to provide for the necessities of the government by the hated imposition known as the 'taille,' which levied on persons and on landed property, but from w
nobles and clergy were entirely exempt. The injustice and hardship of this tax had been recognized by Sully, Richelieu, and Colbert; the latter especially had made great efforts to abolish the exemption of the nobles, and certain enquiries had been made by which false titles of nobility were discovered, and the usurpers subjected to taxation; but beyond this little was done, whilst the personal extravagance of Louis, and the reckless expense of his wars, made the need of raising money at any sacrifice daily more pressing. Bois-guillebert was not the only person who foresaw the ruin which was impending over the country, and which was traceable to oppression, selfishness, extravagance, and misgovernment. The abbé Fénélon also had attempted to open the king's eyes, in a letter addressed to madame de Maintenon, as early as 1683. Madame de Maintenon was then on the most intimate terms with the abbé, and had entreated him to tell her her faults, and Fénélon took advantage of the request to enter upon subjects in which the welfare of the nation was intimately concerned; but it is much to be doubted whether the letter was ever shown to Louis. Madame de Maintenon was naturally timid, and the king's irritable pride might have caused a permanent alienation from herself, and would probably have consigned the author of the letter to the Bastille. Scandalous laxity of morals and general depravity of the court must also have been a daily burden to all persons of sober and earnest thought. Men and women were alike insensible even to outward propriety, and displayed their indifference to it by their dress, that unconscious indication of the spirit of the age. 'The men,' to quote the words of Michelet, 'were effeminate in their appearance and put patches on their faces; and the women, with their hair turned back from the forehead, so as to show the roots, their high combs, diadem-like bonnets, and Steinkirk scarves, had a bold expression of countenance, which gave them the air of minions of a seraglio, or of conceited pages who had merely stolen the dress of a woman.' The king was not ignorant of the condition of the country, but he shut his eyes to it. He was becoming daily more and more a confirmed invalid. Political affairs still passed through his hands, but otherwise his time was chiefly occupied in conversations with his physicians, Fagon, and his confessor, père la Chaise, except when occasionally the affairs of the church were forced upon his notice.

The doctrines professed by madame Guyon, and which had to a certain extent been upheld by Fénélon, were becoming at this time matter of general discussion. The Quietists, excellent in themselves, nevertheless upheld principles which, when carried out by those of less simple piety, might lead to evil. They were supported also by many persons openly antagonistic to religion, and thus the name of the party became associated with conduct which the leaders
abhorred. Even the saintly lives of Fénélon and madame Guyon could not save them from reproach. And the king, troubled by the rumours which reached him of heresy in such high places, at length ordered a commission of enquiry, under the direction of Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, who was vehemently opposed to Fénélon.

Madame Guyon submitted herself without reserve to the decision which Bossuet pronounced against her teaching. Whatever he disapproved she was willing to renounce. She received the Eucharist from his hands, and then went to Meaux to establish herself in a convent which he named to her, promising neither to write nor speak but according to his directions.

Fénélon also professed submission, and his doctrines were gently dealt with; no precise heresy was found in them, and his friends, who ardently desired to see him archbishop of Paris, rejoiced in the expectation of his speedy and open triumph.

As the tutor of the young duke of Burgundy it was incumbent on the king to show Fénélon honour, and he was raised to an archbishopric. It was not, however, Paris, but Cambray; and Cambray, a town of the Spanish Netherlands, recently conquered, was exile. The banishment was accepted, and retiring to Cambray, Fénélon wrote an explanation of the doctrines which he held. The 'Maximes des Saints' was no sooner circulated than it was denounced by Bossuet. Fénélon appealed to the decision of the Pope, and the controversy was in consequence carried on at Rome.

The king himself, urged by Bossuet, undertook the prosecution; and in August 1697 an order was sent to Fénélon that instead of appearing in his own defence he was to remain at Cambray. The Pope delayed his decision, and it was not till March 1699 that the archbishop knew that his book had been condemned. He had previously declared himself perfectly willing to acquiesce in the Pope's decree, whatever it might prove, and he now accepted the condemnation with perfect humility and read the brief from the pulpit of his cathedral. His submission was his triumph. His humility was applauded far more than his doctrines. Controversy was at an end, and he retained his influence and his archbishopric. Bossuet after this took a less prominent part in public affairs. He died about five years after Fénélon's condemnation. His harsh censures of the archbishop are remembered as the one blot upon his otherwise noble character.

The peace of Ryswick had restored a temporary repose to Europe, but the aspect of the storm which had for so many years been gathering in connection with the affairs of Spain was becoming daily more threatening. The health of the Spanish king, Charles II., was failing fast; and as he was childless his vast dominions would naturally become the object of competition to many claimants.
Claims of Succession to the Throne of Spain.

Louis XIV.

According to the law of hereditary succession the Dauphin of France was undoubtedly the heir to the Spanish throne. His mother, Maria Theresa, was the elder sister of Charles, and her right would naturally descend to her son. But when Maria Theresa became the wife of Louis XIV. she solemnly renounced for herself and her descendants all claim to the Spanish inheritance, and it was therefore contended that the succession fairly devolved on the family of her younger sister, the wife of Leopold, emperor of Austria.

The daughter of the empress had married the elector of Bavaria, and dying had left an infant son, who was so fully recognised as the rightful heir to Spain that as early as the year 1696 the Spanish monarch made a will bequeathing to his young Bavarian nephew all his dominions. But this will was not destined to last. The prince of Bavaria died in the spring of 1699, and a new arrangement became necessary.

The king of Spain detested France, and now turned his thoughts to the archduke Charles, the emperor’s second son, by a second wife. In this case also there was a shadow of right; for, according to the emperor’s assertion, the Bavarian claim had from the first been invalid, in consequence of a renunciation similar to that of Maria Theresa which had been exacted from the electress on her marriage; and when France and Bavaria were put aside, Austria would naturally succeed, as the emperor’s mother was a daughter of Philip III. of Spain.

The complicated question would have been of comparatively little consequence but for the determination of William III. to preserve what is known as the Balance of Power in Europe, by preventing the accumulation of territorial dominions in the hands of any one sovereign.

By his influence, when it was seen in 1698 that Charles II. of Spain could live but a short time, a secret treaty, known as the Treaty of Partition, was made at the Hague between Bavaria, Austria, and France, by which the whole of the enormous Spanish dominions were, on the death of the king, to be divided between the three competitors. But the death of the Bavarian prince necessitated a new division, and in March 1700 Louis XIV. and William III. agreed upon a second treaty, by which the archduke Charles was to be allowed to have Spain and the Indies, while the remainder of the Spanish dominions, including Naples and Sicily, were to be inherited by France.

The king of Spain, deeply resenting this insolent premature division of his kingdom, put himself into the hands of the Pope, Innocent XI., and at his instigation drew up a will excluding the Dauphin and his eldest son, but naming as his successor Philip.
duke of Anjou, the Dauphin's second son. The will was signed early in October 1700, and on the 1st of November the weak, unhappy, but honourable-minded Charles II. of Spain breathed his last.

The Spanish will fell as a thunderbolt into the French court, scattering all moderate ambitions to the winds. A few days before Louis had been satisfied with the secret treaty which was to enlarge the frontiers of France and increase the number of her seaports; now he had to resist the temptation of the whole of the Spanish empire.

The royal family were of one mind upon the subject, the little duchess of Burgundy (the Savoy princess) being the most outspoken. Gay, fascinating in manner, very clever in working out her own wishes, and ruling madame de Maintenon, whom she caressed and called her aunt, she half-laughingly expressed her decided opinion that the king would be a fool if he refused to accept Spain for his grandson.

Once said, all agreed. The princess was the charm of the court, and everyone was led by her. Visions of future grandeur floated before the eyes of the princes and nobles. Madame de Maintenon and the duc de Beaufort, and the chancellor Pontchartrain, were the only persons who seemed to retain any common sense.

A council was held to discuss the question. Madame de Maintenon warned the king that relationship would not always prevent war between France and Spain. M. de Beaufort spoke of the terrible evils of a contest with the other European states, which would inevitably follow the acceptance of the will; and the king for the moment, touched by his reasoning, prepared to refuse it.

But Tercy, the nephew of the great Colbert, who was one of the council, opposed the arguments of Beaufort. 'War,' he said, 'was inevitable at all events, and it would be well, therefore, to fight for the kingdom, which was their right.' He was supported by the Dauphin, a prince usually without influence, being as dull in mind as he was heavy and unattractive in person. A further council being held, the Dauphin expressed his feelings angrily. He declared that 'Spain was his by right. For the peace of Europe he would consent to give it to his second son; but to no one else was he disposed to relinquish an inch of the territory.' 'And you, madame,' said the king, turning to madame de Maintenon, who, as usual, was present at the council, 'what do you think of all this?' The answer was modest. Madame de Maintenon did not wish to interfere further. When the king insisted, she gave a vague opinion, praised the Dauphin, and in fact no longer resisted.

Still Louis hesitated. 'We will wait till to-morrow,' he said.
CHAPTER XLV.

LOUIS XIV. (continued.)

A.D. 1701.

There may be a difference of opinion as to the wisdom of the acceptance of the crown of Spain by Louis XIV. for his grandson, but there can scarcely be any as to the folly of which the French king was guilty in the transactions which followed it. The one all-important stipulation in the eyes of Europe, that France and Spain should never be united under one monarch, was at once set aside, and Louis caused to be registered by the parliament a decree which expressly reserved to the new king the possible succession to the throne of France. Already, indeed, Spain was looked upon as a French province, and the Spanish governors were directed to obey every order which should reach them from Versailles.

A few weeks afterwards the duke of Anjou, with the title of Philip V., set out for Madrid, and his grandfather prepared to carry into execution the plans which he had so long secretly meditated.
LEAGUE OF THE HAGUE—CHARACTER OF MARLBOROUGH. 573

Louis XIV.

The Dutch had received from the Spanish sovereign at the Treaty of Ryswick the permission to garrison certain strong towns in Flanders. By this means they protected both themselves and the Netherlands from any attack on the part of France; but on the morning of the 2nd of February, 1701, on the order of the governor of the province, who was a friend to France, the gates of the towns were opened, and French garrisons admitted, and the Dutch on waking found themselves compelled to acknowledge Philip V. as king of Spain. This was the first open indication of the fixed designs of Louis to identify Spain with France, and by this means control all Europe.

William III. was dying. He had been told by his physicians that he had not a year to live, but he employed that year in rousing England and Europe generally to a sense of their danger. England might, perhaps, have been slow to believe it but for the last and crowning act of folly of Louis, who on the death of James II., on the 12th of September, 1701, continued to his son the title of king of England, Scotland, and Ireland, contrary to the advice of all the French ministers. A coalition, known as the League of the Hague, was immediately formed against France between England, Holland, Austria, and the German states, and—somewhat later—Portugal.

The only allies in all Europe whom Louis XIV. could claim were the elector of Bavaria and the dukes of Modena and Savoy, the two latter being likely to prove faithless. Spain was indeed one with France, but Spain had neither soldiers, money, nor ships. 'It is a body without a soul,' said Torey, 'and France is called upon to nourish it at her own expense.'

There was indeed much to fear. William, the skilful general and statesman, might be dying, but Churchill, afterwards duke of Marlborough, who had made his first campaign under Turenne, was prepared to replace and support him in the interests of England, whilst Eugene of Savoy, and Heinsius, the grand pensionary of Holland, were destined to be towers of strength for Holland and Germany. Marlborough was then fifty-two years of age. Although long inured to a military life he had scarcely ever as yet been the chief commander of an army, but his talents had been fully recognised. Voltaire has said of him that he never besieged a fortress which he did not take, nor fight a battle which he did not win, nor conduct a negotiation which he did not lead to a prosperous close, and this remarkable success may probably be attributed to his clear understanding, resolute will, and calmness of mind. Handsome, courteous and graceful, humane and compassionate, never surprised, never discomposed, Marlborough needed only the principle of honour to render him a hero. But throughout the whole of his career self was his first object, and his correspondence with James II. and his son
whilst professing to serve the actual possessors of the English throne reveal but too clearly the secret of his continued treachery.

