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A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLDEN TIME

VOL. I.



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A GENTLEMAN
OF
THE OLDEN TIME,

FRANÇOIS DE SCÉPEAUX, SIRE DE VIEILLEVILLE,
1509—1571 :

Portraits and Stories of the Sixteenth Century,
During the Reign of Henri II.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME C. COIGNET

By C. B. PITMAN



IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I. ✓

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CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
BIRTH OF VIEILLEVILLE.—HIS ARRIVAL AT AMBOISE.	
—HIS MARITIME ADVENTURES IN ITALY ...	1

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTURE OF AVIGNON.—MARSHAL DE MONTÉJAN	23
---	----

CHAPTER III.

ADVENTURES OF THE MARÉCHALE DE MONTÉJAN ...	44
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

	PAGE
DEATH OF M. SCÉPEAUX.—FRIENDSHIP OF VIEILLE- VILLE AND THE BOURBON PRINCES.—CAMPAIGN IN PROVENCE	70

CHAPTER V.

HENRI II.—DIANE DE POITIERS.—MONTMORENCY.— ST. ANDRÉ	89
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

VIEILLEVILLE'S MISSION TO ENGLAND.—INTRIGUES AT COURT	122
---	-----

CHAPTER VII.

OBSEQUIES OF FRANÇOIS I. — CONSECRATION OF HENRY II.	146
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE JUDICIAL DUEL OF JARNAC AND LA CHATEIG- NERAYE	166
--	-----

CHAPTER IX.

	PAGE
GREEDINESS OF THE COURT.—DISINTERESTEDNESS OF VIEILLEVILLE.—M. DE ST. ANDRÉ'S COMPANY. — THE KING'S JOURNEY. — REVOLT OF LA GUYENNE	196

CHAPTER X.

SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLT IN GUYENNE.—MARRIAGE OF MADEMOISELLE DE SCÉPEAUX.—SIEGE OF BOULOGNE.—MISSION OF ST. ANDRÉ TO ENGLAND	226
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.


THE GENERAL 'CONDITION OF EUROPE.—PREPARATION FOR WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE EMPIRE...	271
---	-----





INTRODUCTION.



FTER having for a long time been attracted by historical researches, I entered upon the study of the sixteenth century without any preconceived idea as to what would be the outcome of it. My only motive was curiosity, and my object was to discover one or more of those original and powerful individualities which distract one's thoughts from the pettiness of the present and the deceptions of public life. The sixteenth century teems with them, and from the very outset my interest in the subject was so great that I conceived the idea of writing a biography; my choice soon falling upon Marshal de Vieilleville, with whom I had been particularly struck. At first I was uncertain as to

whether this biography would take the form of a magazine article, a pamphlet, or a book. But as in history everything hangs together, I found that there were so many highways and byways to explore that the whole epoch to which Vieilleville belonged opened itself up to my research. At the same time the ideas by which the personages were actuated came into prominence, and the century to which they belonged acquired a new historical signification. The multitudinous events which occurred in its course, the variety of ideas which were interchanged, and the contradictory efforts by which various transformations were effected, gives it a place of its own in the series of centuries. As the area of the work thus extended, it became necessary to go back a little further, and in order to give a fair idea of the man—who cannot be considered apart from the society in which he moved—I sketched in an introductory volume the leading traits of the society of the time, grouping around the central figure of François I. all that related to his reign, and keeping over for a second volume the life of

Vieilleville, which would afford an opportunity of reconstituting the reign of Henri II.

Nor, for the matter of that, was my first conception modified. In making a summary of persons or contemporary events, in touching incidentally upon the questions of art and science, my only object has been to provide a frame for the personages sketched, and to throw a little light upon the pictures; and if, as a very friendly critic has complained, I have indulged in too many "metaphysical disquisitions," my excuse must be that philosophy is with me one of those inveterate failings for which there is no cure.

The reign of Henri II. is not nearly so rich in materials for the historian as that of his predecessor. There is nothing in it to compare with the tragic episodes of the Italian war, the revolt of Bourbon, the capture of Rome, the imprisonment at Madrid, and, above all, that touching three-fold incident of the mother keeping guard over her son's kingdom while his sister goes off to sustain and console him in his captivity.

Events of this kind need no telling, and the facts themselves are full of eloquence.

The personality of Henri II. is lacking in grandeur and relief, while public affairs during his reign were very uneventful and monotonous. Though war may in detail have abounded in curious surprises, no great catastrophes occurred, and the very victories which French arms achieved were whittled away at last by the mean-spirited concessions of a shameful peace. Some original personality, characteristic of the epoch, and mixed up in all the events of his time, was required to give piquancy to the history of this reign, and we have such a personage in the hero of the present work.

At a time when noblemen rarely took up the pen (tells us the author of the Vieilleville memoirs),* they generally had in their employ a secretary, at once a confidant and a friend, who wielded it for them. What with the correspondence, the confidential missions which he undertook, and the care of the title

* I refer to the collection of memoirs published in London in 1787.

deeds and the genealogical tree, the secretary was familiar with all the affairs of the family; and when the life of his employer had been a busy and eventful one, he generally retraced the principal incidents of it.* These memoirs, written while the events they narrated were still fresh, and without any sort of affectation, are very valuable documents for the historian. They are, however, impaired by many omissions. Generally written in a hurry, amid the pressure of travelling or business, or else from memory long afterwards, many of the most important facts are omitted, while others are related without any cohesion of time and place. When the secretary happened to die before they were completed the memoirs were copied afterwards by persons who had not been present at the events described in them, and who accordingly made confusion worse confounded. This was the case with the

* It was in this way that the memoirs of De Guesclin, the Constable de Richemont, Bayard, and many others, were prepared. The correspondences of different noblemen in the sixteenth century are very numerous, but nearly all are in the handwriting of a secretary.

Vieilleville memoirs composed by Vincent Carloix. When they came into the possession of Père Griffet, in the eighteenth century, after having been stowed away for nearly two centuries in the archives of a chateau, they were found to be in several handwritings, all, it is true, of the same period. The first six books, which had been recopied (probably after the original), were pretty regular, but the three last, teeming with corrections and erasures, were devoid of all order. Père Griffet, when he published them for the first time in 1757, commenced a commentary upon them, but without making change in the order of the events described, full though it was of patent errors. To this he added a preface and notes, and as the manuscript stopped at the capture of St. Jean d'Angely, he completed the work with a précis taken from a work by the Dominican Monk du Paz. He also divided the work into chapters with headings. He has been charged with touching it up and in some degree altering its meaning; but though the wording is clearer and easier to understand than that of most of

the contemporary memoirs, it abounds as they do in the highly-coloured terms and primitive expressions characteristic of the age, and Père Griffet has probably done no more than reconstruct certain phrases.

Vincent Carloix, having been attached for six and thirty years to Vieilleville's person, and having accompanied him in all his campaigns and travels, gives us the animated impression of his life, which can only be derived from an eye-witness. He relates many conversations and speeches, the absolute accuracy of which we may doubt, but which none the less reproduce the intimate and living side of history. If these conversations and speeches were not delivered word for word as they come down to us, they ought to have been. So whenever these narratives are confirmed by what we know of the events and persons to which they refer, I have followed them. But in many cases, again, I have put them upon one side, as the devotion of the author to his hero is constantly leading him to exaggerate in the most ridiculous fashion, and even to invent.

But these are not the only memoirs of which the same may be said.

There are two portraits of Vieilleville at Versailles, one in the north attic, and the other in the Salle des Maréchaux, and he is represented, just as the history of his life reveals him, with strongly marked but irregular features, a strong-willed and resolute mouth, keen and intelligent eyes, and a very vivid cast of countenance. Of an energetic and hardy temperament, he was a man of indomitable pride, and ready to unsheath the sword at a moment's notice. But he was also very quick to reflect upon the consequences of an act, and so was as well fitted for the diplomatic as for the military career. Vieilleville is the type of a class which will soon have passed out of existence : that of the old independent nobility. The feeling of responsibility which as leader falls upon him, gives a dignity to his commands, while his humane spirit tempers their severity ; not only does he never commit an act of needless cruelty, but his justice is inexorable, and his solicitude incessant. In time of

war, he would protect the inhabitants of a town, and at the same time see that his troops were well cared for. But the slightest relaxation of discipline rendered him implacable, as the troops at Metz learnt to their cost. A very strict administrator at a time when corruption was general, he was as scrupulous in the handling of the royal, that is to say the public, funds, as in his own affairs. Each item of expenditure is explicitly stated, and his accounts are clear and regular. His warm and generous heart, and his natural loyalty, made him a model friend, while his courteous manners, ready wit, and keen observance of what was going on, rendered him a true courtier. To these qualities were superadded the Gallic humour and the light-hearted gaiety and high spirits which made our ancestors as ready to bear reverses as good fortune.*

* " Besides being of illustrious birth, Marshal de Vieilleville was valiant, full of wit and resource. In military affairs, he acquired the reputation of being a perfect leader, and sustained his renown in five celebrated diplomatic missions in Germany, England, and Switzerland. . . He also deserves credit as having been the sole architect of his

If with so many high qualities to help him, Vieilleville did not fill a larger place in history, this may be attributed to two causes :

In the first place to his disinterestedness. Attached to the person of three successive sovereigns, and living upon intimate terms with the two last, Vieilleville did not stoop to turn their favour for him to account. He used his influence for the good of the State, sometimes for the benefit of a selfish and ungrateful friend. For himself he asked nothing. Wealthy by hereditary descent, and imbued with the old spirit of independence, his aspirations, which were of a purely military order, and with which was combined the love of adventure, were quite unselfish and full of chivalrous indifference to

fortune, of having been attached to the King and Queen without taking part in factions, of having attained the highest dignity by the sheer force of his services, and having no other aim but the good of the State."—"Addition to the *Memoirs of Castelnau*," vol. ii., pages 154—163.

"The Marshal had acquired the reputation of being brave and valiant. With all this bravery and valiance, he was well versed in affairs of state, and very sharp witted. He was, therefore, held in much esteem at Court."—"Bran-tôme," vol. ii., page 496.

self. He served his King in the old-fashioned way—out of pure zeal for his service. His master's confidence and affection were an ample reward, especially if now and again he was entrusted with some onerous and difficult mission, which he was sure to discharge with honour. Thus it was that, divested of all ambition, his mind was serene and cheerful, and that his attitude at Court was a proud and dignified one. But if the King endeavoured to enlist him in a cause of which he disapproved, as in that of the Guises, for instance, or to arrest him in a struggle once begun, as in the case of M. de Villebon, his refusal came very near to open revolt.

The second cause was the indifference of Vieilleville in regard to the religious questions which were so prominent in his time. Neither a Huguenot, as has been asserted, nor an unbeliever, his adhesion to the established faith was that of the statesman. Holding aloof from the controversies of theologians, and free from the mysticism of the pious, the ancient religion represented in his eyes the history, and the constitution of

his country, the authority of the law, and the wholesome moderation of custom. For these reasons, he defended it against the onslaught of the Huguenots, while regarding the individual and inward conscience and conviction of the individual as matters with which the outside world had no concern or right to interfere. Wherever his action extended, he generally upheld this right, at whatever risk to himself. It was this respect for the moral rights of man that constituted the grandeur of Vieilleville's character at the same time, as the passionate accents of religious enthusiasm never found utterance in him, he remained, to a certain extent, outside the movement of an age in which recklessness and grandeur, aberration and heroism, went hand in hand.

It is only by taking part in the popular passions, at all events in spirit and intent, that it is possible to guide and shape them. Vieilleville, accused by the Catholics of being a Huguenot, and by the Huguenots of being lenient with them only the better to subdue them, remained paralysed and powerless

amid the wars of religion. It was in vain that, attached exclusively to the Monarchy, he endeavoured to raise it above party; the Monarchy, devoid of all force, tossed from one party to another, allowed the flag of France to be blown hither and thither by the varying winds of fortune, and this loyal and devoted subject could but mourn over its decadence. Vieilleville died upon the eve of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.

It will be admitted by those who read this volume, and who note how careful I have been to quote the sources from which my information is taken, that I have scrupulously adhered to historical truth, and have given nothing at second-hand. All my information has been taken from official documents, from correspondence and memoirs, which are either contemporary, or have been derived from those who had received a direct communication of the facts.* Some erudite

* I have been accused of making too much use of Brantôme. Doubtless, if the only thing sought for in history is mere accuracy, he is not a good authority, but in regard to colour and life, no one can equal him.

persons think that unpublished matter, when once put into print, ceases to be a source of information. At this rate, original history would be at an end once our archives had seen the light of day. If the arduous unravelling of ancient writings be a task of high merit, it does not add to the value or interest of the work. For the last half century, numerous unpublished works derived from the State, from private individuals, and from the French Historical Society, have been continually increasing the resources of literary students. I have made a large use of them. More familiar with historical study, freely helped by advice, the value of which I fully appreciate,* my researches have extended rather further than I had at first intended. Many original letters from Vieilleville have been shown me, and have enabled me to fix certain dates, but as most of them related to military matters, they would have

* I am anxious to renew my thanks to M. Lalanne, the Librarian of the Institute, who has been the surest of guides; M. Tuetey, of the Archives; M. Desprez, of the Bibliothèque Nationale; and M. de Maulde, for their assistance.

little interest for the public. The letters from Henri II. to Montmorency are more important. They characterize the motives of the peace concluded at Cateau-Cambresis in a way which is not new, but which contributes to give it a solid basis.*

I have no pretensions to anything in the shape of didactic teaching, for I do not assume to be a savant or a professor. Having travelled without let or hindrance in the regions of the past, what attracts me in these distant lands is not to count the fragments, measure the depth of the mould, or to sift the dust, but to raise up the ruins, to restore to the ancient cities their warlike aspect and local existence, to re-people the country districts with their castles and cottages, to bring back the judges to the bench, the warriors to the battlefield, the people to the fields, the streets, the churches, and the public places of assembly, and when I have evoked all these shadows from the tomb, what fascinates me still more, is to try

* I do not believe that these letters have been published, but I cannot be quite sure on the point.

and discover upon their mysterious foreheads their inmost thoughts, and to read in their veiled eyes their sentiments, dreams, and recollections. Upon returning from these curious excursions, it is pleasing to relate our discoveries and encounters, with the sentiments which they awake, and the reflections they engender, to those, who, like myself, have a disinterested and lofty affection for things of the mind, and who appreciate the ancient French fatherland. Their sympathy is all that I desire, and I am thankful to them for having so far freely bestowed it.



A

GENTLEMAN OF THE OLDEN TIME.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH OF VIEILLEVILLE.—HIS ARRIVAL AT
AMBOISE.—HIS MARITIME ADVENTURES IN
ITALY.



T was probably upon the banks of the Loire, in the part of Maine which runs parallel with Anjou and adjoins Brittany, that was born, in 1509, the gallant knight and valiant captain whose life I am about to write: François de Scépeaux, Sire de Vieilleville. The Scépeaux descended in the female line from the d'Estouilles, and were allied to the royal branch of the Bourbons.* This powerful family was

* Vieilleville was a grandson of François de Scépeaux and Marguerite d'Estouville, a grand niece of Marguerite

formerly among the wealthiest in the kingdom, but its devotion to the Crown, during the war with the English, had reduced its fortune very considerably. It still remained possessed, however, of very extensive property.

René de Scépeaux, the father of François, represented the younger branch. He had married the "high and virtuous dame Marguerite de la Jaille," and both of them led such a stately and dignified existence in their domain of Duretal, that they were a pattern to all the nobility of Maine and Anjou.

The early years of François de Scépeaux are enveloped in obscurity. He probably passed them in his father's house, his time being divided between his Latin tutor and his fencing master, while preparing, according to the usage of the higher nobility, to be

Adrienne, Duchesse d'Estouville, afterwards married François de Bourbon, Comte de St. Pol.—"Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 118 ; "Addition aux Mémoires de Castelnau," vol. ii., page 167 ; "Généalogie des Scépeaux," pièces originales, 2661—59,067, folio 32.

attached to some member of the Royal Family, in order "to complete his education and manners, and to learn virtue and understanding."*

At about the age of fourteen he entered into the service of "the Most Serene Princess Madame Louise de Savoie, mother of François I." at Amboise. This was a singular school in which to learn virtue, it may be thought. He remained there four years, but at the end of that time "a piece of good fortune occurred to him which shortened his term of service and hastened his advancement."

Having, one day, at the dinner of his mistress, committed some blunder, he was reprimanded by the maître d'hôtel, who went so far as to give him a blow. Out of respect for the Queen Regent he said nothing at the time and went on with his service. But as soon as dinner was over, he slipped away from his governor and went to demand from the

* See, with reference to the education of the day, the "Fin de la Vieille France, François I.," page 13.

maître d'hôtel satisfaction for this insult. The latter attempted to pass the matter off by treating him as a child, but the lad insisted upon having reparation made him, and failing to obtain it, ran the maître d'hôtel through.

This created a great stir in the Château, and as the King was staying there, he was at once informed of what had occurred. François I., however, did not feel at all scandalised, as he held that the maîtres d'hôtel had no right to lay a hand upon the pages, lads of good family, who are under the authority of their own governor. He accordingly sent for the young culprit, in order to effect a reconciliation between him and his mother; but the lad had taken to flight, alarmed at what he had done, and made the best of his way home to Duretal, where he told his father what had occurred. That gallant gentleman, recognizing in this act of vivacity the characteristics of his race, was not harder upon him than the King, and, in order to let him have the opportunity of atoning for it by a few valorous achievements,

proposed that he should join the expedition which M. de Lautrec was preparing for Italy. The lad was delighted at the prospect, and as M. de Scépeaux was anxious that his son should appear as a young gentleman of quality, he gave him a liberal supply of money, and selected for his following five-and twenty young men of the best families in Anjou and Brittany. It was at the head of this cortège that Vieilleville repaired to Chambéry, where M. de Lautrec was collecting his army in the autumn of 1527.

M. de Lautrec, who was connected with Vieilleville by the Parthenays, received him very kindly. He had him lodged in his own quarters, and showed him several marks of friendship and honour.