Prince Eugene, the son of Olympia di Mancini, comtesse de Soissons, was then eight-and-thirty. He was thus Italian by descent, French by training, and German by adoption; and in his signature, it is said, he was wont to combine the three languages, calling himself 'Eugenio von Savoye.' His long, pale face, bearing the marks of age before its time, was lighted by brilliant, speaking eyes and a mouth telling of eagerness and impetuosity; but although clever, cultivated, and artistic in his taste, he had more mind than heart, and if, like Marlborough, he could be calm on the field of battle, he could also be prudent even to deceit in his negotiations.

Heinsius, a cold-mannered, determined man, awed by no personal interest, gave to the allies the moral influence which was lacking in the military commanders. The first man in the Dutch republic, his habits of life were yet simple almost to austerity. And as he had no wants apart from his country he was open to no bribes, whilst his natural honesty of character saved him from the temptation of political intrigue.

United, the three leaders Marlborough, Eugene, and Heinsius could well replace William of Orange, and were far more than a match for the men whom France could bring forward. Villars, Catinat, Boufflers, and Vendôme, who had distinguished themselves in former wars, were indeed men of ability, and the inferior generals Tallard, Villeroy, Marsin, and La Feuillade were unable to undertake any independent action, and Chamillart, the minister of war, a weak favourite of madame de Maintenon, was wholly unfit for his position. The king, aware of this, proposed to direct the movements of the war himself; but this only increased the evil, for, living as he now did a retired life, far from the scene of action, he understood little of the questions which he was called upon to decide, and hampered his generals by orders, limitations, and delays. The design of Louis was that the war should be defensive everywhere except in Germany. Boufflers was sent to defend Flanders against the English and Dutch under Marlborough. Catinat was despatched to Italy (1701), to prevent Prince Eugene and the Imperialists from entering the Milanese; whilst Villars, with the forces of the elector of Bavaria, was to march upon Vienna. There were thus three distinct wars, which were carried on with various successes, but for the first three years without any decided advantage on either side. Boufflers could not prevent Marlborough from entering Flanders, but he afterwards saved Antwerp from falling into the hands of the Dutch. Catinat could not prevent Prince Eugene from entering Lombardy, and in consequence was superseded by Marshal Villeroy. Madame de Maintenon
tributed to Catinat's disgrace. They differed in religious opinions, and the king, she said, did not like to confide his affairs to those who did not love God. Yet Catinat, devoted to his country, showed his disinterestedness by consenting, after he had lost his command, to serve under Villeroy. "I would give my head to help him," he wrote to one of his friends. To help an obstinate and rash man was, however, difficult. Villeroy desired to change the tactics of the war and take the offensive. Catinat brought forward objections, to which Villeroy only replied, "I do not boast of the talent caution." A battle with prince Eugene at Chiari, in Lombardy (September 1701), was accordingly risked and lost. Villeroy took up his winter quarters in Cremona, thinking himself fully secure. He was awakened one morning in February (1702) by a discharge of artillery, and rising hastily left his house to enquire the cause, and, to his consternation, found himself confronted by a troop of Austrians. Eugene had contrived to enter the city, and would have taken it but that the alarm was given by a regiment which happened to be assembled at four o'clock in the morning in readiness for a review under the colonel. Eugene was obliged to retreat, but he carried the marshal with him, and the court and the Parisians showed their satisfaction by singing—

François, rendez grâce à Bellone;  
Votre bonheur est sans égal:  
Vous avez conservé Crémone  
Et perdu votre général.1

William III. lived only a few days after the adventure of marshal Villeroy at Cremona. He died on the 2nd of March, 1702, but the event made no difference in the war. It was for England's advantage, and the first act of William's successor, Anne, was to declare that it should be carried on. By this time the position of France had become weakened by the disaffection of Victor Amadeus of Savoy. The intimate alliance between the duke's family and that of Louis XIV. must have rendered the defection of Victor Amadeus at first sight highly improbable. His eldest daughter was the wife of the duke of Burgundy; his second daughter was now queen of Spain. But although the vivacity of the young duchess of Burgundy greatly amused her father, with whom she gossiped about all that was done and said at Versailles, this did not prevent him from being on good terms with prince Eugene, who was his relative, and, according to general report, at heart a very good Savoyard. Neither did it save him from being sorely offended with his son-in-law Philip V., who, having, by the advice of Louis,

1 Frenchmen, give thanks to Bellona; your fortune is unequalled; you have preserved Cremona and lost your general.
Louis XIV.

joined the French army in Italy, had an interview with his father-in-law, and showed his absurd arrogance by refusing to allow him the use of an arm-chair in his presence.

There is no doubt that wounded pride stimulated the duke's wish to be on the side of the allies. For the present, however, it was kept in abeyance. France was gaining the upper hand. The presence of the young king of Spain gave spirit to the army of Italy, and the efforts of the duc de Vendôme, grandson of Henry IV., compelled prince Eugene to give up the attempt to take Mantua, which had for some time been his chief object. The French seized the magazines of the Imperialists on the right bank of the Po, and were able to reach the entrance of the Tyrol. But Vendôme, though successful for the time, was little to be depended upon. Notoriously profligate and so self-indulgent that he would often lie in bed till four o'clock in the afternoon, he was continually liable to surprise. He could rival Condé when on the field of battle, but in camp he was the indolent slave of his own vices, requiring only much eating and much sleeping. So well was this understood by his contemporaries that La Fontaine, the author of the celebrated French fables, is thought to have had the French general in view when he makes one of his characters express a wish to see the country in which everyone sleeps, or rather does that which is better—nothing.

Philip V. left Italy for Spain in October 1702. He was recalled partly by the murmurs of his young wife—a mere child, who was at Madrid under the care of a worthless, intriguing Frenchwoman, generally known as the princesse des Ursins—and partly by the rumour that the English, to the number of 4,000, had made a descent on Andalusia. The fleet of the allies, under admiral Rooke, had in fact met and defeated the fleet of France and Spain (October 22, 1702), and although the French admiral had set fire to his ships, to prevent their being taken by the enemy, the English had captured no less than twenty vessels, several being richly freighted.

Louis in the meantime, living in the firm belief that nothing which he thought fit to command could be impossible, had insisted that Catinat, who with an insufficient force had been entrusted with the defence of Alsace, should weaken himself still further by sending one of his chief sub-generals, marshal Villars, to the aid of the elector of Bavaria in the centre of Germany. It was the month of October; snow was already on the mountains, the narrow defiles of the Black Forest offered insurmountable obstacles to the progress of artillery wagons and the cumbersome apparatus of an army; but the order had been given, and obedience was a necessity. Villars, knowing that the Black Forest was impassable, ventured to take his forces across the Rhine in the face of the Imperialists. His troops were armed with the bayonet—a weapon newly introduced—and
with it the French felt themselves invincible. The Imperialists
retired, and the army of Villars, in a fit of enthusiasm, proclaimed
their general marshal on the field of battle.

The king had only to confirm him in the dignity, and marshal
Villars became the hero of the hour. A talkative, boasting Gascon,
with a great reader of romances, delighting in the theatres and opera,
Villars often made himself the laughing-stock of the court, but
when he lived with his soldiers as their boon companion, retaining
his gay spirits in the midst of cold and hunger, their enthusiastic
devotion was awakened; and the raw recruits, without clothes and
barefooted, who were torn from their homes to follow him across the
Rhine, laughed at their own sufferings, and in the most gloomy days
and the most bitter frosts exclaimed, 'It is only Villars's weather.'
The king's command was obeyed in the effort, but the attempt
actually to join the elector was necessarily delayed till the spring.
By that time the strength of France had been weakened by the
open defection of the duke of Savoy. Louis was in consequence
left to carry on the war almost alone.

In March 1703 Villars and the elector of Bavaria joined forces,
and met personally to consult as to their future plans. Villars, in a
letter to the king, thus described the meeting, which had been
ardently desired by the elector:—'Although the weather was most
inclement, the elector mounted his horse at seven, and climbed some
heights from which he could discern my line of march. As soon
as he saw me draw near, he came up to me full gallop, shedding
tears of joy and declaring that I had saved his person, his honour,
his family, and his dominions. In his eagerness to embrace me he
nearly threw me over, and nearly himself fell down.' And now
what was the next step to be taken? The possession of Vienna was
undoubtedly the object of the allies, but by what preliminary move-
ments was it to be obtained? The elector's wishes turned to the
Tyrol. The beautiful land of mountains has always had a peculiar
attraction for the Bavarians. He would fain have taken advantage
of the inactivity of Austria to pierce the defiles, seize the province,
pass through it into Italy, join Vendôme, who was already on the
borders, and then, with the augmented strength of the double
army, make his way back to Vienna, and there dictate the law to
Europe. It was a bold and attractive idea, but wholly chimerical.
The Tyrol was, of all the countries in Europe, perhaps the most
difficult to traverse. The people were warmly attached to Austria.
Their resistance was certain to be desperate, and the scheme would
almost inevitably fail.

Villars saw this plainly. His own proposition was to march
direct upon Vienna. The step, even if it failed, would save Italy;
for the emperor would be compelled to recall his troops from that country. But the elector was vacillating. The Tyrol project at last gained the day. The province was entered, and Innsbruck, the capital, reached. Then came the reverses which had been foreseen. The Tyrolese rose in arms, and the country proved impracticable. Vendôme could no more reach the elector and Villars than they could reach him, whilst the defection of the duke of Savoy rendered the position of the French in Italy very dangerous, and Vendôme found himself compelled to retire as quickly as possible into Lombardy, in order to prevent the seizure of that province.

Villars and the elector were now in a most dangerous position. The Imperialist army, in two great divisions, had hastened to the defence of the Tyrol, and was already in Bavaria and threatening Munich. United the force would probably have been irresistible; but Villars, by a most skilful movement, interposed between the two portions, and on the 20th of September, 1703, met the division under Count Styrum on the plain of Hochstadt, near Donauworth, and gained a complete victory, inflicting a loss of 10,000 men. He then once more appealed to the elector to march on Vienna, and a second time met with a refusal.

In great disgust he immediately solicited his recall from the king. It was granted; but repose was not to be his reward. An inglorious mission awaited him. At the instigation of Madame de Maintenon he was sent to quell the insurrection of the Protestant sectaries of the Cevennes, on the borders of Languedoc, known in history as the Camisards, from the white shirt or jacket which they wore at night in order to recognise each other. These unfortunate people, who mingled wild superstition with their asserted purity of doctrine, had been driven to desperation by a decree of the Pope, supported by Louis, offering plenary indulgence for their extermination; and, encouraged secretly by the duke of Savoy and by England, they had risen in insurrection. Villars, aware that the Camisards had been exasperated by the horrible cruelties which had been practised upon them, resolved to treat them with clemency. "They are," he said, "Frenchmen, very brave, and very powerful. These three things must be considered." A negotiation with Cavalier, the youngest and most popular of the Camisard leaders, and an asserted prophet, ended in the submission of the insurrectionary chief and his acceptance of the rank of colonel in the royal army. Very many of his followers laid down their arms, and only those who resisted were treated rigorously. The peasants were encouraged to rebuild their ruined houses by being exempted from taxation for three years, and by the close of 1704 the insurgent districts were for the most part quiet, but the rebellion cannot be said to have been extinguished. Languedoc was crushed, but not entirely pacified. The struggle
really lasted about six years longer, and was carried on chiefly by the duke of Berwick, an illegitimate son of James II.

The fate of Cavalier was singular. Villars was obliged to put a certain number of men under his command as colonel, but in his heart he was ashamed of his rough and rather dirty friend, whom madame Villars did not scruple to laugh at, saying mockingly, 'M. Cavalier, will you do me the favour to prophesy a little for me?' Under these circumstances Cavalier's position was not comfortable, and after a time he escaped to England, entered the English service, attained the rank of general, was made lieutenant-governor of Jersey, and died at Chelsea in 1740.

Villars, whilst engaged in the Cevennes, was replaced in Germany by the comte de Marsin, and once more the idea of a march upon Vienna was suggested. The elector of Bavaria had refused to make the attempt upon Vienna when Villars was at hand to assist. Now, with an inferior general and in the depth of winter, he resolved upon it, and actually marched as far as Passau and took the place in two days. The severity of the weather prevented any farther advance, and he was compelled to retreat to Munich; but the invasion of the Empire convinced the allies that it would be necessary to concentrate all their efforts upon its defence. Marlborough, who had been rather maintaining his position in Flanders than gaining any material advantage, brought his troops across the Neckar on the 4th of June, 1704, with the hope of joining the Imperialists under prince Eugene; and the French, under Marsin, Tallard, and Villeroi, prepared to meet him.

Apparently the arrangements were merely a question of military tactics; but the unfortunate determination of Louis to direct the war himself really threw it into the hands of women, and the loss of the battle of Blenheim, which followed, was the result of the tactics of Versailles, governed by madame de Maintenon and the little duchess of Burgundy. The fascinating but reckless daughter of the duke of Savoy—the spilt child of the palace—who would venture to jump on the king's knees, stroke his chin, turn over his papers and, if she choose, read them, whilst the solemn Louis only laughed at her slang, and found amusement in her absurd outrage of conventionality—was in her heart devoted to her father's interests. In order to please her madame de Maintenon had suppressed some despatches from Catinat, which would have given the king warning of the intended defection of the duke of Savoy. To please her also Catinat was not allowed sufficient forces to enable him to act in Alsace, and in consequence he had retired from the service; and the person then brought forward by the ignorant choice of madame de Maintenon was her favourite Villeroi. The ridiculous affair of Cremona had done him no injury. On his release from prison the king gave him the
command of the army of the north, and with this he was to con-
front Marlborough. The occasion was most important. Only by
the junction of Marlborough and prince Eugene could the allies hope
to save Vienna. If France could prevent this the fortune of the war
would be hers.

But Villeroi was under orders—express orders from Versailles.
He was to guard Alsace, and could not therefore intercept Marl-
borough. He was to join marshal Tallard and the army of the
Rhine. But when he had done this the three generals were not
allowed to attack a force of 15,000 men, under prince Eugene,
although, being four times stronger, they might have annihilated it.
Marlborough, by rapid movements, accomplished the desired junc-
tion; whilst the French generals, compelled at every turn to write
to Paris for orders, moved so slowly that they never succeeded in
reaching the decisive scene of action.

It was on the 2nd of July, 1704, near Donauwörth, that the
first great engagement took place—Marlborough and Eugene con-
fronting the elector and Marzin. The result was the defeat of the
French with terrible loss. Reinforcements under Tallard were then
despatched, which raised the French army again to the number of
56,000, and they crossed the Danube, and reaching the same spot
at which Villars had fought and gained the battle of Hochstadt in
the previous year, took up a strong position between the three villages—
Blenheim, Hochstadt, and Lutzingen.

A great mistake was, however, committed. Tallard’s force,
stationed in the village of Blenheim, were isolated from the rest of
the army; but, as they were protected by a small river, it was
thought that the enemy would not dare to approach. Tallard left
his post, in order to communicate with Marzin and the elector. He
was recalled by the intelligence that Marlborough had crossed the
river and was directing his attack on Blenheim. Entreaties for aid had
been hastily sent to Marzin; but he was attacked by prince Eugene,
and it was impossible to give it. Tallard galloped back to Blenheim,
and found that his son had just fallen. Despairingly he threw him-
self into the midst of the enemy and was taken prisoner. No one
was left to give orders, for the chief officer in command lost his pre-
sence of mind, fled, and was drowned. The army collected at Blen-
heim, and which numbered 12,000, was surrounded, and the officers
capitulated notwithstanding the fury of the soldiers. The elector
and Marzin retreated in terrible disorder to Ulm. Not more than
20,000 men out of a force of 56,000 could be collected. The rest
were either killed in battle, drowned, wounded, or prisoners. Such
a defeat was ruinous to the fortunes of the war. Seeing no hope of
retrieving their loss, the French recrossed the Rhine. The elector
of Bavaria fled from his dominions and sought refuge in the
Netherlands, and the Empire was completely freed from all fear of invasion.

The defeat at Blenheim was quickly followed by losses in Spain; for in August 1704 the English, under admiral Rooke, took and kept Gibraltar, and the archduke Charles was soon after proclaimed king by the allies as Charles III.

The power of France was certainly on the decline. In the following year (1705) little or nothing was done by the French forces, with the exception of a victory in the month of August, gained by Vendôme in Italy over the forces of prince Eugene, a success neutralised on the whole by the progress of the allies in Spain, where Charles III., supported by the English under the famous Mordaunt, earl of Peterborough, was rapidly making good his footing, and having taken possession of Barcelona, in October, was almost immediately acknowledged as king throughout the south of Spain.

The movements of the allies were in accordance with an able plan framed by Marlborough and Eugene for the humiliation of France. The provinces dependent upon the Spanish kingdom were first to be conquered, and then France herself was to be attacked. It was with this view that Eugene, after the battle of Blenheim, had repaired to Italy, whilst Marlborough had again taken up his position in Flanders. But Eugene's good fortune seemed for a time to have forsaken him. The month of April 1706 saw him again defeated by Vendôme, and the French victory was about to be followed up by the siege of the duke of Savoy's capital, Turin, when sudden orders reached Vendôme that he was to repair with all speed to the assistance of the army in Flanders.

The rash and boastful Villeroi had been placed by Louis at the head of an army of 80,000 men, with the order to wait for still further reinforcements from Marsin. Proud and jealous, the marshal desired to have the glory of victory to himself. The despatches brought by four couriers from Versailles, following one upon another, were unheeded. He placed his force at Ramillies (not far from Waterloo), in a position so disadvantageous that one of his generals remonstrated against it, but was silenced by being told that he was wanting in respect. Half-trained recruits were in the centre, and the left wing had a marsh in front, as though he would actually have prevented an advance upon the enemy. The result might at once have been foreseen. The centre was pressed by the allies and overwhelmed. A panic seized the army and the soldiers fled wildly, leaving 13,000 men on the field. Marlborough had then only to take possession of Flanders. Villeroi returned to Paris, and Louis, nobler in his reverses than in his victories, contented himself when they met with saying, 'Monsieur le Maréchal, at our age one is no longer fortunate.'
The only hope for France now was in Italy, but there also reverses followed the steps of the army. La Feuillade, the son-in-law of Chamillart, besieged Turin. He was a vain, boastful man, who would listen to no directions, and refused the offer of Vanhan, the great engineer, to superintend the siege works.

Prince Eugene and the duke of Savoy threatened an attack on La Feuillade whilst the siege of Turin was being carried on, and Vendôme, who ought to have intercepted them, allowed them to advance. The young duke of Orleans, the king's nephew, who was with the army before Turin, now strongly urged that, as a battle with Eugene and the duke was inevitable, the French should not wait to be attacked, but should at once confront the enemy. Marsin, the defeated Blenheim general, who was likewise with the army, and who held a special commission from the king giving him supreme authority, was entirely of the contrary opinion. Before the question was decided the French lines were attacked and forced by the duke and Eugene, on the 7th of September, 1706. The soldiers proved themselves totally undisciplined, and one brigade refused to march. The generals were scarcely more competent. Marsin gave no orders, though he fought gallantly. La Feuillade's directions were absurd, and contradictory of those given by the duke of Orleans. Marsin was killed, the duke of Orleans severely wounded. Eugene and the duke entered Turin, and La Feuillade, in despair, broke up his camp, spiked his artillery, burnt his powder magazines, and took the road to France finally abandoned Italy.

The proclamation of Charles III. at Milan quickly followed. By a convention signed in March 1707 the French agreed to evacuate all Northern Italy, and a few months later further victories of the Imperialists in Naples secured the recognition of the archduke in that kingdom also.

Similar success had accompanied the allies in Spain. Philip V., pursued by the victorious army which, after the taking of Barcelona, steadily made its way northwards, fled from Madrid to Burgos. His rival was proclaimed in the capital, and the French thought the cause of Philip V. lost. It was even gravely proposed at Versailles to relinquish the crown of Spain, and send the young prince to reign over the French possessions in America. Louis, however, entirely rejected this despising advice, and the spring of 1707 brought symptoms of a change in the fortunes of the war. It is true that the Pope acknowledged Charles III., and wrote to him as his "very dear son, the Catholic king of Spain," but the success of the French made the recognition somewhat premature. The duke of Berwick gained a decisive victory in the north of Spain at Almanza, in April 1707, and Philip V. once more re-entered Madrid, where he was received with general acclamations. Eugene and the
duke of Savoy about the same time attempted to invade France by the frontier of Provence, but failed; whilst Marlborough was kept in check by marshal Villars, who forced the line of fortifications extending from Philipsburg to the Black Forest, and regarded as the ramparts of Germany, and then inundated Franconia and Württemberg with his troops. Charles XII., the eccentric king of Sweden, was at this time engaged in a war with the elector of Saxony, and an alliance with him was ardently desired by Louis, and anxiously dreaded by Germany; but the headstrong king of Sweden had another object in view—that of overthrowing Peter the Great of Russia—and France was in consequence left to carry on the combat unaided.

Gleams of success had no doubt cheered the king, but the expenses of the war were every day becoming more alarming. Loans were raised at a ruinously high rate of interest, and the revenues of future years were pledged. Still more money was, however, needed, and the people, groaning under the burden of taxation, raised such a clamour against the incapable Chamillart that the king was obliged to dismiss him, and place in his stead Desmarets, a nephew of the great Colbert.

But the fault lay in the necessities of an ambitious war rather than in the measures of the minister. Desmarets could find no other way than his predecessor of raising money, and the embarrassment of the country only increased.

There was one person, however, in France who ventured to face the truth. Fénelon had from the beginning protested that the desire to make Spain and France one was the sole cause of the war. This opinion he fully impressed upon his former pupil the duke of Burgundy. The sensitive, benevolent, religions, but somewhat weak-minded prince would have been willing to sacrifice his brother's interests to secure peace, had it not been for the folly of the Jesuit party, who were at this time resuming their influence, and who, instead of peace, desired rather to see the duke take an open part in the war, and be placed at the head of the army in Flanders.

The idea was carried out, but it proved most unfortunate. The duke's appearance alone unfitted him to be a military leader. Rather deformed in figure, with a very large nose (in which he greatly resembled Fénelon), a pointed chin, and a mouth considerably overhung, not only was he awkward and unprepossessing, but he spoke with difficulty, and when he laughed he was almost ridiculous. His limbs were too long, and he rode badly; and that which was really attractive in him, the expression of his face and his beautiful eyes, was lost when he was seen at a distance at the head of his troops. Still more unfortunate was the fact that the young prince's leader was
the duc de Vendôme. The contrast between them was as great in character as in appearance, and the prince who, under the guardianship of Fénélon, had passed all his life in his study, at prayers, and in the refined society of really devout women, saw in the actions and words of his commander only that which he turned from with disgust, whilst the bold, successful strokes which Vendôme hazarded were regarded by him as only fortunate follies. The fears which inexperience suggested were also increased by the Mentor, M. d'O, under whose charge he was placed, and who had shown himself quite incompetent in military affairs, and had given but one promise—that he would bring back the prince alive.

There were indeed clever men about the duke of Burgundy, whom he consulted, and amongst them the stern, honourable duke of Berwick, who had gained for himself a great name in Spain, and who was described by the young wife of Philip V. as a 'great dry Englishman, who always goes straight forward; but their military tactics were totally opposed to the bold spirit of Vendôme's movements. Alone they might have done well, but when called upon to work with a general whose views they utterly differed from they were an obstacle instead of an assistance.

The results of a divided authority were soon evident. Eugene and Marlborough once more joined forces. An engagement took place at Oudenarde, in the Netherlands, on the 11th of July, 1708. Vendôme, who was in command of the right wing of the French army, found himself left to bear the brunt of the battle. He was unable to obtain help from the left, owing to counsels given by the duke's advisers. The conflict continued till night. Vendôme, exasperated, would willingly have remained on the field and recommenced it the next day. He proposed this to the duke and his officers. The answer was that if so he would have to remain alone. 'Must it be so?' he exclaimed in a fury. 'Then we must retreat, and turning to the duke of Burgundy, he added, 'I know, monseigneur, that you have long wished to do so.'