The army soon crossed the Alps, and seized, without a blow, the small towns in the north of Italy. Pavia alone offered any resistance, but it was taken after a siege lasting four days, in the course of which Vieilleville distinguished himself very much. The town, taken by assault, was treated very severely, by way of reprisal for the imprison-

ment of King François I.* The army of M. de Lautrec then went on to Piacenza and Bologna, and as the Pope had taken to flight, instead of marching upon Rome, it made for Naples, passing through the Abruzzi country.

As it was slowly following the Adriatic coast, ten or twelve galleys of our allies the Venetians, led by the nephew of the Duke of Urbino, were keeping close in to the shore to lend it any assistance which might be required. The Duke, hearing that a small Imperial flotilla was on its way to Candia, resolved to attack it. The report found its way to shore, and Vieilleville, "who was anxious to see everything he could," left his followers in camp and jumped into a galley, accompanied by a gentleman of honour, his friend, M. de Cornillon, the two exchanging oaths never to desert each other.

The galleys came in sight of the enemy's fleet near Monaco, and the latter being the

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 24; "Martin du Bellay," vol. xviii., page 70.

strongest, and having the wind in its favour, opened the battle, and attacked the Venetian galleys so furiously that they could not resist the onslaught. They put up sail and made off. The vessel upon which Vieilleville and Cornillon had embarked being too closely engaged to follow the others, was surrounded and captured, and they were both made prisoners by the Lord of Monaco. They were put to ransom, and the Seigneur de Monaco proposed that Vieilleville should go and fetch the sum of money fixed, upon the understanding that if he did not return in a given time his companion would be put to the chain, and probably kept to it for the rest of his life. Vieilleville, fearing that the accidents of travel and the length of the journey might detain him beyond the time named, refused this proposal, and induced their capturer to send a messenger to M. de Lautrec for the ransom. M. de Lautrec sent only that of Vieilleville, who refused to abandon his companion, and was devising some means for sending to his father for the rest of the money, when the

Seigneur de Monaco, touched by his loyalty and courage, agreed to forego the remainder, and set them both at liberty.

Upon returning to the camp, they found M. de Lautrec had advanced far into Italy, and that facing the French forces was what remained of the army of Rome, led by the Prince of Orange. The two armies were watching each other in inaction. M. de Lautrec had just seized the stud of the Emperor, which was being conveyed into Spain for him, and he made Vieilleville a public present of two of the finest horses, saying, "They have been broken in by the Emperor's own equerry, and I have kept them for you in the assurance that they will never go back to France." He gave the best his own name, *Lautrec*, while the other he called *Imperial*. The two armies remained for some time in presence of each other without trying conclusions. A broad and level valley separated them, and, pending the battle, there was no lack of skirmishes, charges, captures, and rescues. Vieilleville having in one of these encounters captured

the son of the Seigneur de Monaco, was delighted to send him back free and unhurt to his father, with his arms and his charger, in recognition of the courtesy with which he had been treated.

The French, superior in numbers, were eager to attack; but M. de Lautrec was waiting for the troops of Jean de Médicis, which had since his death been led by Horatio Baglioni. They duly arrived, but the Prince of Orange, having learnt this, marched off during the night without sound of trumpet or drum, and with the bells and ornaments on the harness of the mules removed—whence the proverb, “*Déloger sans tambour ni trompette.*” M. de Lautrec did not attempt to pursue him, being content to follow in his track on the road to Naples. On his way he seized several places, Melfi among others, the capture of which was marked by a curious incident. While the Prince of Melfi was fighting upon the breach, sword in hand, and without any shield, he was about to be put to death when Vieilleville warded off the blow. He made him prisoner, and so talked

him over that the Prince returned his order and oath of allegiance to the Emperor, in order to become the subject of the King of France.*

The French army, continuing to advance, eventually encamped upon the sea-shore of Naples, a little to the south of the city. Count Phillip Doria, nephew of Andrea Doria, then arrived by sea, with eight galleys, to reinforce it, just as the Venetians had done in the Adriatic. The enemy's fleet remained motionless in harbour, and Doria was left at complete liberty to cruise in the Gulf.

It so happened that Vieilleville and Count Doria had been great friends as boys, the former being attached to the person of the Queen Regent, while the latter had been page in the King's chamber. Vieilleville, therefore, when he heard of Count Doria's arrival, hastened to greet him on board his galley, and, after a very effusive mutual welcome, Count

* Martin du Bellay mentions this conversion without attributing it to Vieilleville. La Noue, at page 36 of his "Discours," mentions the Prince of Melfi among the foreign princes who showed themselves the most devoted to France. He was afterwards made marshal and lieutenant of the King in Piedmont.

Doria did the honours of the fleet to his friend, and placed it entirely at his service. Vieilleville, who was anxious for a revenge of his recent defeat, eagerly accepted the command of a galley, and chose the one named "Régente," in honour of their common mistress. Doria assembled upon deck Lieutenant Napolion, the commander, who was a Corsican by birth, the sailors and soldiers who were on board, and presented them to their new captain. Vieilleville, profiting by his recent apprenticeship, took the frigate in hand as if he had been a sailor all his life, and all the crew yielded him a ready obedience. There were as great rejoicings at his assuming the command as if the fleet had won a signal victory.

A week passed in rejoicings, without the enemy's fleet showing any sign of activity. Vieilleville and Doria then went on shore, by way of a change, and every night they supped in camp with the officers of the army, and joined in all sorts of dissipation.

Don Hugo de Moncado, the commander of the Spaniards, hearing of all this, deter-

mined to surprise the Genoese fleet in the absence of the chiefs. He armed six galleys, took with him the Marquis de Guast, and other of the bravest chiefs of his force, and, placing himself at their head, sailed down upon the Genoese galleys, which he failed, however, to take by surprise.

M. de Lautrec, forewarned of what was brewing, had not only put Count Doria upon his guard, but had reinforced his galleys with four hundred adept and picked marksmen, under the command of a veteran captain, a native of Gascony. So, when the enemy arrived, and, thinking themselves sure of success, attacked the Genoese fleet furiously, they met with such reply as they had not bargained for. At the first discharge the French sunk two galleys, and the others were hemmed in. The combat lasted two hours, hand to hand and foot to foot, with severe losses on both sides. Nearly all the Imperial forces perished, the Viceroy and most of the nobles being killed, while the Marquis de Guast was made prisoner. Two galleys had been sunk and two were captured, the two which

escaped being the "Moncadina" and the "Nympharella," of which I shall have occasion to speak presently. It must be said, upon the other hand, that upon the French side there remained but one hundred and fifty of the four hundred marksmen sent by M. de Lautrec, and not all of these were uninjured.*

The most curious part of the affair was Vieilleville's share in it. He had fought so well on board the "Régente" that only twelve of his marksmen were left out of fifty, and with these twelve men he had conceived the idea of attacking the "Nympharella," one of the two vessels which the enemy had preserved. He grappled her, and his men boarded her; but while they were fighting like demons, the convicts who were wielding the oars ungrappled the galley, and the "Régente" bore off, Vieilleville, who had remained on board the "Nympharella," which set sail for Naples, being obliged to

* Martin du Bellay, whose version is analogous to that of Vieilleville, says that the combat lasted an hour and a half, and that sixty marksmen escaped.

constitute himself the prisoner of Captain Horatio de Barletta. He had already pictured himself a prisoner in the Imperial camp, when, upon approaching Naples, a piece of news arrived which put quite a different face upon matters. Don Hugo de Moncado having been killed two days before in the combat, the Prince of Orange had assumed the command of the town in his stead, and the naval defeat had so exasperated him that when he saw the "Moncaldina" come back into port after the disaster, he had the captain and all the crew hung, without form of trial.

Horatio de Barletta, having learnt this, was so afraid that he did not venture to come into harbour, lest he should be treated in the same way. Vieilleville then made such good use of his indignation that, as in the case of the Count de Melfi, he induced him to enter the King's service. The captain, who had seen by the way in which he fought that he belonged to some illustrious family, placed himself unreservedly in his hands, and he accordingly took the oath of allegiance and

tore to pieces all the red crosses and streamers of his men, who were not at all sorry at what had occurred, being so irritated by the cruelty of the Prince of Orange. The arms of Spain and Austria were also effaced, the Emperor's motto and the eagles, and the galley bore down joyfully—with bending oars, for the wind was contrary—upon the French camp.

In the meanwhile, Vieilleville's friends, finding that he had not returned at the end of twenty-four hours, gave him up for lost. Count Phillip Doria, "in extreme mourning and grief," had search made for his body among the corpses floating in the water, and, as it could not be found, he feared that owing to the weight of armour it had sunk to the bottom. Then, in the hope that he might have been made prisoner upon the galleys which had made off, he arranged with M. de Lautrec to send the "Régente" to Naples, under the orders of Lieutenant Napolion, with a safe-conduct to demand his exchange, or, at all events, to glean some news of him.

Napolion started at once, and the galley, which was sailing fast with the wind in her

favour, sighted about two miles from shore a vessel, which from her shape he knew to belong to the Imperial fleet, bearing down upon him. The sailors were already making ready for battle, when they descried a man at the top of the main-mast flourishing a white streamer. For fear of a surprise, they would not lower their sails, being anxious to retain their advantage, but the sight of the white streamer "gave them pause," and their astonishment increased when, upon getting within a quarter of a mile of the other vessel, they were greeted with flourishes of the trumpet, and discovered upon the poop and along the sides of the vessel sailors waving their caps and shouting "France, France!" The next thing they saw was Vieilleville himself, mounted upon the fore-mast, shouting at the top of his voice to Captain Napolion. The latter was overjoyed to see him again, and thanked God that he was not dead, nor even a prisoner, inasmuch as he had command of the "Nympharella." The men then dropped their sails, and the two galleys accosted each other, the sailors

exchanging joyful greetings and relating their adventures to one another. They anchored under the protection of a lofty mountain to let the convicts take some refreshment. Captain Napolion, who had been a prisoner of Captain Horatio de Barletta, and had been very well treated by him, threw himself into his arms when he learnt that he had rallied to the French cause, and the two commanders were delighted at the idea of henceforth fighting under the same flag and serving the same Sovereign.

In the meanwhile, the Prince of Orange, after having had the crew of the "Moncadina" hung, had provided a fresh crew for the galley, and given the command to a brother of the Prince of Melfi, Alfonso Caracciolo. Finding that the "Nympharella," which he knew had escaped destruction in battle, did not return, and, having his suspicions as to what had happened, he sent the "Moncadina" in pursuit of her. The "Moncadina" came upon the two galleys at anchor, and Vieilleville, who was the first to recognize her, at once conceived of a stratagem to employ against this fresh foe. Calling the crew

promptly together, he put the "Nympharella" in advance, with her flag hoisted, and placed the "Régente" in her stern as if she was in tow of the Spanish vessel. Captain Caracciolo, recognizing the Spanish vessel, which appeared to be sailing along in triumph, bore down upon her without the slightest suspicion. They allowed him to advance, and when he got within range the "Nympharella" opened fire with all her guns, the "Régente," which had got under sail, doing the same. Caracciolo, caught between two fires, endeavoured in vain to make off. The forestay-sail of the "Moncadina" was carried away, her masts were broken, and her crew demoralised; so her commander had no choice but to surrender. Vieilleville, who preferred capturing the galley to sinking it, took the word of the captain and his men, and transferred them all to the "Régente," the whole party then returning to the French camp, with the "Moncadina" in tow.

It may be imagined how well they were received, and M. de Lautrec, upon hearing

what had happened, declared that he had never known anything so singular. He raised to the rank of captain not only Horatio de Barletta, but Alfonso Caracciolo, whose brother, the Prince of Melfi, had already rallied to the cause of France.

“I take them under my protection,” said M. de Lautrec to Vieilleville,” and I do not require of them any other pledge than that which they have given you, and, out of regard for you, I promise to treat them upon the same footing as captains in the French army. As to the galleys, they are yours by right of war, and well have you deserved them, so they are yours to do as you please with.”

Vieilleville replied that he wished to give them to Count Phillip in recognition of the honourable reception which he had met with upon his fleet. But M. de Lautrec pointed out to him that this would be almost more than royal generosity, and that as he had not yet paid the three thousand crowns of his ransom, and as he would require some little money for his journey back to France, he had better sell the galleys.

Vieilleville, who owed the three thousand crowns to M. de Lautrec, understood the allusion, and did as he advised.

One great disappointment cast its shadow over the successes which Vieilleville achieved. He did not find, upon returning to the camp, his friend, Phillip Doria, whom M. de Lautrec had despatched to France with two galleys filled with prisoners. They were not destined to meet again, for Phillip, who had stopped at Genoa to greet his uncle, followed him in his quarrel with the King, and from this period he enlisted beneath the Imperial flag.

During this time M. de Lautrec, whose quarters were at Poge-Real, besieged the city of Naples very closely both by sea and land, the garrison not attempting to make any sortie. Vieilleville, after having waited a month for the assault, and seeing that there was no sign of its being undertaken, asked for leave to go back to France. Lautrec, with considerable reluctance, granted it him, and entrusted him with despatches for François I.

The way in which this campaign ended is

only too well known. The French, remaining inactive, were eventually assailed by that most terrible of scourges, the plague. The disaster was an awful one, for the epidemic spared neither princes nor captains, officers or men, Lautrec himself being struck down. Those who survived might have been taken "for pilgrims rather than soldiers, so thin, poverty-stricken, and gaunt did they appear." The Germans, who sought to retreat by way of Trent, were struck down like dogs, and the French, who retreated upon Rome, did not escape much better.

Vieilleville had doubtless been inspired by his "good angel," when he left Italy before the disaster occurred. Upon returning to France, he repaired to Moulins, where the King was, to deliver his despatches, in which M. de Lautrec related the incidents of the war, and dwelt in detail upon the "perilous fortunes" of the messenger. He entreated the King, in consideration of "such a promising beginning at such an early age (he was only nineteen), to forgive him the homicide of the maître d'hôtel."

François I. told the lad that this was long since forgotten, and that he was very pleased to see him. "You have," the King added, "rendered such brave and famous service, that if you had made an attempt upon my own person, I declare, upon my word of honour, that I would forgive you. Be sure, then, that you do not fail to present yourself at my rising and going to bed, as well as at my meals, to tell me about what took place with my forces at Naples."


Vieilleville took care to obey the King's orders, and for eight or ten days the conversation went on, the King being "marvellously interested in it." *

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., pages 117—158.



CHAPTER II.

THE CAPTURE OF AVIGNON.—MARSHAL DE MONTÉJAN.

URING the six years of peace which followed Cambrai, we may infer from the silence of his memoirs that Vieilleville led much the same life as the other young nobles of his day : taking part in tournaments and other games, hunting wolves and bears, going upon long riding excursions, and making himself proficient in the art of love and gallantry to ladies. Upon the return of the Princes, he was attached to the household of the Duc d'Orléans, second son of the King, afterwards Henri II.*

The Imperial war having begun afresh,

* Vincent Carloix dates this appointment from Vieilleville's return from Italy. But at this period the Princes were still prisoners in Spain.

we find Vieilleville at Lyons in 1536, just as François I. was about to descend the Rhône with his army, while the Emperor was preparing to cross the Alps.*

As, in spite of his protests of neutrality, Clement VII. was suspected of being favourable to Charles V., François determined to make himself master of Avignon, under the pretence of protecting it, and thus avoiding an open violation of neutrality. His proposal was well received by the Council, and the enterprise being decided upon, Vieilleville, despite the objections raised upon the score of his youth, was selected to carry it into execution. He set out, as if on a simple reconnoitring party, with six thousand horsemen and no artillery, in order not to excite suspicion.

Upon reaching Avignon, Vieilleville left his forces behind him, hidden from view by the rising ground, and taking with him six of his gentlemen, made his way to the gates, and requested, through a trumpeter, that he

* "François I.," page 286.

might speak with the Vice-Legate on behalf of the King of France. The Vice-Legate at once appeared upon the walls, and asked what he had to say.

Vieilleville requested him to come down, as he had an important communication, affecting the interests of the city, to make, and he added that he had only six followers with him, while the Vice-Legate might, if he felt apprehensive of his safety, bring a whole company as his escort.

The Vice-Legate, after some hesitation, determined to come down, accompanied by fifteen or twenty soldiers and the principal inhabitants of the city. The gate was opened, and the two delegates went forward to meet each other. Vieilleville assured the Vice-Legate of his pacific intentions, and that all the King asked was that he would exclude the Imperial as well as the French troops, and that, as a pledge of this, he would give a certain number of hostages.

The Vice-Legate consented to give the pledge, but refused to deliver up any hostages, and as Vieilleville insisted, the discus-

sion grew warm, and at last became very furious. During this time, the six men who accompanied Vieilleville — badly clad, badly shod, and altogether miserable in appearance—asked leave to go into the town to have their muskets mended, and buy some powder. When permission to do this was granted, they placed themselves under the gateway, so that the portcullis could not be let down, and several of their companions had joined them from a distance, coming in one by one, and not being noticed in the heat of the discussion. Vieilleville was threatening the Vice-Legate and his followers, that if they persisted in refusing the hostages, he would devastate the country for five miles round, and when he found that the number of his followers had swollen, he struck the Vice-Legate with the flat side of his sword, knocked him down, and forced his way into the city with the few men he had with him. Those inside fired a few shots, and even killed two or three of his followers; but when they attempted to lower the portcullis, they found it protected by four of the French

soldiers, who held their ground until the main body of Vieilleville's troops, warned by the sound of firing what was going on, had time to come forward from their ambuscade in the cornfields. They entered the city like a whirlwind—flags flying and drums beating, and all resistance was hopeless. When the city had been captured, the keys were handed to Vieilleville, who kept all the gates closed except that of the bridge over the Rhône, leading to Villeneuve, "in the King's domain." Vieilleville imposed the strictest discipline upon his troops, slaying with his own hand five or six soldiers and a captain who were inciting to pillage. No act of violence was committed upon the inhabitants; not even upon the Jews; and the women were all treated with respect. When order had been re-established, a messenger was sent to inform the King of what had happened. His remark upon it was: "There's a plucky thing; and I never heard of a city being more adroitly seized and surprised! If Vieilleville goes on like this, upon my word of honour, he will set us all an example."