The prince received the insult meekly, but his friends would fain have made him instantly leave Vendôme, under the pretext of seeking for reinforcements. Vendôme interposed to prevent this, for he was aware that he had gone too far; but the quarrel was fatal in its effects. The French army was divided in its interests, and Marlborough and Eugene took the bold resolution of invading France, and for this purpose seizing Lille, which was, as it were, its goal. The advance might easily have been prevented, but Vendôme and Burgundy did nothing. On the 12th of August Lille was invaded by the allies.

Marshal Boufflers, who was entrusted with the defence of the city, resisted bravely for seventy-two days, and when the town was
taken held out for forty-seven more in the citadel. Prince Eugene, full of admiration, allowed him at last to dictate his own terms of capitulation, and accepted an invitation to supper in the citadel on the evening of the surrender, when he was regaled with roast horseflesh. Under ordinary circumstances Lille might doubtless have been saved, but Berwick, clever and thoughtful though he undoubtedly was, allowed time to be lost in every way; whilst the duke of Burgundy seemed to have his thoughts entirely removed from earthly affairs. In the camp he led a life similar to that at Versailles. Public prayers and processions occupied him in the day, and having bought an English telescope, he employed himself at night in observing the moon.

When at last the news reached him that Lille was taken (October 22, 1708) he was playing at battledore and shuttlecock, and did not trouble himself to stop the game. 'I do not know whether your royal highness will gain the Kingdom of Heaven,' said his favourite page, M. de Gamaches, 'but as regards gaining the kingdom of this world it must be owned that Marlborough and prince Eugene set about it in a very different way.' The surrender of Lille was quickly followed by that of Ghent and Bruges.

There was a mingled cry of regret and disappointment throughout France, and the unhappy Duke of Burgundy candidly acknowledged that he deserved all that could be said against him. Fénélon wrote to cheer him, begging him, in the words of Scripture, 'to be strong and of good courage;' but his natural disposition and his education had combined to unfit him for the duties of a soldier. Even when he confessed his faults they were not those which were doing injury to his country. He reproached himself for pride, especially with regard to the son of James II. of England, known as the Pretender, and bewailed his contempt of the lower orders, to whom he really was very charitable. The important faults of indecision and want of energy in public affairs, which had become a part of his nature, he indulged without an effort at resistance, and shutting himself up, praying and reading, he thought that he was serving God.

France was now open to the allies; and so slight was the appearance of defence that a troop of Dutch soldiers were able to make their way to the neighbourhood of Versailles, and on the bridge of Sèvres seized the king's master of the horse, whom they mistook for the Dauphin.

A winter of most terrible and unusual inclemency, in which even the impetuous waters of the Rhone were frozen, aggravated the sufferings and the despair of the people. Half clothed, and sheltered only in miserable, ruined hovels, open to the bitter blasts, their distress was indescribable. Famine quickly followed, and crowds
of miserable wretches, like moving skeletons, besieged the gilded gates of Versailles, murmuring against the king and entreating for aid; and vain were the efforts of the Swiss guards, who understood no language but German, to induce them to retire. Louis was not insensible to their misery, and indeed it was in a measure shared by himself. His servants were seen begging at the entrance of Versailles, and Madame de Maintenon was compelled to eat oaten bread. But the resources of the government were utterly exhausted; nothing but a totally new system of taxation, which should compel the nobles and the clergy to pay their equal proportion with the lower orders, could possibly have redeemed the financial position of France, and this measure Louis and his ministers were not yet prepared to adopt. Some plans for bettering the condition of the poor were suggested by Marechal, the king's favourite surgeon; but unhappily at the very same time the irritated populace were placarding Paris with warnings that another Ravaillac would not long be wanting, and Louis became indignant. Paris was still the Paris of his childhood, the Paris of the Fronde, and he stiffened and grew cold, and, resolving that no change should be made, shut himself up in Versailles, that he might no longer hear the cry of his angry and suffering subjects.

One thing, however, he could not conceal from himself. That which France above all things needed was peace; and a proposition made secretly about this time by Heinsius, the grand pensionary of Holland, induced him to consent that a meeting of the most private kind should be arranged between envoys of Holland and France, with a view to the discussion of the terms.

But the hope held out was delusive. The French negotiator, on arriving at the place of rendezvous, found indeed two Dutchmen, but they had no instructions, no power, and of course nothing could be arranged. Particulars of the interview were quickly known to everyone. Eugene and Marlborough affected surprise and anger. 'What had their Dutch ally ventured to do?' they enquired. 'There could be no peace unless the king of France would abandon Philip.' 'He will abandon him,' was the answer, 'but upon condition that he shall receive the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.' Marlborough and Eugene demurred. They insisted upon keeping Lille and retaking possession of Alsace; more than all, they required that Louis should himself aid in dethroning his grandson and placing the archduke Charles on the throne of Spain.

Louis, who up to this time had been tolerably patient, now broke forth in an indignant rejoinder. 'If I must have war,' he exclaimed, 'let it be with my enemies rather than my children,' and without delay he addressed a circular to the great nobles, the governors of provinces, and the bishops and magistrates, represent-
ing the conditions which had been demanded, and throwing upon
the allies the whole burden of the renewal of the war.

The appeal was answered nobly. France was thoroughly roused.
The people, starving though they were, offered themselves willingly
for the service of the king, and soon an army was raised equal
to that of the allies. Villars was put in command, and Desmarests
managed to find the money by the aid of loans.

In all these transactions there must have been much secret working
of motive and intrigue with which no one can ever be fully acquainted,
but it seems evident that the rising influence at the court of Versailles
at this period was that of the duke of Burgundy, or rather of his
party. The king was growing old; the Dauphin was apoplectic, and
might die at any moment; and the gentle, devout young prince
was therefore regarded as the heir to the throne, likely to be soon
vacant. His friends and advisers, the due de Beavilliers and the
due de Chevreuse, both sons-in-law of the great Colbert, were
strongly attached to the Jesuits, and Fénélon himself seems to have
regarded them with respect as the upholders of orthodox teaching.
So careful, indeed, was he to guard his pupil from an unfavourable
opinion of them that the duke of Burgundy was not permitted to read
Pascal's 'Provincial Letters' until the year in which he died; and
even then he did not read them himself, but they were read to him by a
Jesuit, who was able to soften and modify expressions which were too
bitter. In accordance with this strong influence of the Jesuits it
was natural that when the king's confessor, père la Chaise, died, in
January 1709, his successor should be appointed from the same
order. The post was, perhaps, the most really important in the
kingdom, and the choice was left to Beavilliers and Chevreuse.
Madame de Maintenon, to her great mortification, was not consulted.
She was, in fact, rapidly losing her influence. All that she could
obtain was that two friends of her own should be allowed to confer
with the dukes before the selection was finally made.

The choice was unanimous, and the appointment of the Jesuit
Le Tellier to be the royal confessor was the completion of the influ-
ence which the order had so long been striving for in the counsels of the
country. A hard, cold, reserved, and cunning man, the expression
of whose eyes is said to have been so disagreeable that, if he had
not kept them bent upon the ground, it would have been difficult to
endure a conversation with him, Le Tellier must have been per-
sonally disagreeable to the king, who always liked to have handsome
persons about him. But still more obnoxious must have been his
discipline. Père la Chaise had dealt gently with Louis. Knowing
the king's overweening love of power, he had always been careful,
whilst upholding the rights and influence of the clergy, not to bring
their power forward offensively. Le Tellier, on the contrary, had
but one idea, that of the greatness of his order. It was his mono-
mania. He could recognise nothing else of importance. He had lived in a cell of the sombre college of the Great Jesuits, so called to distinguish them from the Teaching Jesuits, with all his interests concentrated in the intrigues of the society, which gained its influence by hearing confessions, and he had none of the insinuating arts of management which are often attributed to the Jesuit order. His authority was exercised mercilessly. Twenty years before the courtiers, who had gained their own influence by adoration of their monarch, would never have dared to suggest to him a confessor so unpleasing. But Louis was old, weary of life, and crushed by disappointment. He was likely now to bear the bit submissively, and perhaps he might even endure it all the more willingly because it was sharp. His past life had been one which he could scarcely look back upon without remorse, and in the spirit of penitence he might welcome sternness.

With Le Tellier, Fénélon, and the duke of Burgundy all-influential there could be little doubt of the policy of the government. The Jesuits had made their trial of war under the duke, and it had failed. Now they sought for peace. Fénélon was almost too strongly on the same side. It is said that he feared the success of the French arms, lest it should render the young king of Spain more resolute in maintaining his throne, the one thing which the peace party desired being that he should abdicate. As for himself, the archbishop declared he should not quit his diocese even if the enemy were to take Cambrai. He should submit for the time to the Austrian government. Some persons proposed that all the territory as far as the Somme, which in the course of 200 years had been gained, should be restored, and that France should revert to the frontiers which had been recognised as such at the accession of Louis XI. Fénélon caught at the idea. 'In that case,' he said, 'we should fortify Peronne, St. Quentin, and Guise.' It was a very amiable and peaceable idea; but times had changed since Louis XI., and if the frontiers of France had been so restricted who would venture to assert that Paris would long have been retained?

And yet Fénélon had much to say for the cry of 'Peace at any price.' It was a touching as well as an overpowering sight for all thoughtful men, that overwhelming misery of a great people, which produced at last a despairing resignation. Even the armed soldier became gentle and patient. There was neither murmur nor pilage. In an army of 100,000 men, continually wanting bread to eat, exhausted and starved sufferers were to be seen who, in their uncomplaining wretchedness, died the death of saints.

And this power of endurance, united with the impulse of the national bravery, was the one hope of France when the campaign opened in Flanders in 1709, and Villars and Boufflers, having made
them a force of 90,000 men, directed their march against Marlborough, who had taken Tournay and was besieging Mons. At Malplaquet, in the neighbourhood of Mons, was fought, on the 11th of September, 1709, the most terrible battle of the war. When the action began the French soldiers had just received their rations, after having been without food for a whole day. The food was thrown away, that they might hasten more readily to the conflict, and by their energetic efforts the left wing of the allies was quite destroyed.

Marlborough, however, attacking the centre, redeemed the day. Villars, wounded in the knee, called for a chair, that he might continue on the field, but, fainting under the anguish of the wound, he was borne senseless away, and the army was defeated. The retreat was conducted by marshal Boufflers in admirable order. Many of the flags and standards of the allies were carried off, and their loss was calculated at 20,000 men, whilst France had only about 12,000 killed and wounded. A battle so lost was almost equivalent to a victory, and Villars, in a report to the king, dated a few days afterwards, thought himself justified in saying, 'If God, in His goodness, should vouchsafe to us to lose such another battle, your majesty may consider your enemies annihilated.'

But even victory cannot avail when money is wanting. Desmarets, the minister of finance, was compelled to refuse for the time the payment of the sums owed by the government, and in the gilded halls at Versailles, and under the painted ceilings of the great artist Lebrun, which depicted the victories of France, Europe saw only a royal beggar—a bankrupt. Conferences were opened at Gertruydenberg after the battle of Malplaquet, and the commissioners of the French king lowered themselves to propose that Louis should contribute to the expenses of the war which the allies were carrying on in Spain against his own grandson. 'Where will you find sureties for the money?' was the enquiry made by the Dutch negotiators. Certain well-known French bankers were named. 'But who will answer for it that they themselves are not bankrupts?' was the insolent rejoinder, and the French envoys had no answer to make.

Still the conference continued. Louis was lavish in his offers. He would give up Alsace, he would demolish Dunkirk, he was willing to part with Metz, Franche Comté—he might even have been induced to part with Burgundy, which certainly had once belonged to the empire—but the allies would listen to no proposition.