Thereupon, he ordered the Grand Master Montmorency to descend the Rhône and take command at Avignon, while he himself proceeded to Valence. The Grand Master was met about four miles from Avignon by Vieilleville, to whom, after making him the customary greetings, he said :—

“ You can safely go to Court, M. de Vieilleville. It is long since anyone has been as well received there as you will be. It must be said, too, that you have rendered a signal service to the King, and one beyond anything we could have hoped ; seeing that this Vice-Legate is, as we are informed, the creature of Gonzagua, and that the Pope is none too well disposed towards us. But you showed great diligence, and would not let yourself be deceived. Now that we hold this position, we will take care that the Emperor does not get any further. Is this Vice-Legate dead ? ”

“ No,” replied Vieilleville ; “ but he has had a rare fright. I am keeping him under surveillance in a lodging, so that he may not play any tricks ; having turned him out of

the palace, which I have ordered to be got ready for you, and where you will find your dinner awaiting you. If you would like me to have him sent for, you will see him, and it would be well for you to speak with him, as you might, in the course of conversation, find out what communications he has been keeping up with Gonzagua—a fact which can admit of no doubt.”

In this way, they drew near to the city, and entered the gates. Just as they were doing so, they were met by one of those agents “whom the indiscreet contemptuously call spies, failing to understand what great service they render to Sovereigns.” Montmorency at once recognized him as having been present at the interview when François I. despatched him to the camp, from which he had just arrived. He summoned him to accompany them, and when all three had reached a room to themselves, he ordered him to speak openly before Vieilleville. The spy then said:—

“Sir, I have just come from the Emperor’s camp, in which there is a force of so

many men, with such and such a prince, colonel, noble, and captain (naming them all by their surnames and Christian names, with a detailed account of all the forces, horse and foot). They have determined upon passing into Provence; but they have not yet crossed the pass of Tende, and I can assure you the Emperor is very vexed. It is with Ferdinand de Gonzagua that he is so angry, and he said to him:—

“ ‘What, in Heaven’s name, does this mean? this is not what I was promised?’ ”

“ And, upon Gonzagua asking what was the matter, the Emperor replied, still more angrily:—

“ ‘What is the matter? Why, that the French are in Avignon.’ ”

“ Whereupon Gonzagua assured him that this was not so, and showed him a letter which the Vice-Legate had written him. But the Emperor, in a great rage, tore it up, declaring that it was an imposture which the traitor of a Vice-Legate had crammed down his throat, and that he knew for certain that Avignon was in the hands of his enemy.

And, in consequence of this, they despatched a man to find out the real truth, and to get to communicate, if possible, with the Vice-Legate, whom Gonzagua declared must have been surprised and forced into a surrender. What made me use all haste is that I know this messenger."

Upon this, the Grand Master ordered the spy to seek out this envoy of the Emperor, and the latter soon discovered him in the vice-regency of Avignon, where he was staying with a cousin of his. He was brought in custody before the Grand Master, who had him "put sharply to the question, whereupon he confessed more than was wished;" after this, he was hung.

When this execution had taken place, Vieilleville bade farewell to Montmorency, whom he left in possession of Avignon and preparing to fix his camp in the plain, and he went to rejoin the King at Tournai. About two miles below Thym he met a troop of young nobles who had come to meet him, and bestowed "a million caresses" upon him. Among them were his intimate friend,

St. André, afterwards the favourite of Henri II.; La Chateigneraye, for whom such a tragic end was in store; the eloquent and courageous La Noue, and many others. These young men, who were all serving under the Duc d'Orléans, greeted Vieilleville with enthusiasm, and escorted him without delay to the Duc d'Orléans, who received him with delight, and himself conducted him into the royal presence.

“Come to me,” said His Majesty, “you gentle light of chivalry. When you are a little older I will call you Sun, for if you go on like this you will shine with a brighter lustre than all the others. In the meanwhile, ward off this blow of your Sovereign, who loves and esteems you.”*

As he uttered these words, François I. seized his sword and made him a knight, to the delight of all, and more particularly of the Duc d'Orleans.

François I., after having reconquered Piedmont in 1537, appointed as Governor of

* “Vieilleville,” vol. xxviii., pages 159—170.

that province Marshal de Montéjan, Baron de Sille, and de Baupréau,* the most cantankerous man in all France. There was no question as to his loyalty and bravery, but he was a man of narrow and haughty ideas, of very violent disposition, and ready to take offence, while his furious passion was always getting him into trouble. A proof of this was afforded at the time of the union of Brittany to France in 1532. The States of that province having been convoked upon this occasion, Montéjan, who belonged to an old Anjou family, very devoted to the Crown, was selected to preside over them. The question of the union, sagaciously prepared by the Chancellor Duprat and by Louis des Désert, of the Parliament of Rennes, was sure of passing, despite a certain amount of opposition. But we all know the proverb: "Preserve me from my friends; as to my enemies, I can protect myself from them."

* This is how Godefroi styles him in his "Recueil des Maréchaux de France." The barony of Baupréau must have come to him through his wife, for a son whom she had from a second marriage, inherited it.

When the session opened, the deputies hostile to the plan attempted to speak. Instead of allowing them to state what they had to say, as they were entitled to do, M. de Montéjan intervened so violently and treated them so scandalously that the whole assembly protested. The proposal was very near being rejected summarily, but fortunately an arrangement was come to.*

Two years afterwards, M. de Montéjan, fighting in Piedmont under the orders of Montmorency, persisted, in spite of the most earnest entreaties, in the most headstrong enterprise. Accompanied by the Sieur du Boissy, he attacked with six hundred men Ferdinand de Gonzagua, who was at the head of eighteen hundred horsemen and six thousand infantry. No amount of bravery could save him, and the disaster was a crushing and a rapid one. Nearly all his men were killed, and he himself, having been made prisoner, was conducted to the Imperial camp, where a violent quarrel occurred

* "Martin du Bellay," vol. xvii., page 159; Observations, page 341.

between three chevaliers who were disputing as to his ransom. They were about coming to blows, when the master of the camp, being called in to act as arbiter, awarded it to the one who, having seized the horse's reins, had prevented the prisoner from escaping.*

Despite these rather discouraging antecedents, the King appointed Montéjan Lieutenant-General in Piedmont, and his arrival was at once marked by the most serious quarrels. First of all, he fell out with Guillaume de Langey, Governor of Turin, whose bodyguard he endeavoured to remove. The proceedings to which he resorted were so insulting that the whole province took part against him, and he was compelled to give way.

Langey writes on this subject to his brother: "He at length made overtures that we should live on friendly terms with each other, and I have endeavoured to put up with everything as long as I am under his orders for the King's service; still, he has used language to me that the greatest nobleman in

* "Guillaume du Bellay," vol. xix., pages 380 and 467.

Christendom would not attempt to apply to anyone who had the title of gentleman. . . . He has already done enough to make himself detested by everybody in the province.”*

The same spirit prevailed in the administration, and Montéjan conducted everything in this headstrong fashion. There was no end to arbitrary imposts, exactions, waste, pillage, and other abuses. Trade was ruined, and agriculture could not meet its liabilities. The population of the province grew very discontented, and the leading men in it sent a deputation to remonstrate with him. “God loves justice,” they said, “and princes must love it also if they wish their reign to be a durable one.”

This language made Montéjan furious, and he told them all “to go to five hundred thousand devils,” adding, “the King cares nothing for your wants. Get out of the country, if you like; I can take care of it without you.”

The Piedmontese, though struck with

* “Ribier Collection,” vol. i., page 192. Martin du Bellay makes no mention of these details.

consternation, did not lose heart, and replied:—

“The country does not believe that the King can have any such feelings; or that a change has occurred in his goodness, clemency, and liberality.”

Thereupon, they sent to François I. a notable deputation, headed by a certain Master George, councillor and physician in Turin, to lay before him their grievances. The Governor, who was very loth to let Master George go, had him arrested *en route* at Briançon, and thrown into prison at the Castle of Susa, as a traitor and malefactor. The King, being informed of this, ordered him to be set at liberty, and to be allowed to continue his journey. But it was only upon a second and more imperative order from the King that this was done.

While all this was going on, a revolt broke out at Turin. The soldiers demanded their arrears of pay, and M. de Montéjan, who had lost the money at play, tried to quiet them. They mutinied against him, however, and he had to take refuge in his

castle, and keep very quiet for five or six hours, until the revolt had calmed down.

As disorder followed disorder, François I. saw that it was necessary to exercise some strict control over him, and determined to send a royal commissioner into Piedmont.* In order to spare Montéjan's feelings, he gave this commissioner the title of inspector of fortresses in the province, and he selected for it Vieilleville, who was a near relative of Madame de Montéjan.

It may be imagined what sort of a reception he met with, or rather that he was not received at all. The Governor, instead of going to meet the King's commissioner, as it was his duty to do, shut himself up in his castle, and left Vieilleville to inspect the cities and fortresses by himself. He heard the complaints of the inhabitants, collected all the information he could, and inspected all the military posts. Having completed his

* Ribier mentions a second letter from Langey, dated Aug. 30, 1538, in which he entreats the King to send commissioners into Piedmont.—“Du Bellay,” vol. xviii., page 198; “Vieilleville,” vol. xxviii., pages 178 & 383. There is a great deal of confusion in this part of Vieilleville's Memoirs.

tour, he arrived at Turin, and went straight to the castle. His reception was a very freezing one. The first words of the Governor were to say that as the King was only anxious to be rid of him, he would anticipate his wishes, and go straight to the King and hand over his functions, which Vieilleville might take upon him forthwith.

Vieilleville let him talk, and then gradually, with a mixture of affection and adroitness, he pointed out to him, as an attached relative, that he would be very wrong to act in this way. Montéjan gradually calmed down, and Vieilleville, who went on flattering his *amour-propre*, came close up to him and said in his ear :—

“Monsieur, do not gamble any more! You have gambled and lost two “monstres” (money intended for paying the troops) of the Turin garrison, and that was the cause of the mutiny.”

“What! my cousin,” rejoined the Marshal, much agitated, “does the King know that?”

“Yes; I can assure you,” was Vieille-

ville's answer. "But His Majesty is so attached to you that he does not wish you to be aware that he knows it. You will receive, in a week or so, eighty thousand crowns, to make good your deficiency, and set things in order. I am making my report upon the state of the province, and you will find that, as your relative, friend, and servant, I have smoothed things down as much as possible."

Montéjan, touched by this, spoke to him more cordially; and when he was preparing to start the next day, he got on horseback to accompany him as far as Veillanne. As they were riding along together, Montéjan asked his companion if he did not bear him some little grudge for certain incidents of war, in which he felt that he had been lacking in the fraternity of arms. Vieilleville replied that at the time he felt inwardly grieved at them, but that he bore him no ill-will on that account. They then began to recall the companionship of their early campaigns, their amusements, and their youthful follies. Vieilleville evoking souvenirs particularly dear to his friend.

The imperious Marshal had, in fact, when a youth, fallen deeply in love with a cousin of Vieilleville's, Madame Philippe de Montespédon, a young orphan, who was the ward and heiress of M. de Châteaubriand.* As she was of very old family, possessed a great deal of property, and would inherit still more from him, her guardian had resolved that she should marry no one under a prince of the blood. It was all in vain, therefore, that Montéjan paid her every attention, and that his languishing looks told the story of his love for her. Her guardian was inexorable; and seeing that Madame Philippe was not insensible to these attentions, he forbade her to speak to her "lover," or "attract him in any way." Montéjan, much distressed at this, had recourse to Vieilleville, who at once interested himself cordially in the matter.

M. de Châteaubriand acknowledged his connection with Vieilleville through the Dinan family, from which they both traced their descent, and held him in high esteem.

* Husband of the well-known countess of that name, mistress of François I, page 208.

The latter took advantage of this to become intimate with him, and worm himself into his confidence. One day, he invited him to come, with his ward, and pay him a visit at his Chateau of St. Michel-en-Boys, where Montéjan had already arrived. There, in his own house, and in the exercise of his duties as host, he had many natural opportunities of using his influence. He so charmed M. de Châteaubriand by the attentions which he showed him, that when the time came for asking his assent to the marriage of his ward with Montéjan, he carried his point without difficulty.

The revival of these souvenirs, with all the circumstances and details which accompanied them, dispelled the last traces of anger, and the ancient friendship which Montéjan felt for Vieilleville resumed its sway. He asked him to remove all cause of reproach with the King; and Vieilleville having promised to do so, "their reconciliation was so ardent that they jumped from their horses to embrace each other over and over again, much to the astonishment of

their followers, who could not make out what it was all about." Getting on to their horses again, they rode on to Veillanne, "where they supped, and slept in the same bed, so as to be able to talk more freely."

The next day, they said good-bye, and for the last time, as Montéjan died in the year following.*

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., pages 173 to 181, and Observations, page 383.



CHAPTER III.

ADVENTURES OF THE MARÉCHALE DE MONTÉJAN.

IT is doubtful, from the way in which she wore mourning for him, whether the death of her husband was a great blow to Madame Philippe. Passionate natures like his fascinate more than they attach.

She had, moreover, much to console her. "Bright with great beauty and in the flower of youth," as the Memoirs tell us, "Madame Philippe was, moreover, in the possession of an income of sixty thousand livres," without counting the property of M. de Châteaubriand, which she was not destined to inherit, after all.* She was, besides, a person of wit and

* See her adventure with Montmorency, "François I.," page 272.

experience, who was well able to make the best of life, and take good care of her own interests ; of a bright and cheerful disposition, without any false assumption, devoid of all sentimental and silly fancies. She treated the male sex with just the mixture of coquetry and reserve which attracts and rivets their attentions, without involving herself in any engagement. If she occasionally went a little too far, she knew how to withdraw, and her ease and simplicity went a great way towards making all things pleasant about her. When once she was free, there was no lack of aspirants for her hand. The first who "offered his services" was the Marquis de Saluce,* brother of the man who had, in 1536, given over Piedmont to Charles V.† Very short, stout, and badly built, the Marquis did not look like a man whom a lady

* The Marquisate of Saluce, a movable fief of Dauphiny, was exchanged on the 17th of May, 1601, with the Duke of Savoy, for La Bresse, Le Bugey, Val Romey, and the Barony of Gex.—"Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 393 ; "du Bellay," vol. xviii., page 462 ; "Dictionnaire Historique de Lalande."

† "François I.," page 286.

would fall in love with ; but for all that, he met with a very amiable and even encouraging reception. Madame de Montéjan had an object in view, and that was to return to France ; but knowing how much she was sought after, she dreaded the journey. It so happened that the Marquis de Saluce was about to repair to the Court, with all his train of followers, and he would of course be an invaluable protector on the road. It was desirable, therefore, to be on friendly terms with him, by leaving the future open.

The Maréchale was inimitable in devices of this kind. By means of a few words, which might be interpreted in a double sense, and which were well weighed in advance, a few timid smiles, and reticences, she achieved her object, M. de Saluce having been made to fall into such a trap. For the Marquis, with the southern qualities of exuberance, impetuosity, and gush, was made of the vain and self-satisfied material which a woman's supple hand can so well fashion as suits her best. He had taken fire at the first words, not to say at the first silence, of Madame

Philippe, and he was at once well assured of success, and ready to undertake anything that might be required of him. Not only was he at her orders to escort her to Paris, but being inwardly convinced of marrying her, he was ready to defray all the expenses of the journey.

She said nothing, and so they started.

It was no small affair in those days to travel from Turin to Paris, especially for two great personages who had a large train of servants. The Maréchale had retained, in addition to her own, the servants of her late husband, and some idea may be formed of their number when it is said that, in addition to the gentlemen, officers, valets, and ladies' maids, "there were fifteen or sixteen needlewomen." Added to the servants of the Marquis, with the horses, baggage-waggons, litters, etc., these all formed such a large caravan, that the crowd assembled to stare at it as it passed through the different towns. The Marquis was much pleased at all this display, and gave his orders in a loud tone, as if he and the Maréchale were already man and wife,

or, at all events, betrothed. He strutted about, cracked jokes, and even remarked that it would be necessary to dismiss this man or get rid of that, as the household would be too large. All the time, Madame Philippe kept on smiling, and, though reserved, was so amiable that the poor Marquis plunged deeper and deeper into the mire.

Travelling by very slow stages, they arrived in April at Lyons, where they had decided to rest for twelve days. There Madame Philippe received letters from Vieilleville, which were so secretly given her by the courier that no one knew anything of it, though the Marquis had set several of his servitors to watch, not because he had any doubt as to the Maréchale's feelings for him, but in order to discover whether he had any rivals, and if so to cut them out.

Vieilleville had always been a very affectionate cousin and trustworthy friend for her, and she knew this. His letters, dated from St. Germain-en-Laye, April 6, 1540, where the King was staying, gave her the news of the Court. Everybody was full, he said, of

her marriage with M. de Saluce. It was announced that they were both coming to Paris for the wedding, and the King had expressed himself as very pleased at it, thinking that it would be the best means of attaching the Marquis to him, nothing being so potent a tie upon a dweller in a strange land as love. When the Marquis had become naturalized through this alliance, there would be no reason for fearing that he would enter into intrigue with the Emperor, or that the latter would endeavour to corrupt and entice him. In fact, people said that Madame de Montéjan appeared to be about to marry more to render service to the King than to suit her own fancy and desires. He himself was too sharp to believe in so much disinterestedness, and he could not think that having been such a good and faithful wife to her first husband, she could so soon have thought of taking a second without first advising him, her near relative and most humble and affectionate servant. He begged her, therefore, to enlighten him upon all these points. Finally, he asked her to let the bearer

of the letter also deliver her a verbal message, to which he requested her special attention.

Madame Philippe, after having read the letter and heard the verbal message, at once replied to her cousin. She thanked him for his good opinion of her, and explained how it was that the difficulties of returning to France had led her to choose the Marquis's company, adding :—

“God has been so good to me that by His great mercy I have returned to France without having made any promise, engagement, or contract with living man. The present letter will testify to this before the Church and before Justice. It affects my honour, and you can show my letter to any one you please.

“I cannot sufficiently wonder at the King for thinking me capable of securing servitors for him at the cost of my good fortune and against my inclination. I never intend to become Italian, and had I any such intent, I should avoid the Marquis for several reasons, which I will give you at some future time, but of which the chief is that he is not French at

heart. Although he pretends to be well affected to the King, he is no more to be trusted than his brother, the Marquis François, whose treachery placed the lives of so many brave nobles and knights, including several of our relatives, in peril at the siege of Fossan.

“ I have also well considered the message which this gentleman has transmitted to me on your behalf. I see by it that you think of me and care for me far more than I do for myself; and I thank you for it with all my heart, the only recompense I can offer you being to assure you that you may always count upon finding me your most grateful cousin and affectionate friend,

“ PHILIPPE DE MONTESPEDON.

“ Lyons, April 12, 1540.”

The journey of the two travellers was drawing to an end. The Marquis, anxious to make a grand appearance at Court, had purchased the finest stuffs, and Madame de Montéjan had also bought a great many articles of dress. In addition to this increase

of baggage, M. de Saluce had, out of sheer gallantry, hired a band of musicians to "charm the ennui of the route," so that their cortège was an endless one. The horses and mules were accordingly sent by road to Briare, the Márquis and his companion going to Roaune, where they took boat upon the Loire. Their immediate following was so numerous that six boats were required, and the meals were cooked on board.

Their journey proceeded uneventfully, and when they got close to Paris, Vieilleville, who had been advised of their progress by the King's messengers, who were constantly on the road between Paris and Piedmont, was at Corbeil with eighty horses when they reached Essonne, whither he despatched a courier to take Madame de Montéjan's orders. She requested him to meet them at Juvisy on the following day at the dinner hour. He accordingly did so, and the interview was a very cordial one. The two travellers related to him their adventures, and expressed their pleasure at getting back to Paris, which they were to reach the same evening.

After a short time, Madame de Montéjan withdrew to make ready for starting; but before getting on to her horse, she sent for the head of her household, Sieur du Plessis-au-Chat, a gentleman of Brittany, and ordered him, as soon as they reached the Porte St. Marceau, to separate her cortège from that of the Marquis, and to proceed along the fortifications, between that gate and the Porte St. Jacques, while they were taking leave of each other.

The travellers accordingly passed through the Faubourg St. Marceau, making a very imposing show, and at the gate of the city, du Plessis-au-Chat obeyed his mistress's orders, and proceeded towards the Porte St. Jacques. The Marquis, much surprised, thought that he had mistaken the road, and asked him where he was going.

“They are quite right,” rejoined the Maréchale, “for your lodging is at the Hôtel des Ursins, in the cloister of Notre Dame, and mine at the Hôtel St. Denis, near the Augustins. My honour prevents me from lodging in the same hotel with you, and this

is why we must now take leave of each other, but I will not do so without very humbly thanking you for your pleasant company. With regard to the expenses of the journey, I have kept a careful account of them, and your steward and Plessis-au-Chat will settle all that in a week, so that we shall be quits. I mean as regards money, for as to the obligation which you have put me under, it will be lasting, and I am afraid that I shall never be able fully to discharge it. I beg you to believe that this is only a bodily separation, for I leave you my heart, which I trust will be in good keeping."

Whereupon she embraced him, adding:—"Adieu, monsieur; we shall meet to-morrow in the royal presence."

The Marquis was "so taken aback at this sudden change" that he could not utter a word. But "his sobs and sighs" spoke for him. At last, recovering his presence of mind, he replied:—

"Madame, your farewell tore my heart-strings, but your last words and the kiss you honoured me with give me fresh courage.

To-morrow, as you say, we shall meet again. But do not forget the promises you gave me, and good-bye."

Thereupon they parted.

While the worthy Marquis, hoping against hope, was going over, as he rode along, the many irrefutable reasons which would shortly throw the beautiful Maréchale into his arms, she reached her lodging and set to making herself at home with her heart far away from her travelling companion. She was expecting two visits, and it may be surmised that, while giving her orders to her retinue, she had an eye to her prim widow's dress, and was careful that she did not appear at her worst; for the moment was a critical one, as in a few hours time the secret of the message delivered at Lyons was to be revealed. M. de Vieilleville presented to his cousin the future master of her hand and heart, Prince Charles de la Roche-sur-Yon.

This Prince, a brother of Louis II., Duc de Montpensier, and of Antoine, afterwards King of Navarre, belonged to the younger branch of the Bourbons, which was, as we

know, very poor and much out of favour since the treason of the Constable. The Prince was a perfect gentleman, of good presence, very courteous, and of most agreeable manners. Of an amiable disposition, and of an elevated character, he always took a humane and tolerant view, Brantôme tells us, in the quarrels of religion. As brave and valiant as he was sagacious and prudent, a man of high honour in all matters, he never deceived any one, and faithfully kept all his promises. "So it was that a young lady of the Court, with whom he was much in love, called him the 'faithful *grison*,' in allusion to a very handsome grey horse belonging to the King."*

Vieilleville, his oldest and most intimate friend, regarded this marriage as at once calculated to ensure his happiness and to improve his fortunes, while he thought that he was advancing his cousin's interests by obtaining for her the rank of Princess and relationship to the King through her marriage to the most amiable man at Court. They

* "Brantôme," vol. i., page 487.

both pleased each other so well that, with Vieilleville's help, they at once came to an understanding, and Madame de Montéjan accepted the Prince as her suitor the same evening.

Vieilleville urged him to press his suit, declaring that any delay would be risky. The situation was, beyond doubt, a rather complicated one.

The next day, the Marquis de Saluce arrived, attired with great splendour, and brimming over with hope, to pay his respects to the charming widow. It was scarcely possible to pull him up short and treat him with contumely, after having travelled all that distance together. The least that could be done was to avoid rejecting him point blank, and to fence with his pressing demands. So the matter was spun out, and fresh suitors appeared upon the scene; among others, Marshal d'Annebaud, who had succeeded M. de Montéjan as Governor of Piedmont. "M. d'Annebaud was not much of a courtier, nor was he very eloquent of speech; in fact, he stuttered slightly; but he

was a man of high honour, and very brave into the bargain,"* besides being a great favourite of the Dauphiness, Catherine de Médicis, to whom he confided his aspirations in a long letter, written on his way to take over the government of Piedmont.

He stated in the letter that there were three reasons which should make Madame de Montéjan decide in his favour; the first being that he occupied the same position as her late husband, so that she would not lose in rank; the second being that, having rendered great and signal services to the King, he stood a good chance of obtaining preferment when there were any honours to be bestowed;† while the third reason was, that as his land in Brittany ran into the property of Madame de Montéjan, their marriage would be a great convenience to both. Putting their incomes together, they would have a revenue of 100,000 livres (francs), "which is a rare thing in this

* "Brantôme," vol. i., page 286.

† He was, as a matter of fact, appointed Admiral soon after.

kingdom, outside the rank of prince." He accordingly entreated Madame la Dauphine to "secure him this good thing."

Upon receipt of this letter, Catherine, who was very obliging to her friends, and was, moreover, very partial to a display of patronizing influence, took his request up, and sent for the Maréchale. The latter at once obeyed the summons, and was informed by the Dauphiness of her desire to arrange a marriage for her. She then, without naming the suitor, set before her all the advantages dwelt upon by Marshal d'Annebaud in his letter.

The Maréchale, who was much less at ease with persons of her own than she was with those of the opposite sex, was taken quite aback. The Dauphiness then said who her protégé was, and how much superior he was to the Marquis de Saluce. The latter, she said, Italian by birth, and Imperialist at heart, would, if war breaks out afresh, be out of favour at the least suspicion, and, what is more, would be disgraced, for he would

be denounced as a traitor. Moreover, "he is very ungainly in his person, pot-bellied, dirty, of a swarthy, bad complexion, and devoid of all grace, while M. d'Annebaud, as you see, is honest and strong, acceptable in all ways."

Madame de Montéjan listened very willingly to all the hard things said of the Marquis, but they did not make her any the more favourable to M. d'Annebaud, and all she had in her head for the moment was how to avoid all these benevolent intentions without displeasing the exalted personage who had conceived them for her.

"I cannot say, Madame," she replied, after a short pause, "whether Marshal d'Annebaud or myself should be the more grateful that a great Princess, the most excellent in Christendom, should have deigned to take the trouble to bring us together. How sorry I am that it did not please you, while I was still on my journey, to announce your intention, for then I would have followed him, esteeming myself only too happy to have been married by such hands as

yours. But now, Madame, I find myself so far advanced in proposals of marriage with some one else, that I could not well draw back without laying myself open to a charge of fickleness and bad faith. I hope, at all events, that it will not be displeasing to you that I should ally myself with one who will one day have the honour of being the very humble servant and near relative of your children, should God grant to you and to us the grace of your having any."

In reply to the inquiry of the Dauphiness as to whom she meant, Madame Montéjan told her that it was the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, and that her cousin, de Vieilleville "had thrust the irons so far into the fire that I could not draw back without being accused of fickleness and bad faith."

Disarmed by this way of presenting the matter, Madame la Dauphine congratulated her, and handed her M. d'Annebaud's letter, and promised not to speak on the subject again. She also advised her, as Vieilleville had done, to hurry on the marriage for fear of its being opposed by the King, who was

very much in favour of M. de Saluce. This, however, was no such easy matter. Clever as a woman may be, she always finds it easier to get herself into an equivocal situation than to get out of it, as Madame de Montéjan learnt. Far from renouncing his claims, M. de Saluce continued to declare them to everyone, making himself very conspicuous in connection with the young widow. He told everybody that she was irrevocably engaged to him; he styled her in public his "mistress," after the fashion of the time, and called to see her every day. Madame de Montéjan, dreading a scene, hoped to tire him out by treating all this as a joke. She laughed at his gallant expressions, affected to regard them as of no significance, and gradually drew further away from him.

A situation so false and so strained could not last for ever. The dilatory state of affairs irritated the impatience and vanity of the Marquis, especially as whenever he came to pay a visit he found the Prince de la Rochesur-Yon quietly settled in the room, and apparently quite at home. The Prince was

a regular thorn in the flesh to him ; for what could be harder than to find oneself in the presence of a cold, taciturn, and polite nobleman, whose rank of Prince exacted a certain amount of respect, and of the woman with whom you were in love, bright, amiable, and good-natured, but ever intangible, and not to be brought to the point. This is enough to make any man, however convinced he may be of his own merit, lose his head ; and so it was with the Marquis.

His patience being exhausted, and believing that he was encouraged in his suit by the King, he devised, as a means of settling the matter, the most singular expedient to which a suitor could resort—that of summoning Madame de Montéjan, not before the Official, a religious tribunal, but before Parliament, for her to declare as to whether or not she had promised him marriage.

The news of this created a great sensation, and it was the talk of the town and of the Court. And Madame de Montéjan, it will be said, must have sincerely regretted her coquetry when she was served with the writ.

Fortunately, in those days, when a young and beautiful woman committed a foolish act, there was always certain to be a man ready to come forward and protect her cause. In this case the man was her cousin, and we shall see how he met the attack in a way that astonished both the Parliament and the Court.

Upon the day appointed, by order of the King, the Parliament assembled, the Presidents and Councillors of the High Chamber being present. The audience was a very solemn one. Madame de Montéjan came into the Chamber attended by Vieilleville and a suite of nobles, ladies, and damsels. The First President made her raise her hand, and asked her, in the presence of M. de Saluce, whether she had not promised him marriage. She replied, "No, upon my faith." The President attempted to carry his examination of her further, the Registrar writing down her replies; but she suddenly checked him, and made the following speech:—

"Gentlemen, I have never before found myself face to face with the law as I do now,

and this what makes me apprehensive of contradicting myself in my answers. But, in order to prevent any sort of quibbling about what I may say, I declare in your presence, gentlemen, and in that of all here assembled, I swear before God upon the eternal damnation of my soul, and before the King upon the confiscation of my life and honour, that I never gave my word, or my pledge, or any promise of marriage to M. de Saluce; and what is more, I never thought of so doing. And if there is anyone here who says the contrary," she added, taking Vieilleville by the wrist, "here is my chevalier, whom I present to them, in order that he may uphold my word, which he knows to be true, uttered by the lips of an honourable woman, if ever there was one, and of a woman of high repute, who, trusting in God and the justice of her cause, hopes, with all due respect to the Court, that he will prove him to be a foul liar."

This was equivalent to taking the matter out of the hands of the gentlemen of the long robe, and bringing it before that ancient

court of honour which, it is true, had been allowed to fall into disuse, but the authority of which could not be questioned by any member of the French nobility, least of all by the King chevalier. This the President felt, and exclaimed, "What a check! You may as well retire, Registrar, for, as far as I can see, there will be no further question of taking down evidence in writing. Madame la Maréchale has adopted another course, and a much shorter one." Turning to the Marquis, he asked him :

"Well, sir, what view do you now take of the matter?"

The Marquis replied that he had no wish to take a wife by force; and "if she does not wish to have me, neither do I her."

He then made a low bow and retired, knowing that he could not attempt to cope with Vieilleville, either in bodily agility, fat as he was, nor as regards skill at fence, or valour.

Vieilleville then asked the Parliament whether Madame de Montéjan was not at liberty to contract marriage with whom she

pleased, inasmuch as the Marquis had publicly withdrawn all pretensions to her hand. The answer being in the affirmative, he turned towards the Court, and said :—

“ Gentlemen, if you will be so good as to come to the residence of the Archdeacon du Hardaz, you will meet there the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, accompanied by the Dukes d’Etampes, Rohan, and Gié, waiting to be affianced to Madame la Maréchale. The Bishop of Angers is quite ready to perform the ceremony.”

The Court, not wishing to be mixed up in the disputes of the great, declined the honour, saying that they must depute one of their number to make a report of the proceedings to the King.

The Court then rose, and as the members of it were leaving, one of them called Vieilleville aside, and said to him in a whisper :—

“ If you had not put this challenge to combat in the way, the case would have lasted six months, for the Marquis had prepared an interrogatory of forty questions

relating to all that the Maréchale had said to him and his suite, and to the kisses which she had given him while on the road, notably at the Porte St. Marceau. The most serious allegation, however, was that of the equerry St. Julien, governor of the Marquis's household, that she had promised him a chain worth five hundred crowns for his wedding uniform."

"Well," rejoined Vieilleville, "she is a Frenchwoman who has beaten a hundred Italians."

"Not so," said the other; "it is you who are the gallant hero of this triumph. You managed the affair so well that it was disposed of in less than an hour, and you have extricated the Maréchale from a very awkward fix."

Upon the same day the betrothal was effected, at the residence of the Archdeacon of the Sainte-Chapelle, by the Bishop of Angers, and four days later Cardinal de Bourbon married them at the Church of the Augustins, with very little pomp and ceremony, as was the custom with widows.

Thus, the dream of M. de Châteaubriand was in the end realized, and his ward married a prince of the blood, this marriage being also due to Vieilleville.*

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., pages 197 to 218.



CHAPTER IV.

DEATH OF M. DE SCÉPEAUX.—FRIENDSHIP OF
VIEILLEVILLE AND THE BOURBON PRINCES.
—CAMPAIGN IN PROVENCE.



VIEILLEVILLE lost his father about 1540.* He then returned home to take possession of his property, and while there he determined to marry. His choice fell upon a daughter of the House of Tour-de-Maines, near Saumur, a “beautiful and virtuous dame,” who did not, however, occupy a very large place in his life. When he was about to bring her back to his residence of St. Michel-en-Boys, he asked M. de Châteaubriand, then Governor of Brittany, to honour with his presence the reception commonly known as “the return

* This appears to me, from a comparison of the facts, the most likely date.

from the honeymoon." M. de Châteaubriand, valetudinarian and gouty though he was, was loth to refuse, having a great regard for his young relative, and being anxious to make certain proposals to him. When they were alone, he made two: the first being that he should assume the lieutenancy of his company, with the authority of captain; and the second that he should have the succession to the Governorship of Brittany, which he felt sure the King would give him the promise of. Vieilleville accepted the offer of the company, and promised* his relative to "lead it into places where it would cover itself with glory"; but he refused the succession to the Governorship, being too young and gallant to accept what would be an honourable retreat.†

Vieilleville, allied to the Princes of the House of Bourbon, lived upon very intimate

* He did, as a matter of fact, make a very gallant use of it during the campaign in the North, at the sieges of Landrecies, St. Dizier, Hesdin, and Théroüanne, and at the camp of Marolles.—"Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 184.

† "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 181. M. de Châteaubriand died soon after.

terms with them at Court. The house of the Comte de St. Pol, uncle of the Comte d'Enghien, was like his own. The young Comte d'Enghien was most devoted to him, and treated him with the utmost deference. He always called him his "bel oncle," a term of alliance which was generally employed in France among the princely families.* Whenever any party or entertainment was got up at Court, they were sure to be found upon the same side, and their mutual friendship was as close as that of Damon and Pythias. When they came to talk of serious matters, the young Prince paid great attention to what Vieilleville said, and regarded his word as law. He always called him in public his "bel oncle, whom he loved better than himself."

In 1543, during the war in Provence, the Comte d'Enghien was sent thither to join Barberousse's troops. Vieilleville, being attached to the household of the Dauphin, was

* The Dukes of Brittany, Berry, Burgundy, Guyenne, Orleans, Anjou, and Bourbon called each other step-uncle, step-nephew, step-cousin.

not one of the nobles selected to go with him, and this was a great disappointment to the young Prince, who set to thinking how he could manage to get over this difficulty. One day, while the Dauphin was playing at tennis, he came to look on, as if by chance, with a very doleful face. The Dauphin began to talk to him about the war, but, suddenly remarking his woe-begone looks, asked him what was the matter. St. André, who was always ready with a word, at once said:—

“I would stake my life that it is because he has to leave M. de Vieilleville behind.”