Eugene had in his head a plan for the humiliation of France, and he kept to it. Louis must himself, and alone, dethrone his grandson, and that in the space of two months. 'But,' said the abbé Polignac, the French envoy, 'Philip V. is at this moment in possession of the
whole of Spain except Barcelona. How is it possible we can induce
him to give up his kingdom, unless you agree that he shall receive
in exchange the kingdom of the Two Sicilies?'

'One thing is possible,' was the reply, 'and that is war. It will
immediately recommence.'

And it did so, but with a different result from that which the
allies had anticipated.

The duc de Vendôme was sent to Spain, and his name alone
was worth an army.

Philip V. put himself at the head of his troops, and the peasants
began the successful guerilla warfare for which the country offered
so many opportunities, enabling them to conceal themselves amongst
the mountains and take their enemies by surprise. A great victory
gained by the French over the Austrian general Staremburg, at
Villaviciosa, on the 9th of December, 1710, put the finishing-stroke
to the disappointment of the allies.

It is related that after the battle the duc de Vendôme turned to
Philip, who was overcome with fatigue, and said, 'I will give your
majesty the most splendid couch on which monarch ever reposed;'
and the young king laid himself down on a bed formed of the heaped
up flags and standards taken from the enemy.

The unexpected energy of Spain was startling, especially to
England, mainly responsible as she was for providing the funds for
the continuance of the war. The burden of debt and taxation pressed
heavily upon the people. Yet the national pride was involved in
the contest, and there seemed no hope of bringing it to an end.
The queen, indeed, loved peace, but she was devoted to the duchess
of Marlborough, and in consequence upheld the duke in all his
measures. The imperious duchess had, however, about this time
rendered herself obnoxious by her insolence, and was dismissed from
the queen's service.

From that moment the politics of England changed. The
ministers of the Whig party, being friends of Marlborough, resigned
their offices, and the Tories under lord Bolingbroke and Harley, earl
of Oxford, formed a new ministry, which had for its object the
restoration of peace. But it was necessary to be cautious. France
had so long been regarded as the upholder of the exiled Stuarts and
the Roman Catholic interests in England that a popular tumult
might be expected if the new ministers ventured, without careful
preparation, to make known their intentions. The choice of an
envoy to sound the views of the enemy fell advisedly upon a man
of whom very little was known, a certain abbé Gautier, who was
then living in a garret in London. He was sent over to Flanders
first, and from thence he went to France. He reached Versailles
1711

1711 towards the end of January 1711, and paid a secret visit to Turc.
the minister of war. 'Do you wish for peace?' was his question. 'It was,' said Torcy afterwards, when describing the interview, 'like asking a dying man if he wished to be cured.' Gautier offered to carry on the negotiations in Holland, but when reference was made to the king he astonished both Torcy and the abbé by saying that he should prefer England. The ministers felt that the concession would be likely to soothe the English national pride, and they were emboldened by it.

Matthew Prior, a statesman as well as a poet, was sent over to France, but his demands for the allies were so great that agreement was impossible. The negotiations were for the moment checked, and the campaign was permitted to re-open, though with no great result.

The idea of peace was, however, by no means relinquished, and Anne ventured to receive an envoy from the court of France, but his mission was kept a profound secret. He lived in obscure lodgings, and only met the English ministers for conference at night. An event which occurred soon afterwards effected a complete alteration in the object of the war, and rendered it comparatively easy to make open proposals for the ardently desired peace. The emperor of Germany, Joseph I., who had succeeded Leopold in 1705, died on the 17th of April, 1711, leaving no heir to his dominions except the archduke Charles, the competitor with Philip V. for the crown of Spain.

England had entered upon the war of the Spanish succession with the avowed object of preventing the accumulation of power in the hands of one family. She was little likely now to continue the contest when its only result, if successful, would be to create a similar overwhelming influence by uniting Spain and Germany. A suspension of arms was agreed upon almost immediately upon the emperor's death, and the peace negotiators in England set to their work more hopefully.

The first step was the great difficulty. The Tory ministers stated plainly that England must at once be satisfied, and that as regarded the interests of France they should be reserved for discussion at the general peace. 'What guarantee do you offer us,' enquired the French envoy, Ménager, 'if you will not give your signature to a written agreement?' 'Our word and that of our queen,' was the answer; and Louis XIV. trustingly accepted the guarantee. The English ministers were overjoyed. Harley kept Ménager to supper, and, dismissing the servants in attendance, drank to the health of the king of France, 'the queen's best friend'.

The way was now more clear, but the English ministers, in their dread of public opinion, were compelled to be exacting. France, so they insisted, must cease to countenance the exiled royal family;
Louis XIV.

Dunkirk, the great refuge for the French corsairs, must be destroyed, though an equivalent would be given; Newfoundland, the nursery of French seamen, must be yielded; Gibraltar and Port Mahon, which had been taken from Spain by the English, must be retained; and finally, strange as it sounds in our ears at the present day, the privilege of carrying on the trade in negroes must be granted by Spain to England instead of to France. With regard to the main object of the war, Philip V. might keep Spain, but Naples and the Milanese must be ceded to the house of Austria, and an express proviso was to be made that the crowns of France and Spain should never be worn by the same sovereign.

At last all was signed, and Bolingbroke carried off Ménager to Windsor, where the queen was expecting them. It was an autumn evening (the 6th of October, 1711). Anne was failing like the leaves, and could count on but a short remainder of earthly existence. The thought that before her death she had been able to pave the way for peace was soothing to her. 'I hate war,' she said to Ménager, as she greeted him kindly, begging him to carry back her friendship to the king of France. Harley also shared her satisfaction, and taking the envoy's hands, said with earnestness, 'Let us make of these two nations but one, a nation of friends.' And for the time there seemed every prospect of the fulfilment of the wish. The foreign policy of Louis was influenced by his domestic circumstances, and this year (1711) had brought great changes in his family. The Dauphin died on the 16th of April, and the duke of Burgundy, the ardent advocate of peace, assumed the title of Dauphin, and with it a large share in state affairs. Laborious and conscientious, he was for the time the joint king of France, and his influence was exercised for all which he had been taught to consider as right, though unfortunately it may be doubted whether this teaching was in every respect wise and consistent with the laws of God.

The Jansenist controversy still lingered on, and in the eyes of the orthodox Roman Catholics was a scandal to the church. The period had now arrived when the power to extinguish it entirely seemed granted. Port Royal had some time before ceased to exist. The original society, forbidden to recruit itself by the introductions of younger members, had gradually decreased, and when only twenty-two remained—some very old, some ill, none likely to excite further notice in the world—the Jesuits, by the influence of the Teller, obtained an order for their removal; and the police officer was sent on a cold, damp evening in November to carry them away from their ancient home, and transplant them to another so far removed and requiring so long a journey that one of the unlucky travellers, an aged lady of eighty-six, died before she reached it.

De Nointelle, archbishop of Paris, went even further in his
FÉNELON'S "TELEMACHUS"—ILLNESS OF DUCHESS OF BURGUNDY. 593

Louis XIV.

to clear himself from any suspicion of favouring the dreaded heresy, and with his sanction the bodies of the mère Angélique and her sister Agues, with many of their nuns, were removed from the church in which they had found their last resting-place and re-buried. This act was condemned by many persons, and Fénélon expressed his regret; yet he had no sympathy with the Jansenists, and openly condemned the conduct of De Nosilles, who, whilst thus persecuting them publicly, favoured them secretly.

It was hoped by Fénélon's friends that it would now be possible to bring him back to Paris and place him in some prominent position. Louis, however, had never thoroughly liked the archbishop, and of late years he might even be said to have taken an aversion to him. Whilst at Cambray Fénélon had employed himself in writing his famous work "Telemachus," ostensibly for the instruction of the duke of Burgundy, but also, there can be little doubt, with the view of pointing out the grave errors which Louis XIV. had committed by his despotic system of government.

This was an unpardonable offence. In vain did the archbishop protest that he had no intention of writing a satire. The book was too obviously fitted to the circumstances of the times, and Louis XIV. desired no Mentor near his throne. Fénélon at Cambray was in a position much more congenial to his feelings than Fénélon at Paris, and the archbishop was compelled to remain in what was for him obscurity.

His influence, however, could not be felt. The measures favoured by the duke of Burgundy were for the most part sanctioned by him, and the power of the church was evidently on the increase, when an unexpected stroke of death turned the whole current of public affairs, and placed the country in that condition of feeble government and conflicting pretensions which paved the way for the overthrow of the principle of hereditary right and ended in the excesses of the Great Revolution.

It was Monday, the 18th of January, 1712. The king had gone to Marly, and was followed by the young duchess of Burgundy, now known as the Dauphiness. She was ill with a cold, but not so as to excite anxiety or prevent her from returning to Versailles. There the fever and illness increased, and by degrees the rumour spread that the Dauphiness had the measles. Some persons told a curious tale of a snuff-box from which the Dauphiness had taken some snuff on the same evening on which the worst symptoms of the illness appeared. There was evidently a suspicion of poison, dating from the unhappy death of Henrietta of Orleans, but there was nothing approaching to corroborative evidence, and the snuff-box belonged to the duc de Nosilles, whom no one ventured to accuse.
The illness, whatever it might have been, increased. The Dauphin (duke of Burgundy) could scarcely be persuaded to leave his wife’s bedside even to take a little fresh air in the gardens. Madame de Maintenon was in constant attendance, and the king frequent in his visits to the sick chamber. On the 11th of February the case became so serious that it was thought right to suggest to the princess that she should receive the last sacraments. She was surprised, asked what they thought of her condition, and being informed of her great danger expressed herself willing to prepare for the sacred duty. The Dauphin was completely overwhelmed. He was himself suffering from fever, which was rapidly increasing, but which he concealed as long as it was possible. At length the physicians, seeing his condition, urged and at last persuaded him to leave the room, and then quieted him by cheering yet untrue reports of the princess’s state. The next day lingered on with no real hope, the princess being only conscious at intervals, and towards evening the young Dauphiness, the idol of her family, breathed her last.

The king had left the apartment a little before. His carriage was waiting at the foot of the great staircase, and, accompanied by madame de Maintenon, he drove off to Marly. All were in the most bitter grief, and no one could summon courage to go to the unhappy Dauphin.

Left to his misery and his illness, and waited upon by his brother, his confessor, and the duc de Beauvilliers, who rose from a sick bed himself to soothe and comfort his pupil, the Dauphin showed in his overwhelming grief all the resignation, unselﬁshness, and deep piety which were to have been expected from his strongly marked religious character. To spare him the pain of the preparations for his wife’s funeral he was persuaded to remove to Marly, and being carried to his coach early in the morning, he left Versailles accompanied by his three pages.

The few persons who saw him after he reached Marly were struck with a sudden alarm. His gaze was rigid and ﬁxed; his face was marked with large, dark, livid spots, and its expression was unchanged. When he heard that the king was ready to see him, large tears rolled slowly down his cheeks, and though his attendants suggested three times that he should go he neither moved nor answered. Then the duc de St. Simon ventured to touch him gently, reminding him that sooner or later he must see the king who was longing to embrace and comfort him. The unhappy prince gave an agonised glance at the duke and left the room. "I followed him," says St. Simon, "for a few steps, and then left the spot that I might breathe more freely. I never saw him again. God, in His mercy, grant that I may see him eternally where, through the Divinity, he may be happy, and doubtless he is."
The interview between Louis and his grandson was painfully trying for both, but that which struck the king with consternation was the Dauphin's evident illness. He insisted that the physicians should feel the prince's pulse, but he was not told the truth respecting it. The physicians only said that it was not what it should be. In reality they thought it very bad. The prince retired, and from that time the general anxiety about him increased hourly. He took to his bed, and the eruption spread rapidly. It was still called the small-pox. Scarcely anyone saw him. Only the king and madame de Maintenon visited him, separately, more than once every day. He was continually in prayer, or attending to religious reading. The physicians were hopeless, for the fever was like a burning fire. On the 17th he became much worse, and begged that on the following morning he might receive the Eucharist very early, and without the usual ceremonies and attendance. Immediately after midnight mass was celebrated, and the prince communicated. Two hours of quiet devotion followed; then his mind began to wander, and at half-past eight his spirit passed away.