“Why, of course,” remarked the Dauphin; “what could I have been thinking of not to have remembered his step-uncle?”

And without a moment's delay, calling for Griffon, his valet of the chamber, he asked him where M. de Vieilleville was. On being told that he was in the apartments of Madame d'Étampes, where he was playing flux (a game of cards mentioned by Rabelais) with her and Cardinal de Lorraine, the Dauphin at once went there, and after watching three or four *cassades* (hands), he

informed Vieilleville that he was attached to the person of the Comte d'Enghien during his expedition to Provence.

Great was the joy of the two friends. The Comte d'Enghien asked Vieilleville to come to supper with him at his brother's, M. de Vendôme, where he was treated to much good cheer, and sincerely thanked for the "right good will" which he showed in complying with his master's orders. The question of their starting was also discussed and settled.

The two friends went by post straight to Lyons, where they embarked upon the Rhône as far as the village of Cabanes, about eight miles from Marseilles, where they were met by Baron de Grignan, the governor of the province.

The Baron, upon M. d'Enghien's arrival, asked him for a private audience, and then communicated to him the treason of three Savoyard soldiers, who had offered to deliver to the French the Château of Nice, which was the last refuge of the Emperor's ducal ally. All required was that four galleys, carrying the Comte d'Enghien and the most

dashing captains and nobles, should advance, under cover of the night, beneath the walls of the castle, when the garrison would make over the fortress.

M. d'Enghien, being young, ardent, and eager for glory, greeted this proposal with enthusiasm; but being unwilling to do anything without the advice of Vieilleville, he reported the matter to him. The proposal, coming from the quarter it did, struck the latter as suspicious and very likely to be a ruse, so he advised the Count not to reject it altogether, but to avoid exposing any of his leading men in the four galleys which were to advance beneath the walls of the Château, and to let the remainder of the fleet keep watch over them from a distance. It was well that this advice was followed, for no sooner had the galleys reached the Nice waters, than they were surrounded by Doria's vessels, and it was only by desperate rowing that the Comte d'Enghien himself, who was waiting at Cauroux to see the result, managed to escape. This made him conceive a violent hatred for M. de Grignan.

But the unhappy Governor, in despair at his blunder, fell ill, fearing that he would be accused of treason, and that when the facts were communicated to the King he would be a lost man. So when Vieilleville went to see him, he threw up his arms outside the bed, and entreated M. de Vieilleville to effect his reconciliation with the young Prince. Moved to compassion, especially because of his great age, Vieilleville promised to intercede, and he accordingly urged the Comte d'Enghien to go and see the old man. But the Comte d'Enghien refused, adding—

“ If he should die, the King will not be a loser; and if the post becomes vacant, you are on the spot to fill it up. Remember, my bel oncle, that he engaged my honour and risked my life. But for you, I should be either dead or a prisoner. As to going to see him, I cannot at all bring myself to do that.”

But Vieilleville returned to the charge, saying—

“ You must remember that respect is due

to old age and to a lieutenant of the King holding so high a rank. It would be a bad example to set if a young Prince like you were to be implacable. Come, sir, let us go together, and do not let this matter irritate you. In order to assure him that you are not sending a dispatch to the King which is calculated to injure him, write it in his presence, and as he may dictate it."

M. d'Enghien having given way, they went together to see M. de Grignan, in whose presence the dispatch was written and sent off, through Valenciennes, the Prince's secretary.

Pending the arrival of Barberousse at Marseilles, when the attack was to commence, a succession of fêtes served to beguile the impatience of the young nobles. The Imperial fleet, commanded by Doria, was not far off, and among the officers with it was his nephew, Count Phillip, Vieilleville's former friend. Vieilleville wrote to him, and asked him to name the ransom for M. de la Tour-du-Maines, his brother-in-law, a prisoner of the Imperial forces. Phillip sent him back

without payment, in memory of their youthful friendship and their happy days at Naples.

The result of the campaign is well known, how the town of Nice was taken and sacked by the French and the Turks, who failed to capture the Château. The Turks passed the winter at Toulon, and sailed away in the spring. M. d'Enghien then returned to the army of the King, who was fighting in the north, and Vieilleville went to reside upon his property.

A few months later, as the war went on, and things were not going on well in Piedmont, the King sent M. d'Enghien back there, and the latter at once despatched a messenger to Vieilleville, adjuring him to follow him. He would brook no excuses, the only one he "would accept being that Madame de Vieilleville was at the point of death, which may God forbid! He should not regard himself as being the King's lieutenant in Piedmont if he had not his 'bel oncle' at his side."

Upon reaching the scene of battle, the

Prince assumed command of the troops, and, "by way of a start," he captured three or four fortified places, right under M. de Guast's nose. He then laid siege to Carignan, and despatched to the King Blaise de Montluc, to ask his consent to deliver battle.* Montluc himself gives a very curious account of how he fulfilled his mission. He says:—

"About noon, Admiral d'Annebaud bade me go and see the King, who had already opened his Council, at which were present M. de St. Pol, the Admiral himself, the Grand Equery Galliot, M. de Boissy, etc. The Dauphin was standing behind the King's chair, and the Admiral opposite, upon the other side of the table. As I entered the room, the King said to me—

"Montluc, I desire that you should return to Piedmont with my decision and that of my Council to M. d'Enghien, and I wish you to hear yourself the difficulty (regret) we have in not allowing him to deliver battle as he

* Vincent Carlay tells us that he sent Captain Blainville. But Montluc relates the scene so explicitly, that he must have been a witness of it.

wishes." Whereupon he ordered St. Pol to give the reasons for this decision.

M. de St. Pol pointed out to what perils a lost battle would expose the kingdom. The Emperor and the King of England, allied against France, were at that moment preparing an invasion from the north, and it was more important to defend the frontier than to capture the Province of Milan, or assure the conquest of Piedmont. The Admiral took the same view as M. de St. Pol, as did the other members of the Council.

"I was longing to speak," continues Montluc, "and was about to interrupt M. Galliot, when M. de St. Pol motioned to me with his hand, as much as to say, 'Don't be so hasty!' which made me hold my tongue, and I saw that the King began to laugh. The Dauphin did not give his opinion, which is, I believe, the custom; but the King would always insist upon his presence in Council, so that he might become familiar with the conduct of affairs. . . . In the presence of these princes there are always several opinions, and not always honest ones. People

“speak so as to suit the humour of their master. I should not be of much use in such a Council, for I always say what I think.”

At last the King said:—

“Have you well heard, Montluc, the reasons which move me not to give M. d’Enghien leave to fight or incur any risk?”

“I answered that I had, but that if it pleased His Majesty to let me give my opinion, I would do so with pleasure. His Majesty said that it would be his pleasure.”

Montluc gives at length his harangue, which was an ardent and voluble plea in favour of war, terminating thus:—

“All that these gentlemen fear is loss. I have heard nothing else but ‘if we are beaten! if we are beaten!’ I have heard no one say ‘if we are successful! if we are successful, what a grand thing it would be!’ In heaven’s name, your Majesty, do not hesitate to grant our request, and do not allow me to return with the shame of having to say that you have been afraid to let us incur the

hazard of a battle, we who offer you our lives so willingly.

“The King, who had listened very kindly to me, and who seemed to be amused at my impatience, then looked across to M. de St. Pol, who said :—

“‘Would you change your mind because of this madcap, who is only speaking of fighting, and who takes no account of the disastrous consequences to you of losing a battle ; that is a calculation quite beyond the brain of a young Gascon.’

“Montluc went on to advocate his cause, emboldened by the nods of the Dauphin, whom he had already convinced, and who smiled to himself at the allusions he made. M. de St. Pol, losing his temper, returned to the charge, and exclaimed :—

“‘What, your Majesty, is it possible you are going to alter your mind and listen to what this raving madcap says ?’

“‘In good sooth, my cousin,’ replied the King, ‘he has given me such good reasons, and represents so well the high spirits of my people, that I hardly know what to say.’

“To which M. de St. Pol rejoined :—

“‘I see you are already talked over.’

“During all this time the Dauphin was still nodding to Montluc, as much as to say, ‘go on.’ St. Pol, having his back turned, did not see this, but Admiral d’Annebaud did, so when the King called upon him to give his opinion, he said with a smile—

“‘Does your Majesty wish for the truth? You are dying to give them leave to fight. I will not undertake to say positively whether we shall be victors or vanquished, for that is a secret known only to Providence, but I will lay my life and honour that they will fight like heroes. As you are half won over, and are inclined to let them fight, offer up your prayers to Almighty God, and entreat Him to guide you to a right decision.’

“Then the King, lifting up his eyes to heaven, and placing his cap upon the table, said—

“‘My God, I pray Thee to inspire me this day with the right decision as to what is best for the maintenance of my kingdom.’

“Whereupon the Admiral asked him what

decision he had come to, and the King answered, 'That they are to fight! that they are to fight!'

"'Then there is no more to be said,' remarked the Admiral. 'If you are defeated, on you alone be the blame, and if you are victorious—the same.'

"Then the King and all that were with him arose, and I was scarcely able to contain myself for joy." *

Once it was announced that there was to be a battle, all the young men of the Court started to join M. d'Enghien. St. André (the Dauphin's intimate friend), Dampierre, of the Clermont family; La Chateigneraye and Jarnac, whose duel afterwards created so much stir; the Vidame de Chartres; the brothers Bonnivet; Châtillon; d'Andelot, and many others.† The Prince was all the more pleased to see them because the treasury was empty, and he made use of their purses to replenish it. The advances

* "Blaise de Montluc," vol. xxii., pages 245 to 262.

† "Du Bellay," vol. xxi., page 104.

were paid over to the Treasurer of the Special War Fund, who became responsible for repayment pending the arrival of the King's money.

M. d'Enghien's first question was as to the whereabouts of his "bel oncle," and what he was doing, and he was delighted to learn that he might be expected to arrive the next day with fifteen post horses. M. d'Enghien, on hearing of this, took horse and went out four miles to meet him, quite indifferent to any feelings of jealousy which this might excite. When they met, he would not allow him to get off his horse, but they embraced each other from the saddle, and rode back together to the Prince's quarters, where Vieilleville found himself treated like a brother.

The battle was preceded by numerous skirmishes and countermarches, in which each side endeavoured to deceive the other. Upon Monday, April 14th, the two armies met near Céresoles.

The French numbered from twelve to fifteen thousand men, while the Imperial forces ranged from fifteen to twenty thousand.

The Marquis de Guast was so confident of success that he had had chains made for the French, and locks to fasten them with at the galleys. When he showed these chains to the ladies at Milan, the latter entreated him to deal mercifully with the Comte d'Enghien, "because he was so good-looking;" but he roughly replied that "the day of knight errants had gone by."

When the Imperial forces were routed, M. de Guast fled, and among the enemy's baggage the French found more than four thousand locks, which had been intended to secure them to the galleys. The Marquis de Guast, after this ludicrous collapse of his boastings, never ventured to show himself to the ladies of Milan again.*

An incident which occurred during the retreat was near to costing the Duc d'Enghien his life. As the Prince of Salerno, with eight or nine hundred cavalry, which had hardly been engaged at all, was retreating in good

* "Observations aux Mémoires de du Bellay," vol. xxi., page 297.

order, M. St. André and Chateigneraye set out in pursuit with scarcely more than a hundred horsemen, and M. d'Enghien wished to join in with them. But Vieilleville stopped him by reminding him how Gaston de Foix met his death by being stabbed while pursuing fugitives at Ravenna. To which M. d'Enghien rejoined—

“Stop MM. St. André and La Chateigneraye, and I will stop too.”

“In heaven's name, Monseigneur,” exclaimed Vieilleville, “you forget your station, and are simply anxious to cut out the two others.”

M. d'Enghien then threw his arms over Vieilleville's neck, and said—

“All right, my bel oncle, we will say no more about it.”

He had scarcely spoken when St. André and la Chateigneraye came back at full gallop, as the Prince of Salerno, seeing how matters stood, turned round and charged the small French detachment.

Then Vieilleville remarked—

“Now is the time to march and fight,

inasmuch as the enemy is facing us ; not when he has his back turned."

But on seeing the forces collecting around M. d'Enghien, the Prince of Salerno again beat a retreat.*

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., pages 263 to 291.—Poem by Ronsard on the Battle of Céresoles, edition of 1623, in folio, vol. i., p. 341.



CHAPTER V.

HENRI II.—DIANE DE POITIERS.—MONT-
MORENCY.—ST. ANDRÉ.



HENRI II. succeeded his father on the 15th of March, 1537, being then twenty-eight years of age.

The numerous portraits of this sovereign * represent him as having coarse and commonplace features, very undecided lines of countenance, no expression, no light or fire in the eyes. One can read upon this inexpressive

* See in the Louvre, No. 111, the portrait by Clouet, and the copy of it. See also the statue attributed to Jean Goujon, and that by Germain Pilon, in the Salle de la Renaissance, Nos. 101 and 129, at Versailles; two portraits on wood, of the sixteenth century, one of them attributed to Quesnel, Nos. 3177 and 3178; two imitations of Clouet, Nos. 3175 and 3176. See also the curious drawings in the Gower, Niel, Gaignières, and Lenoir Collections. All these portraits depict exactly the same type of countenance.

and melancholy face all the misfortunes of his past life : his early years devoid of maternal affection, and then the misfortunes of his country, which came upon him while still a child.

Henri d'Orleans was seven years old when called upon, with his brother, to take his share of the burden of royalty. Of a timid disposition, he had to face exile and imprisonment at an age when he most needed the care and the comforts of home ; having a fortress for a residence, with thick bare walls, and iron-barred windows, admitting little light and less air. Instead of being able to play in the sunshine, to mount his horse, and to take part in the games of boyhood, he was shut up in solitude with the Dauphin, the only pastime which they had being to colour a few rude drawings, which, as their jailer contemptuously put it,* was "a poor amusement for so mighty a Prince." His servitors had been sent to the galleys, captured by the Turks, or reduced to slavery, and he saw

* "François I.," page 193.

nothing around him but hostile faces, and heard nothing but words of mistrust or denunciation. Fear and cruelty were his masters, and when the hour of deliverance arrived, he, who had so long been broken to a *régime* of isolation and silence, suddenly found himself in the midst of a country which was overflowing with delight at his return. The shouts of joy, the acclamations and the triumphant greetings dazed him,* and all the faces he saw were new to him. He assumed his proper rank in the kingdom, and his household was chosen from among the greatest in the land; but all these honours were a burden to him. A stranger among his own people, the witty and learned conversation of this brilliant Court, its cleverness and *bon mots* were lost upon him. Married at the age of fifteen to a wife for whom he felt nothing but aversion, he avoided her to the utmost, isolating himself as far as possible, while his timidity and awkwardness were regarded as proofs of his stupidity. His

* "François I.," page 199.

courtiers despised him, and made fun of him among themselves; and when the death of the Dauphin brought him a step nearer to the throne, his father was quite in despair at thinking what a poor successor he would have.

Upon one occasion, towards the end of 1536, when François I. was speaking in this sense to the Grande Sénéchale of Normandy, one of the principal ladies of the Court, she said in joke that the best way would be to make him fall in love, and that she would get him to do so with her. The King told her to do so, also as a joke.*

Diane, born on September 3rd, 1499, was nineteen years older than Henri II.† Her father, Jean de Poitiers, Seigneur de St. Vallier, was a gentleman of the province of Dauphiny, of very old family—he claimed to descend from the last Dukes of Aquitaine—but of very scanty fortune. Diane, being the eldest of three daughters, was considered

* "Addition aux Mémoires de Castelnau," page 276.

† "Dictionnaire Historique de Lalande," page 1472. Brantôme assigns as the date of her birth 1496; Duchesne, 1500; Père Anselme, 1499.—"Fontanien," 290 and 291.

very lucky to have been able to marry when about fifteen — March 29th, 1514 — Louis de Brézé, Comte de Maulevrier, Grand Sénéchal of Normandy, who was fifty-four years of age. M. de Brézé descended, through his mother, from Charles VII. and Agnes Sorel.* The early youth of Diane is enveloped in much mystery, and she is first brought into notice at the trial of her father in connection with the Bourbon conspiracy.

The question as to whether Diane was the mistress of François I. before becoming the mistress of Henri II., is one which has given rise to much discussion, and is still unsettled.† It implies, moreover, the appreciation, not of the virtuous character of Diane,

* The marriage of Louis de Brézé's father, which took place in 1462, was followed by a terrible drama. Fourteen years later, upon July 14th, 1476, M. de Brézé, finding his wife in the arms of his huntsman, stabbed them both. For this he was prosecuted, and condemned to pay the King (Louis XI.) a fine of a hundred thousand crowns, to satisfy which debt he had to abandon his domain to the Crown. But after the King's death, he got the judgment annulled by Parliament.

† See the discussion quoted by M. Guiffrey in his introduction to the "Lettres Inédites de Diane de Poitiers."

but of a particular circumscribed fact, and it must be borne in mind, in discussing it, that the love of scandal is no more a principle of criticism than an optimism of innocence.

At the time of the St. Vallier trial (1523), Diane, who had been nine years married, was the mother of two daughters. Attached to the household of Queen Claude during her life, she then formed part of the household of the Regent as lady in waiting, her husband exercising the functions of Grand Master. By a strange and painful coincidence, it was M. de Brézé, warned by a priest,* who revealed to the Queen Regent the Bourbon conspiracy, little thinking that his father-in-law was concerned in it. One can easily imagine the grief and shame of husband and wife, their remorse, perhaps, when this came to light.

The St. Vallier of history is very unlike the St. Vallier of story. Drawn into the Bourbon conspiracy by the promptings of

† This priest had been confided this secret in the confessional by two Norman gentlemen, Matignon and d'Argonge, who had authorised him to reveal it.

unsatisfied ambition, he was unable to hold up his head as soon as ever he was detected. Conducted first of all to Tarare, and afterwards to Loches, he was overcome with terror, weeping and humiliating himself to such an extent that he fell positively ill with despair at his situation.

“If you want to know what sort of treatment my master is receiving,” writes one of his servants who accompanied him to prison, “I can assure you that since he has been in the hands of M. d’Aubigny, no poor wretch was ever so maltreated, and I have to tell you that not a day has passed that he has not cried his eyes out. I much fear that, unless God intervenes to alter things, he has not long to live, for his clothes hang looser on him every day, and he is so wasted that he would fill you with pity for him, and to make matters worse, they have lodged him right up at the top of the dungeon, where criminals are generally placed, which is enough to break his heart.”*

* French MS., 5109, folio 105, quoted by M. Guiffrey.

St. Vallier applied to all his acquaintances, entreating them to ask for his pardon: to the Master of the Queen Regent, to the Bishop of Lisieux, and to the Grand Veneur. He appeals even more pressingly to his children, and his letters, still extant, overflow with humility and despair.

Writing to the S^{én}échal, he says: "I think, Monsieur mon Fils, you need not be told what has befallen me; viz., that the King has had me arrested without any just cause, and had me lodged here in the Castle of Loches as if I were a wretched traitor, the which gives me so much pain that it is killing me. You being the person dearest to me in the world, and in whom I place the most trust, I hereby notify to you my trouble, so that you may have pity upon me and extricate me from my misery. . . . I am told that the King has been asked to confiscate my property. You will see to this, as it affects your interests as well."

To his daughter he writes: "Madame, since I last wrote to you, I have arrived here at the Castle of Loches, and am as badly

treated as any poor prisoner can be. . . . And as all my hopes are centred upon your husband and you, I beg of him that he will come and see me, . . . or that you will come and see me, so that we may settle what you had best say to Madame. . . . I implore of you to have enough pity upon your poor father to be willing to come and see him. It breaks my heart not to be able to give you better news.”*

Not very heroical this!

It was not surprising that his children, whose functions attached them to the persons of royalty, should have exerted themselves to the utmost to save their father, especially after having been the involuntary means of denouncing him. It would have been strange too if François I., who was so easily moved as a rule, had been altogether deaf to their supplications.

“Nothing,” Belleforest tells us, “moves the King so much as the tears and prayers of Diane de Poitiers, who, having been brought up in the service of the King’s mother, as

* French MS., 5109, folios 103 and 104.

well as of Queen Claude, urged her suit so well that the King accorded the pardon of the father to the daughter, who was ready to follow him to the grave if he had been executed.”*

This feeling of pity failed, however, to deliver her father from his judges and his jailers. In spite of Diane's efforts, the trial was proceeded with, and François, who was not blind to the peril in which a revolt of the nobility placed the Crown, had it conducted with the utmost rigour. He wrote himself to the judges to press them on, to excite their zeal, and to put them on their guard against an indulgence which would be fatal to the kingdom. The King writes:—“ We have had your letters, my friends and loyal sub-

* Belleforest, “*Annales de la France*,” vol. ii., pages 14 and 145. Contemporary writers, if they refer to the matter at all, agree with this account. Neither Le Ferron nor the brothers Du Bellay, nor Vieilleville, nor Montluc, nor Tavannes, nor Villars, nor Etienne Pasquier attribute the King's action to any other motive than pity. It was only in the second half of the sixteenth century, thanks especially to the loose humour of Brantôme, and the hatred of Protestant historians, that these accusations were sown broadcast.

jects, and taken cognisance of the acts and procedures, as well as of the confession which St. Vallier made before you, but from which we gathered nothing not previously known to us." The King went on to speak of the dangers arising to the kingdom, and of the necessity of discovering all the guilty parties. "Thus we see no reason why we should be moved to pardon St. Vallier, nor why his confession should be kept secret, the which we order to be communicated to the President. . . . You must not proceed coldly, but with vigour and zeal, and not spare those who have been evil, cowardly, disloyal, perjurers and traitors. . . . We by no means approve of your proposal to submit the whole matter to our Parliament. . . . We have chosen and selected you to hear the said case according to your knowledge and wisdom. . . . Do not leave us to imagine that from pusillanimity you are anxious to rid yourselves of the responsibility of this affair. We must know at once, by means of torture, if necessary, who are the conspirators. . . . St. Vallier and d'Escar know all about it,

and, seeing this and the imminent peril at your gates, act accordingly. . . . After all this has been done, the next thing is to pass final sentence upon the guilty and have it promptly executed." *

The examination of the accused was, therefore, proceeded with without any intermission. The apparatus for putting him to the question was brought out, and if he was not actually put to it, the reason was that the doctor certified that, old and ill as he was, his body trembling with fear and fever, he would succumb under the test.† Sentence of death was passed on him, and he was taken out to the Place de Grève for execution. Here, it is true, his pardon arrived, brought by one of the King's archers; but it was a strange kind of pardon! In consideration of the services rendered by his family, and especially those rendered by M. de Brézé, who had revealed the plot to the King, the sentence

° French MS., No. 1509, folio 111.

† "Procès de Saint-Vallier : Sa Confession." Brienne, 186, folios 11, 17, and 27; "Arrêt," folio 28; "Dégradation," folio 29.

of death was commuted to one of imprisonment for life "between four stone walls, bricked up above and below, and having only one small window through which his food and drink should be passed to him." * And, so far was this from being a merely formal sentence that two years afterwards, in July, 1525, in a memoir which the Constable de Bourbon addressed to the King of Spain, we find him asking, as one of the conditions of the Madrid Treaty, that St. Vallier should be released from prison and have his property restored to him.

This is scarcely the favour which a lover such as François I. would have accorded to a mistress such as Diane. In order to get over this difficulty, it has been said that the connection between them was of later date. But I should like to know when, for there is no trace of it. We are asked to believe that the Comtesse de Châteaubriand and the

* Brienne, 186, folios 30 and 34. See also Dupuy, 480, folio 46; and French MS., 1509, folios 216, etc., and 18,450. It may be remarked that all the other conspirators were respited, not one of them being executed.

Duchesse d'Etampes, both of whom were openly the King's mistresses, would have put up with such a rival without a murmur, and that not a whisper of any outbreak of temper or of any quarrel would reach us. We are further asked to believe that Diane herself was so discreet and disinterested as not to let a word escape her, and to envelope the whole affair in mystery. We know that she was very different from that.

An unknown collector produces seventeen letters without any address, signature, or date, and tells us that they were written by Diane and addressed to François I. No one, after reading them and comparing them to the authentic correspondence, can assert that they are of the same style, or breathe the same spirit; and Sainte-Beuve, one of the most incisive critics of our time, has dealt with this question far more effectively than I could.*

* M. Champollion himself, who has published these letters as a sequel to the poems of François I., is doubtful as to their origin. He says in his introduction:—"With regard to Diane de Poitiers, it is from a contemporary MS. note that we learnt that they were written by this cele-

The justification of Diane consists, to my mind, in the obscurity in which she passed her life after her father's trial, and in which she remained until the death of her husband in 1533. During these ten years there was nothing to call public attention to her—neither social scandal and intrigue, nor the munificent gifts of a Sovereign. She lived, unheard of, in the country, and it was only after her widowhood that she came back to reside at Court.

We have four portraits of her (two drawings, a medallion, and a statue) which are considered to be authentic.* None of them

brated woman and addressed to the King. I have accepted this version, though several passages of the letters themselves render it a very problematic one." The writer of the letters, for instance, speaks of her father-in-law, and Diane had lost hers. Sainte-Beuve, "Journal des Savants," 1847, page 289, has also set his face against this interpretation of their origin. M. Guiffrey, publisher of the "Correspondence de Diane de Poitiers," will not hear of it.

* The oldest, which appears to date from the year 1520, is a drawing in the Méjanes Library, at Aix, with the following inscription upon the border in the handwriting of François I. :—

"Bele à la veoir
Oneste à la anter."

It has been very carefully copied by the librarian. The

give one the idea of the perfect beauty which her name evokes. They denote, rather, strength, vigour, rude health, an energetic and resolute disposition. The features are very pronounced, and the physiognomy haughty. The narrow forehead denotes rather decision and adhesion to a fixed principle rather than elevation of character. The lips are sarcastic and disdainful, the look domineering, and there is no sign of any self-abandonment, tenderness, or sensuality in this strong-willed and self-asserting nature.*

second, in the Niel collection, was done when she was about thirty-five years of age, and bears the ancient inscription: "La Grande Sénéchale." The third, a medallion of the time, is in the Cabinet des Médailles. The fourth is the stone statue upon the tomb at Versailles, where she is represented upon her knees. There are many others in the Louvre, Rouen Cathedral, Chenonceaux, Chaumont, Versailles, Fontainebleau, Hampton Court, and private collections; but nothing certain is known as to their authenticity.—"Lettres Inédites," page xx.

* She had, as we gather from a note by Fontanieu, very black and curly hair, a very white skin, admirable teeth and hands, a very tall figure, and fine carriage. She never knew what it was to be in bad health. In the coldest weather she washed her face with rain-water, and never used pomades. She got up at six, and often rode five or six miles, coming back to bed, and reading there till noon.—"Fontanieu," pages 290 and 291.

We find her the same in her correspondence*—of a cold temperament, hard at heart, and of a very positive and calculating disposition. The keen passion for power, honours, and money absorbed the whole nature of this ambitious woman, and in the conduct of affairs she displayed marvellous surety of judgment and great practical sagacity. Very characteristic of this are the letters addressed to her cousin, M. du Bouchage. Always slow to pay her debts, inexorable and unrelenting in the recovery of what was due to her, we find her discussing each detail with all the acuteness of a procurator. Perfectly familiar with all the particulars of the various properties which she owed to the munificence of the Sovereign, she weighed carefully the advantages of each, and considered how she could best augment the profits of it. She even took care to make the best bargain possible out of the Spanish prisoners who had been captured at sea and reduced to slavery. She even sold them to

* "Lettres Inédites." Published by M. Guiffrey, 1 vol. Renouard.

the highest bidders, who happened to be the Genoese, though they were the enemies of France, and were likely to use them as soldiers, justifying her conduct by the following piece of casuistry :—

“ If,” she writes, “ the Genoese should so employ them, it cannot be said that they will thereby be adding to their strength, but rather weakening themselves by the withdrawal of the money they have paid for them.”*

This is a true test of her character, but, at the same time, this woman was gifted with a very remarkable intelligence, with much culture and a high artistic taste, and she also possessed a well-balanced mind, great tact and adaptability, together with no little suppleness and ease of deportment.

Her daughters being of a marriageable age, Diane came, after her husband's death, to live at Court. She assumed a very retiring attitude, keeping herself almost entirely to

* “ Lettres Inédites,” by M. Guiffrey, 1 vol. Renouard.

herself, and living in great retirement. Her mourning, black and white, which she wore for the rest of her life, suited her to perfection; and this severe attire, added to a youthful aspect, which, as Brantôme tells us, resisted all the ravages of time,* ensured for her a prominent and respected position at the Court of François I., who had known her when young in the households of Queen Claude and of his mother, and who was much attached to her. The narratives of the Venetian Ambassadors, so full of anecdotes and gossip about the Court just at this period, mention this friendship without putting any evil interpretation upon it. Diane had at that time got beyond her early womanhood, and seemed immersed in her

* "I saw Madame de Valentinois at the age of 70—she is said to have died when 66 only—as handsome, as fresh, and as agreeable as at 30. She would have stirred the coldest heart, though she had shortly before broken a leg by a fall from her horse at Orleans. She had a naturally white skin, and this without the aid of powder or any other cosmetics, though it is said that she employs a certain broth made of liquid gold and other drugs."—"Brantôme," vol. ii., page 395. This broth consisted of cold water and perhaps indifference.

souvenirs, nor did she display any sort of pretension or coquetry. François appreciated her cleverness, and enjoyed conversation with her, for Diane understood politics, and was fond of Art, interesting herself in the King's affairs as if they were her own. They used to hold long conferences together, and it was in this way that he one day, half in jest, entrusted her with the education of the Dauphin, little thinking what a wise thing he was doing.

It is doubtful whether, at first, Diane had any ambitious plans upon this point. Life is fertile in surprises, and the one which awaited her in this instance was due not to any stirring of her heart, but to the success of her enterprise.

In accordance with the King's instructions, Diane set to work in quite a maternal way. Having to mollify the savage nature of this wayward youth, she employed gentle means, and sought to attract him by bright and insinuating ways. She succeeded in riveting his attention and in accustoming him to come to her of his own accord. She

was not in the least impatient, and played with him as tenderly as an angler with a difficult fish. By means of delicate play, she opened up the hidden recesses of his mind, and so gradually established her influence over him. In a short time a wonderful change was noticed in the person of the Dauphin.

“The young Prince, with his pale, sallow, and melancholy face, whom, as I told you, few of those who knew him best had ever seen laugh heartily,” writes the Venetian Ambassador, Dandolo, “has, I can assure you, grown to be quite cheerful, and is in excellent health.”*

Owing, however, to the age of Diane—who was old enough to be his mother—to her reputation for prudence and her air of severity, the Court at first believed in the maternal nature of their relations. “The Dauphin Henri,” writes Michel Susiane, “cares little for women. His own wife is quite enough for him. In regard to conver-

* Baschet, “Diplomatic Vénitienne,” page 432.

sation, the only woman he is at all intimate with is Madame la Sénéchale of Normandy. He is really devoted to her, but it is not considered that there is anything sensual about their intimacy; they are like mother and son. It is said that this lady has undertaken to advise, direct, and correct the Dauphin, and to impel him towards all that is worthy and befitting his station. She is performing her part to perfection.”*

Whether or not Diane had calculated her effects, it is certain that she did not scruple to take advantage of her situation. But she at all events kept up outward appearances, and during the whole of her life she maintained that she had been no more than the friend of Henri. But a Court is not easily deceived in these matters, and the happiness which the Dauphin displayed would alone have sufficed to betray the secret. The change in his attitude soon excited suspicions, and the outcome of many enquiries and investigations brought the truth to light.

* “Ambassadeurs Vénitiens,” vol. ii., page 287.

There was no little talk over the matter, as may be imagined, and it is said that the King, finding how far his instructions had been exceeded, was not at all pleased. The courtiers could not conceal their amusement, but the Duchesse d'Etampes was furious. It was unendurable that this elderly woman, who was married upon the day she was born,* should be the mistress of the young Dauphin, while she belonged to the aged and decrepit father. Orders were given that the shameless widow should be made the target of endless epigrams; one of these, composed by Marot, running:—

Que voulez-vous, Diane bonne,
Que vous donne
Vous n'eustes, comme j'entends,
Jamais tant d'heur au printemps
Qu'en automne.†

At the same time, the susceptibility of the Dauphin being thus discovered, all sorts

* "Additions aux Mémoires de Castelnau," vol. iii., page 553. This was an exaggeration, for Diane was not more than ten years the senior of the Duchesse d'Etampes.

† "Marot, Edition St. Marc," vol. i., page 431. This epigram shows that Marot did not believe in the liaison of Diane with François I.

of devices were resorted to for enticing him from his new passion. The ladies of the Court made it a point of honour to do this, and they were well seconded by the courtiers. The Duchesse d'Etampes was at the head of this cabal, but it was all in vain, for the Dauphin cared only for Diane, who, anxious to avoid anything like a scandal, paralyzed the attack by the most imperturbable self-possession. The most irritating acts and the most pointed insults were all of no effect upon her. The point she had in view was to retain the favour of the King, who was very touchy in regard to his heir. This she succeeded in doing, thanks to her good-humoured and fanciful way of treating serious things lightly. It was difficult, moreover, for François I. to act otherwise, for he was not much of a hand at moralising, and so he remained friendly with Diane.

She then set herself to strengthening her position by marrying her daughters into two illustrious houses—the Lamarks and the Guises. She thus created for herself powerful supporters at Court, and the number of

her friends increased as the King's health declined, a regular party being formed, of which she was the centre.* She exhibited wonderful skill in her dealings with the Dauphin: Instead of showing petty and irritating jealousy for all that did not relate immediately to herself, she entered into the sentiments of the young Prince, into his relations with his friends and family, even into his duties.

The Dauphin had a strong antipathy for his wife. The marriage had, politically, been a great disappointment for the King, and as there did not seem likely to be any issue from it, there was much talk of a divorce. Catherine remained isolated and neglected at Court, but Diane, feeling that she could do more with her than she could with any fresh wife, took her under her protection, and not only stood out against a divorce, but reconciled her husband to her. She induced him to show her more attention, and when

* See "François I.," page 331, for an account of the divisions and disputes which embittered the last years of François I.'s life.

children were born to her, Diane attended her in her confinements, assumed the management of the household, and selected the nurse, as well as the governor and governess for the children, of whose education she had the superintendence. Henri being a very good father, this gave her an additional hold upon him.

The King had formed two great friendships, before he knew Diane, with Montmorency and St. André, and she, instead of seeking to break them off, set herself to making them serve her ends.

The Dauphin, attached to Montmorency from his childhood, had a filial regard for him. During his six years exile, he wrote to him constantly, keeping him fully informed as to the doings of the Court, and treating him as the future minister of the kingdom.* Diane, being aware of this, made advances to Montmorency, and, as they had common interests, they became very intimate. They had many points of contact, both alike being

* Source of the affection of the King for Montmorency, "Mémoire sur Henri II.," folio 1737, page 13.

endowed with firm and dogged will, a pertinacious and positive mind, and an implacable and grasping disposition. Diane, however, had the advantage over Montmorency in respect to moral scepticism, for though the latter had a very formal and convenient sort of faith, still he had religious opinions of a kind which at times weighed upon his mind and made him heavy and awkward;* while Diane, untrammelled by any such beliefs, made light of prejudices and principles, smiling cynically out of the corners of her disdainful lips. Her conscience was as hollow as that of other royal courtesans, who, making it their boast and their business to renounce the virtues of their sex, annihilate in themselves the source of all virtue.

St. André, who belonged to the ancient house of Albon, in the South of France, was of much inferior calibre to both of these, but circumstances had served him well.† His

* See, for the portrait of Montmorency, "François I.," page 290.