The consternation which followed the death of the duke of Burgundy was real and universal. It reached even distant lands and foreign courts. The poorer classes wept for the loss of one whose thoughts had been devoted to affording them aid, and all France lamented for a prince whose chief desire in the prospect of reigning was to render the country happy and flourishing. Whether all these expectations would have been realised it is vain to conjecture. Perhaps at the present day we may be inclined to doubt whether the narrowness of the prince's education and the exaggeration of his virtues might not have neutralised in a considerable degree the benefits derived from the example of his pure life and decided piety; but at the time of his death the sense of present loss was too keen to admit of any thought of censure, and when the bodies of the much-loved Dauphin and his young and attractive wife were carried to their grave on the same day, and laid side by side in the cathedral of St. Denis, the general lamentations proved how deeply true virtue was appreciated in an age which on the surface seemed bent only upon varnishing vice. 'There is nothing left to bind me to earth,' said Fénelon, when he heard of the prince's death, and from that time he never recovered his cheerfulness, and after the expiration of two years he died.

The sympathy felt for the king was increased by the further sorrow which was awaiting him. The two little sons of the duke of Burgundy were attacked with the disease which had proved fatal to their parents, and the elder, a most winning child of five years...
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INVASION OF FRANCE—PEACE OF Utrecht.

Louis XIV.

died on the 8th of March; but his little brother, the duke of
Anjou, an infant in arms, was saved and lived to become Louis XV.

The life of a sickly infant was now all that interposed between
Philip V. of Spain and the throne of France, and it was felt by the
allies generally that unless the peace which had so long been under
discussion could be finally concluded the object for which so much
blood had been shed might after all be frustrated.

A congress was opened at Utrecht in the beginning of January
1712, but the emperor of Germany refused to take part in it. Prince
Eugene entered upon another campaign, without the support of Eng-
land. His object was to march, if possible, upon Paris. His troops
ravaged Champagne, Rheims was threatened, and alarm spread
throughout the kingdom.

Louis was keenly alive to the threatened danger. 'I give you
the fullest proof of my confidence,' he said to marshal Villars, when
confering upon him the command of the army. 'I entrust to you
my soldiers, and with them the safety of the country. I know your
zeal and their courage; but fortune may prove adverse. In that
case I shall myself repair to Peronne or St. Quentin, and gathering
around me all the forces I can collect, make, conjointly with yourself,
'a last effort to save the country or perish with you in the attempt.'

It was a noble resolve, but the king was not called upon to carry
it out. Prince Eugene committed the mistake of extending his lines
too far and thus separating his forces so that they could not properly
support each other. Villars profited by this fault. He made a
feigned attack upon one portion of the German army at Landrecy,
and then suddenly turned his efforts against the camp at Denain.
Taken by surprise, and with prince Eugene at a distance, the Ger-
mans were unable to withstand the attack. The camp was seized,
and although Eugene hastened to the aid of his soldiers he was re-
pulsed. A succession of minor victories followed. The frontier
towns which had been captured were retaken, and once more France
breathed freely with the sense of deliverance.

These successes stimulated the desire of the allies for a confirmed
peace, and the treaty, the chief provisions of which have been already
mentioned, was signed at Utrecht by the plenipotentiaries of France,
England, Holland, Portugal, Prussia, and Savoy, on the 11th of
April, 1713. The island of Sicily was assigned to the duke of
Savoy, who assumed the title of king, and it was proposed that the
Spanish Netherlands, in addition to Naples, Sardinia, and Milan,
should be given to Germany. But the emperor Charles VI. still
obstinately refused his adhesion to the peace, and it was not until
marshal Villars had conducted another successful campaign in the
Palatinate that the final negotiations with Germany were opened.

and concluded in September 1714.
There is no doubt that England profited far more than France by the war of the Spanish succession. For Louis XIV. it was a matter of congratulation that after such terrible reverses his country should not be compelled to diminish her frontiers.

The position of public affairs at this time was indeed such as to cause the most gloomy apprehensions, and the burden of disappointment and anxiety, as well as the infirmities of age, pressed heavily upon the unhappy king. His thoughts turned more and more upon subjects connected with religion, but the influence of his confessor, Le Tellier, fatally directed them into the channel of persecution. The result was but an increase of misery.

On the very day succeeding the death of the duke of Burgundy Louis had issued a decree compelling every dying Protestant to confess to a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, the physician being compelled, in case of refusal, to give up his attendance under the penalty of a heavy fine. This same system was adopted for the repression of every species of so-called heresy.

The Jansenist controversy, which had so long been carried on, was more and more violently discussed, and the Jesuits, supported by the king, made an appeal to the Pope, Clement XI., which ended in the publication of the famous papal decree known as the bull Unigenitus, dated the 8th of September, 1713.

The object of this decree was to condemn certain propositions quoted from a book called ‘Réflexions Morales sur le Nouveau Testament,’ and written by Quesnel, a priest of the Oratory. The volume was said to convey false doctrine, though in a very plausible form, and faithful members of the Roman Catholic Church were forbidden to hold or teach them under pain of excommunication. Louis insisted that this bull should be acted upon. The archbishop of Paris and other prelates refused to comply, and a renewal of the Jansenist persecution followed, including banishment from court, imprisonment, confiscation of property, and every minor species of oppression, whilst the people looked on, some in consternation, some in ridicule, at the working of religious zeal, and all losing more or less their reverence for the royal and ecclesiastical authority.

It was at this very time that Louis, with mournful inconsistency, gave a shock to public morality by declaring his illegitimate sons, the duc de Maine and the comte de Toulouse, capable of succeeding to the throne of France in case of failure of the princes of the blood. His excuse was the death of the duc de Berry, the youngest son of the first Dauphin, which took place in 1714, and left only the little infant Dauphin (duke of Anjou) to represent the royal family of France. The decree was publicly accepted, but secretly condemned, and the more strongly as the duc de Maine was wholly unfitted for such an exalted station. He was an indolent, self-indulgent, weak
man, with a reputation for ordinary courage so small that he was the laughing-stock of the court. ‘Monseigneur,’ said M. d’Elbeuf to him one day, ‘in what part of the world are you to have the command this year? because where you go there I mean to go. I value my life, and where you venture there is certain to be safety.’

With this last set of royal defiance of the conditions to which men in general are compelled to submit Louis XIV. may be said to have closed his eventful reign. So far as regarded any public demonstration of royalty, that had long been at an end. Behind the splendid saloons of Versailles were a few small dark rooms, in which the king passed his gloomy existence. And there madame de Maintenon paid the heavy penalty of her ambition. Louis was still the despotic monarch, the centre of his own interest, and he allowed her no respite. When the young duchess of Burgundy died madame de Maintenon was overwhelmed with the prospect of the monotonous tête-à-tête life which lay before her. She made marshall Villeroi come and talk, and tell his tales of former follies and dissipations. She sent for a girl who had been a favourite of the duchess of Burgundy, and made her the king’s plaything until she became jealous of the pleasure which Louis took in having something young and lively near him. And then again the burden fell upon herself, and she complained bitterly in writing to her friends. ‘I am compelled to endure his murmurs, his silence, his whims—even the tears which often he cannot control—and with it all he has no conversation.’

Under such circumstances Jansenism was a boon to her. It occupied the king—gave him a little business, and a little fatigue, and a little anger, and an excuse for bitterness, and so helped to pass away the time.

Le Tellier and the due de Maine were her chief confidants, in the three had one object at heart. The king’s life was rapidly drawing to a close, and his will had yet to be made. The country must for many years be governed by a regent, and the due of Orleans, as the king’s nephew, was the person who would naturally be appointed. But he was profligate and sceptical, and unworthy of the office.

With the consent and advice of madame de Maintenon and Le Tellier a will was drawn up, giving, indeed, to the duke the title of regent, but leaving all power in the hands of the due de Maine, the guardian and tutor of the Dauphin; and naming a council of regency, exclusively composed of his friends. To the due of Orleans, careless of everything but his own personal gratification, the political situation of France was a matter of little moment, and madame de Maintenon and Le Tellier carried their point without opposition.
A few days after the will was made the king was seized by an illness which confined him to his chamber. He still attempted to carry on the public business—had several interviews with deputies of the parliament in reference to the papal bull, and was so indignant at finding that he could not bend D'Agueneau, their leader, to his wishes that, forgetting his customary courtesy, he turned his back upon him. The same evening he was rolled in a chair to a concert in madame de Maintenon's apartments. But he already looked like a dead man. His physician, Fagon, would not, indeed, own that he was ill, and though four doctors were called in to see the king they took care to say nothing but what Fagon approved. The next day were summoned four others, but still nothing was heard but praise of Fagon's skill.

A review even was talked of. The day was fixed—Friday, the 22nd of August. The troops began to collect. But the king was unable to attend, and the duc de Maine represented him, and appeared with the little Dauphin by his side, whilst the duc of Orleans placed himself at the head of his own company and saluted the future king as he passed before him. The position of the duc de Maine was false, and the duc of Orleans gained rather than lost in the public estimation by the honour conferred upon his rival.

The king's condition had now become so dangerous that it was impossible longer to be blind to it. Symptoms of mortification had appeared, and it was evident that his days were numbered. He himself was fully aware of the fact, and the fortitude, resignation, and devotion which he showed must be accepted in evidence of the sincerity of the religion of his later years.

On the 26th of August his state was so visibly worse that the end was hourly expected. He was able, however, to add a few lines to the codicil of his will (so favourable to the duc de Maine), in which he especially directed that the new king should be taken for safety to some strong fortress, such as the castle of Vincennes, where the air would be pure. Evidently he feared that the child's life would not be safe, and probably he suspected the fidelity of the duc of Orleans. Yet almost immediately afterwards he assured the duc in a private interview that he would find nothing in the will with which he would not have reason to be contented. It was a singular assertion under the circumstances; but though Louis must be condemned for insincerity, he can scarcely be blamed for having hesitated to trust his infant successor entirely in the hands of a man so notoriously profligate as the future regent.

The little Dauphin was then brought to him, and the king addressed the child in words which, had they been remembered and acted upon, might probably have saved France its revolution. He exhorted the boy to remember that he was responsible...
to God for all his actions, and that it was his duty to cultivate peace, to avoid extravagance, and to study the well-being of his people.

Le Tellier then made him sign his own nomination of confessor to the future king, thus preserving to the Jesuits the influence they already possessed; but he could not persuade the king to nominate persons for the benefices which might become vacant. Louis appears to have had some doubt whether all his public ecclesiastical acts had been justifiable, for he said to two cardinals who visited him that he died fully submitting to the church; he had done nothing but that which the church had ordered. Those who had counselled extreme measures must answer for them before God.

So he would fain have thrown off his responsibility. Yet it still at times pressed upon him. 'Death,' he said to madame de Maintenon, 'does not appear terrible to me.' 'It can only be so,' she replied, 'to those who die without charity, or are absorbed by earthly affections, or have amends to make to others for wrongs done.'

'I owe no amends to any man in his private relation,' said the king, 'but for those which I owe to the kingdom may God have mercy upon me.'

Days went on, and still Louis lived. The duty of watching became more and more burdensome. Le Tellier, madame de Maintenon, and the due de Maine managed everything. The king took but little notice, and was looked upon as already dead. Mass was not said in his room until a captain of the guards indignantly insisted upon it, and at length madame de Maintenon, feeling her services no longer recognised, departed for St. Cyr.

An appearance of rallying on the next day, the 29th of August, changed the appearance of the court. The royal apartments were refilled, those of the Palais Royal, the residence of the duke of Orleans, deserted. The king, who had taken a little Spanish wine and a couple of biscuits, asked for madame de Maintenon, and she returned from St. Cyr. But it was only to leave him again. Mortification spread rapidly, and on the morning of the 1st of September, 1715, the great king who had been so worshipped in life breathed his last, surrounded by physicians, priests, and attendants, but without a single member of his own family to give one glance of love or whisper a word of sympathy in his dying ears.

Louis XIV. was seventy-seven years of age at the time of his death, and his reign—the longest on record—had occupied seventy-two years. It may be desirable, in conclusion, to take a cursory survey of its most marked characteristics.

The actual administration of public affairs in France was undoubtedly carried on by the king's ministers as well as by himself.
but the ability which asserted a supreme will—the art, in fact, of reigning, as St. Simon expresses it—was possessed by Louis XIV. in a surpassing degree, and rendered his reign the culminating point of monarchical power in France.

His own views upon this subject were concentrated in the well-known words, ‘L'état c'est moi,’ with which he began his independent reign; and as he fully believed the axiom himself, so he compelled the world to believe it also, and induced the church to teach it.

‘You will find,’ he said to his son, who he thought would succeed him, ‘no power in the state over which you will be called upon to reign which will not think itself honoured in deriving its existence and its influence from you.’ The Almighty Himself was imagined to have pronounced a decree in the royal favour. ‘It is the will of God,’ said the absolute monarch, ‘that whoever is born a subject should obey without enquiry.’

The only power which might have reminded him of other rights was the States-General, the great council of the nation, but Louis never convoked it, and when, on the occasion of the Treaty of Utrecht, the allies desired to have the conditions of peace ratified by a national assembly, the demand was haughtily rejected as an insult to the majesty of the throne.

The greater part of the provinces had in former days been accustomed to assemble lesser States-General for themselves, and in this way to regulate the affairs of their respective districts; but Louis suppressed many of these provincial councils, and those which were still permitted were in reality only summoned in order to carry out the orders of the king’s ministers.

‘It is a great delight to me,’ says madame de Sévigné, when writing to her daughter, ‘to be here’ (in Brittany) ‘at the assembly of the States, for I have never in my life before had the opportunity. I did not attempt to see the opening; it was too early in the morning. The business will not be long. They have only to ask the king’s pleasure. No one says a word, so it is soon done. The governor receives—why or wherefore I know not—more than 40,000 crowns. An infinity of presents, pensions, orders for the repairs of roads and towns, fifteen or twenty gaming-tables, with perpetual play, never-ending balls, the theatre three times a week, a grand display of fashion—this, in fact, constitutes the meeting of the States of Brittany. I have forgotten to mention the three or four pipes of wine which are drunk; but though I may omit such a little item, there are others who are sure to remember it, and that is the chief matter.’

Municipal privileges were suppressed as well as provincial. Louis made the office of mayor hereditary, and then sold it to the
highest bidder, and in this way all independent action in the towns was checked.

In accordance with this desire to concentrate all power in himself Louis XIV. also made it one of his great objects to convert the French parliaments into simple law courts of appeal. He compelled the parliament of Paris to register his edicts within a week after they were issued, and to submit to the decisions of a council of state instituted by himself. Even when acting as judges the members were not free to follow their own sense of right. D'Ormesson, an upright magistrate, who resisted the royal will in the case of Fouquet's trial, fell into complete disgrace in consequence.

It was a more difficult task to reduce the nobles. Richelieu had demolished their fortresses and cut off their heads when they opposed him. Mazarin had gained over to his side by bribery and cunning. Louis XIV. drew them from their independent country estates by offering them places at court or offices connected with his own person, thus filling his antechamber with the descendants of the great men before whom his own ancestors had trembled. Such of the nobles as persisted in residing upon their own estates received more than once very alarming visits of inspection by the king's orders. And this not without cause, for the amount of tyranny and actual cruelty practised by some of them is almost incredible in an age which called itself civilised. The marquis de Canillac levied taxes upon the poor for himself and his family besides those demanded by the king, and, to terrify the people into submission, kept twelve ruffians in his castle, whom he called the Twelve Apostles, nicknaming them—one Destruction, another Disturb, and so on with the rest. The sword and the stick used by these braves effectually prevented any resistance. Another noble, the marquis de Montvalais, before he would permit his vassals to marry demanded half the bride's dowry for himself. The baron de Sénégas imprisoned a man who had offended him in a dungeon which all but killed him. The baron de Veyrac murdered a lawyer who had conducted a suit against him. And these were by no means singular atrocities. Of course the king became popular when he interfered to put an end to such abuses, and punished the offenders with death, imprisonment, and exile. Despotism though he was himself he would allow no other person to be so. Justice was administered to all alike, even to the clergy, for we hear of a cure who was hung for murder. 'You must complete the work of banishing oppression and violence from the province,' he wrote to the president of the great council of enquiry held at Clermont in 1665, and known as 'Les Grands Jours de Clermont.' 'You have begun too well not to succeed.'

The great nobles had titles and honours, but they had no political
influence, and the means which were taken to prevent them from acquiring it are amongst the most disgraceful records of the time. Every outward mark of consideration was, indeed, shown them. St. Simon mentions, as the greatest action of the king’s life, that when insulted by the duc de Lauzun he threw his cane out of the window, that he might not be tempted to strike a nobleman. Yet opportunities of distinguishing themselves were, if possible, kept from them. The princes of the blood royal especially were employed as little as possible, and were condemned to waste their lives and their talents in indolence and profligacy. ‘It seems to me,’ said Louis, ‘that I am robbed of my glory when it can be acquired independently of me.’ After the death of Mazarin the king’s ministers were for the most part chosen from persons whose natural position was that of mediocrity; he could thus, as St. Simon expresses it, after having made use of them, plunge them into the nothingness from which they had emerged. The nobles had, in fact, no career open to them except that of the army, and even then they were rarely entrusted with posts which involved influence and power. Thus the aristocracy of France, instead of being, like that of England, a powerful political class, were reduced to a military order.

The general functions of the state, financial, political, and judicial, were placed in the hands of the middle classes; yet Louis was no citizen king even when he governed by and with citizens. He demanded for himself a rigorous ceremonial which suited a divinity rather than a mortal, and his ministers, ambassadors, and secretaries of state ceased to belong outwardly to the middle class as soon as they were admitted into his confidence. They became the marquis de Louvois, the comte de Pontchartrain, the marquis de Torey, &c. The grandson of Henry IV. might work with persons who were not noble, but he chose still to be always the king of nobles.

The clergy were treated like the nobles, and were allowed honour, but not power, for Louis desired to be supreme in the church as in the state. The Gallican church was, in fact, essentially national, and accepted without difficulty the famous proposition of Bossuet that God had not given to St. Peter and his successors any power or authority in temporal matters, and that the decisions of the Pope in questions of doctrine were only binding after they had been accepted by the church. The king was, indeed, obliged so far to modify these pretensions to independence that he ceased to insist upon the propositions of Bossuet being taught in the theological schools, yet they were tacitly acknowledged as the principles upon which the Gallican church was to be governed.

Louis personally was, however, far from recognising the independence which he claimed for the church. He was always more or less under the influence of the Jesuits. The spirit of Jansenism
was too free for him. The church of France was to be the king's church, and the people were to submit to it; but in order to this submission the individual members were to be trained in principles of subjection both of mind and body. Jesuitism, therefore, was to be enforced. It was not only the royal creed, but also the most useful.

Two institutions especially, dating their full establishment from the time of Louis XIV., aided the king in accomplishing this work of monarchical omnipotence. These were the police and the army. The first was entirely his creation. In 1667 a magistrate or lieutenant of police, Nicholas de la Reynie, was appointed to maintain order in Paris. Under his directions the city began to be lighted, and from the 1st of November to the 1st of March a lantern was placed at the entrance and in the middle of each street. There were 5,000 of these lanterns in Paris. The watch was also increased and put on a new footing. The narrow, dirty streets were cleaned, widened, and paved. Public carriages were established, and Pascal even suggested the practicability of having omnibuses, but he did not succeed in introducing them.

But the police served also an important political purpose. They watched over the press, inspected the post, and in what was afterwards called the Black Chamber read suspected letters; while, in order to spare the government the wearisome delays of justice, 'lettres de cachet,' or letters written by the king's orders, signed by a secretary of state, and sealed with the king's seal, were multiplied, in virtue of which the police might seize any person and keep him in custody without trial, and without allowing him to have any intercourse with his friends so long as it should please the government. How these powers were exercised may be seen in the memoirs and records of the times. As an instance of the working of the 'lettres de cachet' we have only to read the story related by St. Simon of the unhappy prisoner of the Bastille who had been arrested on the very day of his arrival in Paris from Italy, his native country, and who remained in prison five-and-thirty years without knowing of what he was accused, or even having a single question asked him. When the regent Orleans, after the death of Louis XIV., opened the gates of the Bastille, this prisoner enquired mournfully what they expected him to do with his liberty. He had not a penny; he did not know a single human being in Paris, indeed in France. His parents in Italy were, he believed, dead; his inheritance had in all probability been divided. All he asked was to be allowed to spend the remainder of his days in the Bastille with food and lodgings provided for him.

The army was almost as serviceable as the police in the furtherance of the king's despotic power. It was indeed employed
confront the enemies of the country, but it served also to break down all resistance to the royal will. During the war of the Spanish succession the French forces numbered 450,000 men; and it is from this time that the establishment of large standing armies may be dated. These troops were sent into the different provinces to support the authority of the ‘intendants,’ and were a great aid in the levying of taxes, whilst ultimately they were employed in religious persecutions.

And thus all orders in the state, all existing authorities, were reduced to obedience. Individuals like Fénelon, Catinat, and Vauban might, and did, protest against the system, but could not overthrow it, and only fell into disgrace themselves. Vauban wrote a book to prove the desirableness of equalising the taxes, and the king, forgetting his great services, ordered the work to be destroyed and called its author a madman.

The general submissiveness was nowhere shown so remarkably as at Versailles, where the king kept the great nobility in a gilded captivity. Any nobleman who did not live within the range of the brilliant court of which Louis was the centre was either entirely disregarded as a person never graced by the royal favour, or looked upon as a fool or a malcontent, and made the butt of witty ridicule and sharp sarcasm.

Three things there were which secured a high place in the royal estimation;—the request for rooms at Versailles; the desire, whether sick or well, or even dying, to follow the court wherever it might go; and the habit of approving everything which the king did. For twenty years the duc de la Rochefoucauld never once slept out of the palace, but he was always fully in the confidence of his sovereign. The marquis de Dangeau was fifty years in the king’s service, and always in favour. What was the secret? Madame de Maintenon reveals it when she speaks of him as ‘M. de Dangeau, who never finds fault with anything.’ This was the road to grace and honour. Life at Versailles was a false existence, in which no doubt certain qualities of mind were developed, but in which true dignity and the virtues essential to it were entirely lost. In the splendid fêtes were displayed all the wonders of art, and all the fascination of a society which for wit, elegance, and courtliness has never been equalled; but there also were to be seen, with scarcely any attempt at disguise, the vices of the sovereign, which the first persons in the state—grave magistrates and illustrious prelates—did not venture to protest against either by silence or retirement.

The lessons thus given by the crown to the people were not lost or forgotten, although the king in later years insisted upon strict outward decorum. The reckless wickedness of the succeeding reign
was but the natural result of the gradual undermining of principle which had preceded it; whilst the coarseness of tone of the ladies of Versailles, only partially veiled by the rigid etiquette which the king required of all who approached him, bore its bitter fruit in the degradation of the female sex in the reign of Louis XIV., and the bitter suffering of the revolution which followed. When duchesses could collect around them their butchers and bakers, and cheat them at games of chance, and royal princesses could borrow the pipes of the Swiss guards, that they might smoke secretly in their own rooms, it is not to be wondered at that persons of inferior position learnt to despise their rank, and to clamour for the destruction of the privileges associated with it.

Already the murmuring of the storm was beginning to be heard. "The nobles," wrote La Bruyère, one of the most literary men of the day, "have no soul. I wish to be one of the people."