† For the description of St. André, see "Mémoire sur Henri II.," folio 4737, page 14.

father having been governor of the Dauphin, the two lads had been brought up together, and being of the same age, having slept in the same room, and joined in the same games, they were inseparable. St. André's was one of those sensual, vain, egotistical and yet captivating dispositions which do homage to themselves and expect everyone else to do the same. St. André's great aim was not political influence, but the satisfaction of his sensual appetites and the display of his vainglorious fancies. It was he, according to Brantôme, "who introduced at Court the luxuries of the table, in the shape of rare and costly dishes of fish and meat which had never been seen before. He even outdid the magnificence of the King in the way of handsome table ornaments, and of rare and exquisite furniture, his residence at St. Valery being one of the most luxurious in France."*

The very contrasts between his nature and that of the Dauphin contributed to knit

* "Brantôme," vol. i., page 488.

them closer together. As easy in manners, as open and as gay as Henri was awkward, reserved, and timid, no one was more apt at forming a merry party than he was; and he displayed in his pleasures the frank good-humour, the "go," and the expansion which made the feeling contagious. Of only moderate intelligence, of a weak and unsettled character, devoid of the sang-froid and profoundly calculating spirit which go to make up the perfect courtier, St. André had sufficient suppleness and address to keep himself in the favour of those whom he had fascinated. His good looks,* his bravery, and his dash filled the Dauphin with admiration; his engaging manners, his brisk gestures, and ready wit stirred up Henri's morose and taciturn nature, and tempted him to join in pleasurable pursuits. Henri could not do without him, and while loading him with promises when Dauphin, he

* See his portrait in the Versailles Gallery, Northern Attic, No. 30,202; also in the Salle des Maréchaux, No. 1004, after the Louvre portrait and the Gower Collection, No. 110.

bestowed on him all the promised gifts when he became King.

The great friendship between the Vieilleville and St. André may perhaps create surprise; but it is to be attributed to the fact, that with St. André there was all the outward appearance of frankness and open-heartedness, and no one possessed to a greater degree the gift of assuming an air of juvenile expansion, and of disarming truly generous natures, which were thus delivered over to him without defence. It was a long time before Vieilleville got to understand his character; and even when he did, he did not cease to like him.

If Henri II., subjected to the influence of these three favourites, did not lose his natural good qualities, it was because they knew that these qualities were likely to be useful to them, and were worth nursing.

Brantôme says of him: "This Prince is very kind, and nothing pleases him more than to show kindness to anyone in trouble. He won the hearts of all strangers, whether great or lowly, by his pleasant way of talking

to them." Brantôme also says that he knew all the gentlemen of his Court, and when he learnt of their having done any doughty deed he was delighted, "proclaiming their exploits in a loud voice at table, and before all the world," for he was "the Prince who gave the most publicity to a service rendered, and to the valour of him who had rendered it." Of martial tastes, he was very fond of warfare, and was always to be found at the post of danger, risking his life like a common soldier. He was passionately fond of horses and bodily exercise; his stables, especially those of Les Tournelles, being full of beautiful animals. A fine horseman himself, Brantôme says that "strangers were never weary of admiring his noble attitude on horseback, his majesty, his grace, and his kingly bearing." Very fond of hunting, when not pursuing the stag, he amused himself with a species of bird-hunt, called "La Valerie," of which, however, no precise description is extant. He was very fond of tennis and fencing as well, but at tennis he never played in the front rank. If

successful, he gave all the winnings to the men on his side, and if beaten, he paid all the stakes. In cold weather he used to indulge in skating, especially at Fontainebleau, and also used to make up snowball parties.

He was also very fond of ladies' society. "As soon as he had dined, he went, with the gentlemen of his suite, into the Queen's chamber, and finding there a cluster of human goddesses, the one more lovely than the other, each of them conversed with the one he admired most. The conversation lasted two hours. When the ladies did not accompany him to the tennis-court, he would insist upon their looking on from the windows above, and giving their opinion. In the evening, after supper, the conversation was renewed when there was no ball.* The Prince also spent a part of the day in transacting business, and attended Mass every day very devoutly.

* "Brantôme," vol. i., pages 296 to 313. The Venetian Ambassadors, Dandolo and Contarini, speak of Henri II. in the same way.—"Baschet," page 433. "His Majesty," says Matheo Dandolo, "is very religious, and does not ride on Sunday mornings. Madame la Sénéchale, his favourite, told

These traits of character may make a charming young man, but they do not constitute a Prince. Henri, quite as deficient as his father in the faculties of a statesman, had not, like him, the strong and original personality which sometimes serves as a substitute for it. He had no force of mind, and his very qualities made him subservient to others. Dominated by tender feelings, he allowed himself to be led and dictated to by those he liked, and surrendering his own individual judgment, he ceased to be master of his own conscience and reason. In fact, he was destined to be a slave all his life.

a lady of honour, who repeated it to me, that, remarking on what a profound state of devotion the King was when he received the Crown, and having asked him to tell her for whom he was praying, he said that he was praying God to give him long life if his reign was likely to be for the benefit of the people, but, if not, to take it quickly from him."—"Baschet," page 234.



CHAPTER VI.

VIEILLEVILLE'S MISSION TO ENGLAND.— INTRIGUES AT COURT.



NO sooner was the breath out of the body of François I. than “Henri Dauphyn, become King,” ordered it to be taken to St. Cloud for the ceremonies of what was called “the quarantine.” Being anxious to escape these lugubrious scenes, he then left Rambouillet and went direct to St. Germain-en-Laye. The Constable, who had been expecting this change for the last six years, had preceded him, and together they set to work to put everything in due order.*

* “Upon the very day that the King arrived, the Constable also arrived, and at once assumed all the weight of affairs.”—Letter from Bochetel to his son-in-law, Claude de

Upon the 3rd of April the new Royal Council was appointed, and it met every morning. Among those summoned to it, according to their rank, were the King of Navarre, the Cardinal de Lorraine, the Duc de Vendôme, Charles de Guise, Archbishop of Rheims, the Constable and his eldest son, the Comte d'Aumale, the Chancellor Olivier, Humières, Sedan, St. André and his father, Bertrandi, President of the Parliament of Paris, and the Sieur de Villeroy.* As the King of Navarre and the Duc de Vendôme usually reside in their provinces, the Constable, the Guises, and St. André had to decide everything.

The first act of the new Council was to gratify the hostilities accumulated under the previous reign by the Dauphin's party. The Duchesse d'Etampes had anticipated these reprisals, and had already left the Court, having first of all restored by order the Crown diamonds, which her too weak-minded

l'Aubespine, dated from St. Germain-en-Laye, April 4th, 1547.—"Fontanieu," 258; "Brienne," 246, folio 297.

* "Fontanieu," 258.

lover had given her.* She withdrew into the country, where she lived in obscurity, and, it is said, became a devoted adherent in secret to the Reformed faith. Gilbert Bayard, a worthy soldier, very attached to the defunct King, for the sole offence of having made some joking remarks about the age of Diane, was cast into prison, where he died of grief. Bochetel, writing to his son-in-law: "Poor General Bayard has been sent to the right-about in a very singular way, as I will explain to you; and I can assure you, that whatever reason I may have had to complain of him, I feel very sorry for him. There have been many other

* It has been alleged that her husband, after having benefited by her liaison with François I., brought a suit against her, in which Henri II. gave evidence against his father. This is not so. But in 1566, in a suit instituted by the Duc d'Etampes against Odet de Bretagne, in regard to some inheritance, it was proved that the Duchess and the Comte de Longueval had disposed of the Duke's fortune as they pleased, without any regard to his rights. The deposition made by Henri II. consisted in stating that the Duke had often complained that "the said lady received the revenues of his functions as Governor of Brittany, and he got nothing."—"Additions aux Mémoires de Castelnau," vol. iii., page 832. Edition of 1731.

changes, of which I will say nothing just now." *

The Cardinals de Tournon and d'Annebaud, who had loyally remained at Rambouillet to keep watch over the King's body, were sent off to Rome under the pretext of maintaining French influence there. The First President, Lizet, who had offended the Guises by refusing them the title of Prince, was soon compelled to resign under the threat of dismissal. Chancellor Olivier, renowned for his loyal and upright disposition, occupying a post from which he could not be removed, retained his title; but the seals were given to Bertrandi, a creature of Montmorency and the Guises. Then the Constable chose four of his creatures as Secretaries of State for Finances and Foreign Affairs, and he filled the Parliament with persons upon whom he could rely, in view of the numerous suits which, as usual, he had pending. When all this was done, the affairs of the kingdom were taken into account.

* "Fontanieu," page 58. — "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 416.

Boulogne, which had been treacherously made over to the English at the time of the signature of peace, had not been mentioned in this document, and so it remained in their hands without the French having recognized the validity of the conquest. This equivocal situation led to endless raids and acts of plunder; so, in order to put a stop to them, it was determined to come to an understanding with the new King of England, Edward VI., who was still a child. Vieilleville was selected for this mission, and left immediately for London. The day following his arrival, he presented himself before the Council, which was dominated by the Duke of Somerset, the King's uncle, and a bitter enemy of France. A discussion arose about Boulogne, Somerset questioning the honour and the courage of the French, and was sharply called to account by Vieilleville. As Somerset, who was very unpopular with the Council, was not supported, the discussion calmed down, and as the English did not wish, amid the embarrassments and divisions of the Regency, to have a fresh war

with France, a *modus vivendi* was agreed upon.

After the Council, Lord Coban (*sic*), appointed to accompany Vieilleville during his stay in London, escorted him back to his lodging, called Darompler (*sic*), near that of the King at Westminster, both being on the Thames, "in the quarter of London near towards Richmond."

Vieilleville passed a week in London amid much gaiety. Dining one day, at the King's table, he was much surprised to find the first personages in the kingdom, Knights of the Garter, doing duty as pages of honour, and that in a very humble attitude. They carried the dishes bare-headed, and when close to the table they went down on their knees, the dishes being then taken from them by the Grand Master. In France, the pages of honour, even when on service before the King, had only to make a bow when entering and leaving the presence.

The amusements, moreover, did not consist, as with us, of dancing, jousting, tournaments, and putting the ring, but of hunting.

Vieilleville, mounted on a richly-caparisoned Sardinian horse, accompanied by forty or fifty lords and gentlemen, was taken to large deer parks, and it was quite a sight to see the English galloping at full speed, with swords in their hands, and killing the deer as they ran—sometimes as many as fifteen or twenty at once. They shouted, too, at the top of their voices, using the same expressions as they might in warfare, when executing a brilliant charge; and they were all the more pleased to show off their skill before the French, as the latter were known to be very apt at the chase.

There were also fights between dogs and bears or bulls; a dozen dogs being set upon one bull or bear, as the case might be. Vieilleville took so kindly to this sport (?), that he determined to import it into France. Several animals were given him, while he purchased others and sent them all across the Channel.*

* The King took such a liking to these pastimes, that they flourished at the Court until the beginning of the reign

The review of the fleet at Greenwich brought these receptions to a close. Vieilleville was accompanied on this occasion by the Duke of Somerset and his brother, the Admiral. They showed him two hundred line-of-battle ships ready for combat, sixty barges, and a number of other vessels, all armed; at the head of which were four of enormous size. Upwards of six thousand sailors and marines, ranged in due order around the sides of the vessels, preserving the most complete silence; and when the review was over, the roar of the guns as they saluted was like loud thunder.

When he remembered that this fleet was but a portion of the naval forces of England, Vieilleville could not but be struck by their superiority to those of other European countries, and he was very sorry that France had not set herself to achieve a like result.*

of Charles IX. They then disappeared, together with all other pastimes and amusements, amid the troubles of civil warfare.

* Contemporary writers say nothing about this mission, which was doubtless of a private description. Details of it

Vieilleville, embarking at Dover, landed at Calais, and took the road to Paris, which did not touch Boulogne. At Marquise he was met by a King's messenger, to whom he handed detailed despatches describing his journey, and from whom he gathered all the news of the Court. He learnt from him that the Constable had the King at his beck and call, and that he was just then taking him to visit his castles at Chantilly, Isle-Adam, and Ecouen, no one being admitted to the King's presence save by his favour. It was at Ecouen that Vieilleville was instructed to render an account of his mission, so he made the best of his way to Luzarches, where he passed the night.

Just as he was sitting down to supper, who should come in but St. André, accompanied by the Sieur d'Apchon, his brother-in-law, the Sieurs de Soult, de Senneterre, and other young men who followed his fortunes.

will be found in "Vieilleville," vol. xxviii., page 419. I have not quoted the debate of the English Council, because of its apparent improbability.

Delighted at the arrival of one whom he regarded as his best friend, Vieilleville threw himself into his arms, made him take a seat beside him, and thanked him for having come, while St. André congratulated him upon the success of his journey. He was loud in praise of his dexterity "in driving the nail so well home into the body of the Duke of Somerset in an open Council of England before the Sovereign himself, for which His Majesty (of France) was scarcely able to contain himself for joy."

After supper, the two friends withdrew, and St. André confided to Vieilleville a matter which had given him great concern. St. André had for a long time been anxious to obtain the charge of Marshal. The patent of M. de Biez, accused of having given up Boulogne, was about to fall vacant, and as he had obtained three promises from the King, one signed when he was Dauphin, the second two days after his accession, and the third quite recently, his success seemed certain, until Diane crossed his path, and claimed it for her son-in-law, M. de Lamarck. She

had complained to the King that she was being thwarted, and dwelt upon the many services which the ancestors of M. de Lamarck had rendered the Crown by adhering to the French party against the Empire. "Their fortress of Sedan," she said, "was a key and a rampart of the kingdom, and was even then being carefully guarded by her son-in-law, who had provided it with fortifications and ammunition at his own cost and for the King's service. Moreover, although he was perfectly free from all vassaldom, holding his lands only of God and his own trusty sword, he was willing to place himself under the French Crown and do homage." All this and much more she had alleged in her son-in-law's favour, and the King was sorely puzzled to know what to do, as he did not like to disappoint her upon the one hand or to go back from his word. The quarrel was getting more envenomed every day, and St. André went on to say, "I told her that I thought it very strange she should seek to injure my prospects in this way, and that having all my life long been her affectionate

friend and servant, I would never have believed she would treat me so. To which she replied that she had received a promise before me, but that she had not been sufficiently familiar and well-versed in Court affairs to exact a written promise from the King, being content with his mere word, and that as soon as the dismissal of Marshal de Biez was carried into effect, she would call upon the King to carry out his promise, reminding him of the place where he gave his promise and of the persons in whose presence he had several times reiterated it. If he failed to fulfil it, she and her son-in-law would quit not only the Court but the kingdom of France, for the old motto of the Seigneurs de Lamarck, '*Si Dieu ne me veult, le diable me pryé,*' was not yet dead, together with much else that one might expect from an imperious woman, who considers that everybody and everything should bow down before her. . . . For my own part, I will die rather than allow a piece of good fortune, which was voluntarily offered me by the King's own inspiration, to be ravished

from me. All my friends advise me not to give way, and you will doubtless be of the same opinion, especially because everybody at Court, great and small, already call me Marshal de St. André."

Upon hearing this, the prudent Vieilleville shook his head and observed :

"How impetuous you are! And should the King give way to you, and should Count de Lamarck leave the kingdom and turn his arms against it, have you thought of how angry he will be at the loss of so powerful a servitor, who, placed upon the confines of France and of the Empire, is in a position to choose his own side? Have you thought, too, of the misfortunes which would ensue, and of which you would be regarded as the author? You may be sure that the King, in spite of his friendship for you, wishes that you had already abandoned your claim, 'in order that he may content his fair dame!' If you are wise, you will not 'thrust yourself between the nail and the flesh.' I advise you, of your own accord, to withdraw your demand in the presence of the Grande Séné-

chale, and to make a merit of so doing. Perhaps, too, there is another way of securing your aim. There are at present only three Marshals in France. Why not, as you have the King's ear, induce him to create a fourth, in accordance with ancient custom, and ask to have the patent conferred upon you, instead of waiting to step into the shoes of a wretched traitor to the Crown. Put your irons into the fire at once, and, considering how friendly the King is, you will not need much coal in order to forge this weapon to your fancy."

St. André was delighted with the suggestion, but did not quite see how he was to follow it up after what had passed between the Duchess and himself, and the pertinacity with which he had insisted upon his claims.

"Leave this to me," replied Vieilleville, "and I will not go to bed to-morrow until I have reconciled you. Nothing can be easier. I will tell her that you lay down your arms to her, very grieved at having stood out against her so long. I will even hand her over your written promises from

the King torn through and effaced. While I am doing this, profit by the King's good will to obtain letters of mark, take the oath immediately before him, doing this with as much secrecy as possible, and I will undertake to say that you will be Marshal before her son-in-law, as the trial of Marshal de Biez is not yet finished."

Matters being thus arranged, St. André embraced Vieilleville, and the whole party retired to rest, the only persons who had been present at the conversation being their two brothers-in-law, M. de Thévalle and M. d'Apchon. Very early the next morning they started for Ecouen, and when about half way they met a body of nobles, who had been sent by the Constable to welcome Vieilleville, at their head being M. de Gordes, who was much surprised and vexed to find that St. André had distanced him. After an interminable number of salutes and huggings, they rode on together, Vieilleville and M. de Gordes leading the way. As they approached Ecouen, they were met, just below Villers-le-Veuf, by the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon

and M. d'Enghien, who had come to meet Vieilleville. This entailed another halt and more huggings, but in due time this brilliant troop of more than five hundred horsemen, headed by the Princes, Vieilleville, and St. André, entered the castle gates. The Princes proposed that they should go and meet the King as he came out of church, but Vieilleville, remembering that they were in the house of the Constable, and that he alone was present when the King gave him his mission, proceeded at once to his apartments, where, as a matter of fact, he found him awaiting him.

As he entered the room, the Constable came forward and embraced him with an air of good humour, saying how pleased he was to welcome him for the second time at Court.* He congratulated him in the name of the King upon the success of his journey, and upon his bravery before the English Council, his attitude being not free from peril, as the Duke of Somerset was "a good

* The first was after the capture of Avignon.

for nothing," who might well have got up some plot to make away with him upon his departure from the kingdom or while at sea. "But, thank God! you are safely back; and now let us go to His Majesty and tell him all the rest."