Bossuet was a young man when, in 1661, he preached before the king and the queen mother a warning sermon so striking that Louis, after hearing it, wrote to his father to congratulate him upon having such a son. But when the Jesuit father Bourdaloue appeared on the scene Bossuet was no longer considered the first of preachers. "Bourdaloue's sermon," says madame de Sévigné in one of her letters, "was so powerful that it made the courtiers tremble. He strikes his blows without fear of the consequences." After him Masillon, bishop of Clermont, attracted courtiers and people alike by his polished persuasiveness; but great as was the eloquence of these men, and earnest as, we cannot doubt, they were in their desire to raise the tone of religion and morality in the country, neither of them dared to show to the fullest extent his disapproval of the royal example. Remonstrate they all did, either directly or indirectly; but the vices of a king—and such a king—could only be mentioned in measured terms, or expulsion from his presence would have been the penalty. Whether the judgment passed upon them by posterity would not have been more favourable if the brave step had been taken, and the penalty accepted, admits, however, of no doubt. There are cases in which disgrace is the greatest honour.

But, with all his faults, one claim to the gratitude of posterity must always be granted to Louis XIV. He recognised and rewarded literary merit. Corneille, Molière, Pascal, Bossuet, the scientific philosopher Descartes, La Rochefoucauld, the author of the celebrated "Maximes," which show so deep a knowledge of human nature; La Fontaine, whose clever fables were the satires of the day; and the brilliant madame de Sévigné (destined to be immortalised by the charm of her private letters) had indeed gained their place in the public estimation before Louis took the reins of government into his own hands. But the king bestowed that which was more valuable.
because more unattainable, than any public applause—a look, a word, a smile, a taste of intimate companionship, which might almost be termed friendship. Racine was loaded with his favours. Jules Mansart, the architect, could obtain an audience at any hour. Boileau, the critic and satirist, was allowed to gain the victory in a discussion; and the nobles at Versailles looked on with astonishment when Molière, the son of an upholsterer, received an honour never accorded to themselves save under circumstances of especial importance, and was invited to dine at the king’s private table.

The societies or academies of literature, science, and art were a yet more important source of influence. The encouragements given to them by Louis tended greatly to the general mental cultivation, and France under him attained a reputation as a centre of taste and criticism which it has never since lost.
KINGS OF THE CAPE蒂AN DYNASTY, 
THEIR 
WIVES AND CHILDREN.

HUGH CAPET, A.D. 987.  
Married.  
1. Adelaide of Aquitaine.  
2. Blancha (widow of Louis V.)  

CHILDREN.  
First Wife.  
Robert (succeeded).  
3 daughters.  

ROBERT, A.D. 996.  
Married.  
1. Bertha of Burgundy.  
2. Constance of Provence.  

CHILDREN.  
Second Wife.  
Hugh.  
Eudes.  
Henry (succeeded).  
Robert (Duke of Burgundy).  
2 daughters.  

HENRY, A.D. 1033.  
Married three times.  
(Third wife, Anne of Muscovy.)  

CHILDREN.  
Third Wife.  
Philip (succeeded).  
Robert (died young).  
Hugh (Count of Vermandois).  

PHILIP, A.D. 1060.  
Married.  
1. Bertha of Holland.  
2. Bertrade of Anjou.  

CHILDREN.  
First Wife.  
Louis (succeeded).  
1 daughter.  

Second Wife.  
Philip.  
Fleury.  
1 daughter.  

LOUIS VI., A.D. 1108.  
Married.  
2. Adelaide of Savoy.  

CHILDREN.  
Second Wife.  
Philip.  
Louis (succeeded).  
Robert (Count of Dreux.)  
Peter (married the heiress of the Courtenays).  
Henry (ecclesiastic).  
Philip (ecclesiastic).  
1 daughter.  

LOUIS VII., A.D. 1137.  
Married.  
1. Eleanor of Guienne.  
2. Constance of Castile.  
3. Alice of Champagne.
KINGS OF THE CAPIELIAN DYNASTY.

LOUIS VII,—cont.

CHILDREN.

First Wife.

2 daughters.

Second Wife.

1 daughter.

Third Wife.

Philip (succeeded).

2 daughters.

PHILIP II, A.D. 1180.

Married.

1. Isabella of Hainault.

2. Ingeburga of Denmark.

3. Agnes de Meranie (daughter of Duke of Moldavia).

CHILDREN.

First Wife.

Louis (succeeded).

Third Wife.

Philip (Count of Boulogne).

1 daughter.

JOUS VIII, A.D. 1223.

Married.

Blanche of Castile.

CHILDREN.

Louis (succeeded).

Robert (Count of Artois),

Alfonso (Count of Poitou).

Charles (Count of Anjou).

John.

1 daughter.

LOUIS IX, A.D. 1226.

Married.

Margaret of Provence.

CHILDREN.

Philip (succeeded).

John Tristan.

Peter.

Robert (married Beatrice of Bourbon.

By descent from this marriage Henry IV. claimed the crown of France).

4 daughters.

PHILIP III, A.D. 1270.

Married.

1. Isabella of Aragon.

2. Maria of Brabant.

CHILDREN.

First Wife.

Louis (died young).

Philip (succeeded).

Charles (Count of Valois).

Second Wife.

Louis (Count of Evreux).

2 daughters.

PHILIP IV., A.D. 1286.

Married.

Jeanne (Queen of Navarre).

CHILDREN.

Louis.

Philip.

Charles.

2 daughters.

LOUIS X., A.D. 1314.

Married.

1. Margaret (daughter of Duke of Burgundy).

2. Clementia of Anjou.

CHILDREN.

First Wife.

1 daughter.

Second Wife.

John (lived only eight days).

PHILIP V., A.D. 1316.

Married.

Jeanne of Burgundy.

CHILDREN.

Louis (died in infancy).

4 daughters.
THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN.

CHARLES IV., A.D. 1322.

Married.
1. Blanche of Burgundy.
2. Mary of Luxemburg.

CHILDREN.

Third Wife.
2 daughters.

PHILIP VI., A.D. 1328.

House of Valois.

Married.
1. Jeanne of Burgundy.
2. Blanche of Navarre (grand-daughter of Louis X.)

CHILDREN.

First Wife.
John (succeeded).
Philip (Duke of Orléans).
1 daughter.

Second Wife.
1 daughter.

JOHN, A.D. 1350.

Married.
1. Bona (daughter of the blind King of Bohemia).
2. Jeanne of Boulogne.

CHILDREN.

First Wife.
Charles (succeeded).
Louis (Duke of Anjou).
John (Duke of Berry).
Philip (Duke of Burgundy).

CHARLES V., A.D. 1364.

Married.
Jeanne of Bourbon.

CHILDREN.
Charles (succeeded).
Louis (Duke of Orléans).

CHARLES VI., A.D. 1380.

Married.
Isabella of Bavaria.

CHILDREN.
Louis.
John.
Charles (succeeded).
5 daughters.

CHARLES VII., A.D. 1422.

Married.
Mary of Anjou.

CHILDREN.
Louis (succeeded).
Charles (Duke of Berry).
4 daughters.

LOUIS XI., A.D. 1461.

Married.
1. Margaret (daughter of James I., King of Scotland).
2. Charlotte of Savoy.

CHILDREN.
Second Wife.
Charles (succeeded).
2 daughters.

CHARLES VIII., A.D. 1483.

Married.
Anne of Bretagne.

CHILDREN.
3. all died in their infancy.

LOUIS XII., A.D. 1498.

Married.
1. Jean (daughter of Louis XI.)
2. Anne of Bretagne.
LOUIS XII—cont.

CHILDREN.

Second Wife.

2 daughters.

FRANCIS I, A.D. 1515

Married.

1. Claude of France.
2. Eleanor of Austria.

CHILDREN.

First Wife.

Francis (died).
Henry (succeeded).
Charles (Duke of Orleans).
2 daughters.

HENRY II, A.D. 1547

Married.

Catherine de' Medici (daughter of the Duke of Urbino).

CHILDREN.

Francis (succeeded).
Charles (afterwards Charles IX.)
Henry (Duke of Anjou, Henry III.)
Francis (Duke of Anjou).
3 daughters.

FRANCIS II, A.D. 1559.

Married.

Mary Stuart (Queen of Scotland).

CHARLES IX., A.D. 1560.

Married.

Elizabeth (daughter of Maximilian II.)

CHILD.

1 daughter (died at the age of five).

HENRY III, A.D. 1574

Married.

Louisa of Vaudemont.

HENRY IV., A.D. 1589

Bourbon Dynasty.

Married.

1. Marguerite de Valois.
2. Marie de' Medici.

CHILDREN.

Second Wife.

Louis (succeeded).
Gaston (Duke of Orleans).
3 daughters.

LOUIS XIII., A.D. 1610

Married.

Anne of Austria.

CHILDREN.

Louis.
Philip (Duke of Anjou and

LOUIS XIV., A.D. 1643

Married.

Maria Theresa of Austria (of Philip IV, of Spain as both, daughter of Henry France).

CHILD.

Louis (the Dauphin).

(Duke of Burgundy, and all
Dauphin, never reigned, but succeeded to the throne.)

LOUIS XV., A.D. 1715.

Married.

1. Marie Leszczynska.
2. Marie.
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<th>LOUIS XVI. — cont.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second Wife.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHILDREN.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Auguste.</td>
<td>2 daughters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Stanislas Xavier (Count of Provence).</td>
<td>LOUIS XVII. (never reigned).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Philippe (Count of Artois).</td>
<td>LOUIS XVIII, a.d. 1816.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 daughters.</td>
<td>(Unmarried.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOUIS XVI, a.d. 1774.</td>
<td>CHARLES X, a.d. 1824.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married.</td>
<td>(Unmarried.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marie Antoinette (Archduchess of Austria.)</td>
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CLODON

MEROVER

CHILDERIC I.

CLOVIS I.

THIERRY,
King of Austrasia

CHLODOULAR,
King of Orleans

THIBOUDART

THIBOUDART

CHILDERIC II.

CLOTHAIR II.

CHILDERIC III.

CHILDERIC IV.

CHILDERIC V.

CLOVIS II.

CHILDERIC VI.

CLOVIS III.

CHILDERIC VII.

CLOVIS IV.

CHILDERIC V.

CLOVIS V.

CLOVIS VI.

CLOVIS VII.

CLOVIS VIII.

CLOVIS IX.

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CLOVIS XCVIII.

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CHARLEMAGNE, Emperor

CARLOMAN

LOUIS LE DÉBONNAIRE, Emperor

LOTHAIR I, Emperor

PEPIN, King of Aquitaine

LOUIS I, King of Germany

CHARLES LE CHAUVET, King of France

CHARLES LE GROS, Louis le Bruce

LOUIS III, CARLOMAN, CHARLES LE SIMPLE

LOUIS IV, D'OUTRE-MER

LOTHAIR

CARLOMAN, Duke of Lorraine

LOUIS V.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE ELDER BRANCH OF THE CAPETIANS.

ROBERT LE FORT, Son-in-law of Louis le Débonnaire

ECDES, Count of Paris

HUGH LE BLANC, Count of Paris and Duke of France

HUGH CAPET, King

ROBERT

HENRY I.

PHILIP I

LOUIS VI, Le Gros

LOUIS VII, Le Jeune

PHILIP II, surnamed Augustus

ROBERT, Duke of France

EMMA, wife of Raoul or Rudolph, King of France

HUGH CAPET, King

ROBERT. Head of the first Capetian House of Burgundy

HUGH CAPET, King

ROBERT

HUGH CAPET, King

HUGH CAPET, King

LOUIS I.

PHILIP I

LOUIS VI, Le Gros

LOUIS VII, Le Jeune

PHILIP II, surnamed Augustus

ROBERT, Head of the first House of Anjou and King of Naples

PHILIP III, Le Hardi

ROBERT. Sixth son of St. Louis; Count of Clermont. Head of the Bourbons

PHILIP IV, Le Bel

CHARLES. Count of Valois and of Alençon. Head of the House of Valois

LOUIS X, Le Hutin

PHILIP V, Le Loup

CHARLES LE BEL.
GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE HOUSE OF

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Antoine, Duke of Vendôme, married Jeanne d'Alluye, Queen of

Henry IV., King of France and Navarre

Louis XIII., King

Louis XIV., King

Louis, the Dauphin (never reigned)

Louis, Duke of Burgundy (never reigned)

Louis XV., King

Louis, Dauphin (never reigned)
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