As they were about to leave the room, the King, who had been informed of all that had occurred by the nobles of the escort, came in, and greeted Vieilleville with much effusion, calling him in joke "Duke of Somerset," passing his arm round his neck, and going with him and the Constable into his study, where they remained for a couple of hours in consultation. Henri then went to his dinner, while the Constable detained Vieilleville to dine with him, after which they again repaired to the King's study.

While all this was going on, Vieilleville had not forgotten his friend, and at St. André's request he had thrown out some hints to the King as to the creation of a fourth Marshal. The King received them very well, but observed that the question was a somewhat complex one, as the fourth title

of Marshal existed, and was in the possession of Montmorency, who had not, in accordance with custom, resigned it when promoted to the dignity of Constable. The King did not quite know how this was: whether it was that Montmorency wished to enjoy the pension which was attached to it, or whether he was anxious to keep it in reserve for his eldest son. But, in any event, there could be no doubt that he held it. Vieilleville proved to the King that the two functions were incompatible, one being for the control of the other. Clear as these reasons were, the King was too easy-going to like giving an excuse to his servitors "to diminish their zeal in his employ," especially in the case of the Constable, whom "he liked even better than he did his own self," and of whom he was, it may be, slightly afraid. The prospect of having to discuss such a topic made him feel very uncomfortable, and he gladly accepted Vieilleville's proposal to broach the subject. The offer was a bold one, and it seemed as if even Vieilleville would scarcely venture to propose to one so enslaved by

honours and wealth that he should strip himself of his rank and pension. Montmorency, when his temper got the better of him, was quite capable of showing it before the greatest in the land, and the Duc de Nevers, who was greatly attached to Vieilleville, felt very apprehensive of what would come of it—far more so than Vieilleville himself.

Montmorency had just finished his supper, and was still sitting at table in conversation with some friends who had shared his meal, when Vieilleville came in. Thinking that the latter had come to speak to him about his mission to England, he took him upon one side, and the pair retired into a corner. Vieilleville began by exacting his promise not to repeat what he is about to say, nor to ask for any names. This, Montmorency, laying his hand upon his heart, promised, and Vieilleville went on to say:—

“I have just heard an argument before the King as to the incompatibility of the functions of Constable and Marshal of France, both of which you hold; and the matter was so thoroughly discussed that it

was made quite clear to His Majesty that you cannot retain them both."

This made the Constable very angry, and he exclaimed:—

"Vertu de Dieu! the late King was never so particular. When he ordered me to retire to my country residence he never, during my six or seven years' absence, called upon me to resign the one or the other; and even when he appointed M. de Montéjan in Piedmont, he created a fresh title of Marshal rather than deprive me of mine. I should very much like to know who were audacious enough to question my title—and before the King, too! Madame Diane was of the party, I suppose?"

"I cannot, if you will remember what you yourself promised, tell you that," rejoined Vieilleville. "But that is not all. The King has decided to ask you at once to surrender the rank of Marshal, having only put off doing so till now because he was reluctant to vex you. And as you would rather die than refuse his request, I have thought that you would anticipate his wishes by

offering him the resignation of your own accord.”

Whereupon he took leave of Montmorency, having produced the desired effect upon the latter, who was very perplexed and anxious, for he was very much afraid of Diane de Poitiers, in spite of their intimacy. Leaning over one of the window sills, he called the Sieurs de Gordes and de Guiches, his two principal advisers and favourites, and began a discussion with them, the main point in which was the danger of being on bad terms with women. He said that he had had ample experience of this, and that he knew it was Madame Bryon-Chabot who had rooted him out of the heart and friendship of the late King, in consequence of his quarrels with the Admiral. The Constable was so high in favour with the King that he had distanced his rival, had driven him from the Court, and deprived him of his property. But the Admiral's wife wheedled the King so successfully that her husband was recalled to favour, and the Constable virtually banished in turn. Knowing, moreover, the fierce

quarrel which had taken place between Madame de Poitiers and the Sieur de St. André with regard to this function of Marshal, Montmorency felt no doubt that she had had a hand in the affair, and an incident which occurred soon after strengthened this conviction on his part.

Two days before, a Franciscan monk, named Hugonis, a doctor in theology, had preached before the King a sermon upon the four greatest forces in the world—wine, the King, woman, and truth—the whole taken from the third chapter of Esdras. The preacher had “amplified the text with such admirable doctrine, especially in regard to woman,” that Montmorency and his two associates were agreed that the monk was referring to Diane, and that she had herself suggested the development of this thesis, in order to intimidate those who were inclined to intrigue against her. Knowing her power, Montmorency determined to lose no time, and he sent for the Sieur de Thiers, the King’s Secretary, to receive his resignation, after which he went to see the King, who,

advised by Vieilleville of what had taken place, awaited his visit with no little trepidation. He said to the King :—

“ Seeing, as I do, that the principal servitors of your Majesty are fighting with each other for the rank of Marshal of France, and are forming leagues and plots which may light a fire difficult to extinguish, I have of my own accord, in order to restore peace, determined to make over to your Majesty my title of Marshal of France, relying upon your bounty not to forget the claims of my son to a like function, when he shall be of an age to render you service.”

To this the King, very much relieved, replied :—

“ What, my worthy friend, do you think I should ever forget a Montmorency? Not only to him, but to my god-son, d’Ampville,* I hereby promise the two first places vacant when they reach an age which will qualify the same to occupy. I further wish that you should remain in possession of

* D’Ampville was Montmorency’s second son.

the pension of the said function all your life.”

Thiers at once drew up the patents of these gifts, promises, and reserves, and they were signed the next day.*

* “Vieilleville,” vol. xxviii., pages 311,—386.



CHAPTER VII.

OBSEQUIES OF FRANÇOIS I.—CONSECRATION OF HENRI II.



ACCORDING to the ancient ceremonial observed at the death of a French king, there was an interval of forty days between the day upon which he expired and the burial. During this period, his widow remained shut up in her apartments, which were kept in almost complete darkness, and were draped in black. The new sovereign transacted indispensable business, but without any ostentation or ceremony.

In obedience to this tradition, the body of François I. was removed to Haute-Bruyère, accompanied by the principal officers and servants of his household. It remained there till the 11th of April, when it

was taken to St. Cloud, where the lying-in-state began.

“The effigy, having been made after nature, and life size,” was placed upon a state bed,* in a room magnificently decorated with his arms and colours. Here he was attended upon for eleven days, as if he was still alive, in presence of the magnates of the Court, and with all the pomp and circumstance of royalty. “The said apartment was then converted from its aspect of grandeur and triumph into that of mourning and woe,” and all the visitors came there to shed tears.

In the eyes of the public, this was not a mere matter of form. The ceremonial made a deep impression upon them, and they made no distinction between what was real and imaginary in it, for they were passionately devoted to their King, and their tears were shed in all sincerity.

* A wax figure, representing the body of the Sovereign, was placed upon the state bed instead of the corpse itself. The cast of the face and hands was taken by François Clouet.—“Gower Collection.”

As the Dauphin François and the Duc d'Orléans had not been interred in state, Henri II. determined to have their bodies placed beside that of the defunct King, and surround the ceremony with the utmost pomp. Three weeks before the day appointed, the nobles and the people were convoked by "public crier and by banns" to be present at the funeral.* No expense was spared to honour the memory of the defunct King, the outlay of the Crown being not less than 500,000 deniers, exclusive of what was spent by the Parisians, "as the true, natural, and first subjects of the Crown." The preparations, therefore, were on a very large scale, and the crowd enormous, the onlookers being so grieved that the hardest hearts were moved to tears.

The order of the ceremony was as follows: Upon the 21st of May, the three bodies were exposed in their coffins, and over each coffin was placed the effigy of the body. The equeries and grooms first conveyed them to

* Letters relating to this Convocation.—"Fontanieu," page 258.

Notre Dame des Champs,* and upon the following day to the Porte St. Jacques, where they were made over to "the merchants and provosts of the city," who conducted them, in accordance with their privilege, to the cathedral of Notre Dame. The body of the Duc d'Orléans opened this funeral march, and then came that of the Dauphin, with the body of the King last. All the courtiers, princes, cardinals, and other notable personages followed, each according to his rank, in deep mourning, and carrying a burning torch in one hand. The councillors and presidents of the Court alone wore their scarlet robes, which were devoid of mourning, to show that they are the sovereign administrators of justice under the authority of the King, and that the Crown and Justice never die. All the corporations of the city also appeared in the procession, with their various costumes, and preceded by their banners,

* Nôtre Dame des Champs was then outside the walls of the city. This church was built upon the ruins of a temple erected to Mercury.—"Topographie de la France : Curiosités de Paris," by Estienne Chollet.

while all along the line of route were dense masses of spectators, who rendered the side streets impassable. In this way the procession reached Notre Dame, where the religious service commenced. After the offertory, the funeral oration was delivered* by Pierre Chastel, Bishop of Macon, who was a great friend of François I. At the conclusion of service, the assembly separated to "go and get their dinner," and after that, about twelve o'clock, the procession was formed anew in the same order to go to St. Denis. The journey was done on foot as far as St. Ladre, where "each and all were allowed to

* He also pronounced that of St. Denis. Having said that, considering the Christian virtues of the King, it might be hoped that his spirit would go direct to heaven, the Faculty of Theology in Paris regarded this as an attack upon the dogma of Purgatory, and was so much concerned, that a deputation was sent to the Court to complain. This was not very discreet, and a facetious maître d'hôtel, having received the deputation, and provided it with a good dinner, said: "Every one here is too busy to consider this matter just now, but I can assure you that I knew the late King very well, and that he was not a man to stop long in one place. If he went to purgatory, you may depend upon it he did not remain there long." The deputation, amazed at this reply, withdrew without further demur.

mount on horseback, to rest their bodies, as far as the Leaning Cross.*

At that point, the Cardinal de Bourbon, Abbot of St. Denis, came forward to receive the bodies, and the four Presidents of the Court took over from the provosts and merchants the four corners of the pall.

When the King's body had been placed in the tomb, the heralds deposited upon the coffin their coats of arms, the commanders of the various sections of the royal household their insignia, and the great officers of State the other attributes of royalty, the herald proclaiming: "The King is dead! Long live King Henri, second of the name, to whom may God grant long life."†

* A stone cross, upon the road to St. Denis, in the form of a pyramid, placed there by Philippe III. to commemorate the funeral procession of his father, Louis IV. In the two arms, and at the foot, were the effigies of three kings, and at the extremity, that of the crucifix.—"Topographie de la France: Remarques Singulières sur Paris," by Estienne Chollet.

† "Relation des Obsèques de François I.," by Pierre Chastel, quoted in "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 343. "Cérémonies observées aux enterrements des rois, princes, et grands. Le trespas, obsèques et enterrement du Roy François I." Old French, 4317.

It was not customary for the new King to appear at the obsequies of his predecessor. Henri II., however, wishing to witness the ceremony, had a room hired for him in the Rue St. Jacques, along which the procession was to pass, and he repaired thither incognito, after having taken off the violet costume, which was the usual mourning attire of the French kings. His only companions were St. André and Vieilleville, who were careful not to address him in such a way that he would be recognized, and when they reached the room, he went to one window and both of them to the other.

When he perceived, at the corner of the street, the cars which bore the bodies coming into sight, he was about to withdraw, "his heart coming into his mouth," and his eyes filling with tears. Vieilleville, thereupon, came away from the window where he was standing, and went up to the King, speaking to him of the grandeur of the preceding reign, and his father's doughty deeds. The late King had descended into the tomb amid such a halo of glory, that it was his son's

duty not to mourn for him, but to seek rather to imitate him. As for the Duc d'Orléans, his death was probably a great boon for the repose of the State, as his ambitious character and the rich appanage which had so imprudently been conferred on him, were a standing menace to the State.

As this did not arrest the emotion of the King, St. André begged Vieilleville to relate a certain unbrotherly act which, coming from the Duc d'Orléans, would lessen his regrets. The young King, surprised at this observation, turned towards Vieilleville as much as to ask him what he meant, whereupon the latter replied :

“ Do you remember, Sire, when, owing to the foolhardiness of La Chateigneraye, Dampierre, and Daudoin, the late Dauphin and yourself fell into the Charente, and the boat turned over upon you ? Genlis at once came to tell the King of it. Believing you to have been drowned, the whole of the Court was much shocked, and the King retired to his chamber in a state of great distress. At the same time, the Duc d'Orléans—then M.

d'Angoulême—went to his room, quite overcome with joy. I myself arrived almost at the same moment, and knocking, without the usual respect, at the King's door, I told him that you were both alive and well. The King 'nearly ate me up with caresses,' and sent me to give the news at once to M. d'Angoulême. I knocked at his door with no more ceremony than at the King's, and called out to him: 'Good news, sir; your brothers are alive, and you will soon see them; they are being carried home by the Swiss.' If I had come to bring him a piece of bad news, or to tell him something reflecting on his honour, he could not have received me worse. Having informed me in very cold terms that he was pleased to hear it, he begged me to go back and tell the King that he would come and join him in his thanks to God, and, turning round to Tavannes, without giving me time to leave the room, he let the following expression escape him: 'God's malediction on the news. I repudiate God; I shall never be any better than a fool.' He was afterwards stricken with a very intense fever, which 'very expert

doctors' attributed to the sudden change from joy to sorrow, these two opposite feelings having fought a terrible combat in his very entrails. The late King and yourself nursed him on his death-bed, and if you had known the source of his illness you would not have shown so much grief, or shed so many tears."

Upon hearing this, the sorrow of the young King was converted into anger, and he exclaimed :

"Oh ! what an evil-hearted disposition in a brother ! My greatest regret was on his account, for the King was so upset by his illness, that I wept over him a hundred times before his death. As for M. le Dauphin, I had almost forgotten his loss, seeing what a long time had elapsed since his death. But as to him, I could not, at the end of sixteen months, banish him from my memory, the more so as, a short time before, he had assured me of his friendship, and had 'also asseverated upon oath that being secure in his appanage, and in the hearts of his new subjects, we might govern peaceably together

and have the whole of Christendom at our mercy.'”

“It was all the more treacherous,” chimed in St. André, “to beguile you with this promise, because he had formed a league with the Prince of Spain to attack you after the death of your father, and if he had lived, he would have had the will and the power to do so.”

Upon the King asking him who was at the head of this league, he said :

“Madame d'Etampes and the Comtesse d'Arenberg, who, under the pretext of marriage, wrote each other all sorts of fine letters, and were, so to speak, the bankers of the fortune of these Princes.”

The King's surprise increasing, St. André promised to show him one day the cyphers used in this correspondence, which he had got from one of the Duc d'Orléans' secretaries.

Vieilleville added that the said Madame d'Etampes had not made the Duke her heir for nothing. He had promised to make her Governor of the Low Countries when he

became Duke. "And if he were still alive, your Majesty would not have recovered from this lady the diamonds worth 50,000 crowns, so famous in France, and they would probably be worn at this hour by the daughter of the Emperor."

By means of these and similar remarks, St. André and Vieilleville, who were called two fingers of his hand, so effectually dispelled the melancholy of their master, that he went back to his place and looked at the three effigies over the coffins, and when that of the Duc d'Orléans passed under the window, he disdainfully exclaimed: "So there is the good-for-nothing who leads the body-guard of my felicity.*"

The coronation at Rheims, celebrated with great pomp, took place two months after the obsequies, and it was characterised by a singular incident.†

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 10 to 23. Cost of these obsequies.—National Archives, Cartons des Rois (Henri II.) K=190. No. 11.

† See for the description of this Coronation the "Cérémonial," by Godefroy, vol. i., page 278. The date given by Godefroy is July 28th, 1547.

The origin of the Sainte-Ampoule is well known. Guillaume le Breton relates that, just as St. Remi, after having received Clovis into the Christian faith, was about to perform the rite of consecration, the vessel which contained the holy oil was broken. Great was the joy of the Pagans, who saw in this an evil omen, and endeavoured to dissuade the King from embracing the Christian religion. But at the instance of St. Remi, an angel brought down from heaven a fresh vessel, the gift of God, filled with inexhaustible oil, which was henceforth to be used for the consecration of the French kings. This was the Sainte-Ampoule which was jealously preserved in a gold reliquary with an outside casing of crystal, and deposited in the Abbey of St. Remi, at Rheims, under the custody of the abbots and monks.* When the coronation was about to take place, the Archbishop and Duke of Rheims, the premier peer of France, accompanied by the other bishops,

* The Sainte-Ampoule was dashed to pieces in 1793, upon the pavement at Rheims, by the Conventionalist, Rhul.—Cheruel's "Institutions de France," vol. i., page 21.

dukes, counts, and ecclesiastical dignitaries, repaired to the Abbey of St. Remi, in order to fetch the Ampoule, which was only delivered to them by the abbot and monks in exchange for four barons, who were left with them as hostages. These barons, who were selected as hostages by the King as a special mark of favour, remained in the abbey until the Sainte-Ampoule was brought back, and in memory of the honour which had been conferred upon them, they left their banners in the cathedral—these banners being hung up on each side of the altar, two and two, above each other, according to the rank and antiquity of their families, this being decided by the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, assisted by the Heralds.

The four barons selected by Henri II. were François de Montmorency, the eldest son of the Constable; M. de Rieux, Comte d'Harcourt; M. de Martigue; and M. de la Trémouille.* It so happened that the banner

* National Archives. Carton des Rois (Henri II.). K=90. No. 2.

of M. de Montmorency, beyond question the premier baron of France, was planted upon the right or Gospel side of the altar, with that of M. de Rieux immediately below it; while on the other, or Epistle side of the altar, were placed those of M. de Martigue and M. de la Trémouille. M. de Rieux learning what had been done, and being of opinion that his banner had not been put in its proper place, went to complain about the matter to Vieilleville, who was nearly related to him through the d'Harcourts, whose arms they both used. Vieilleville quite agreed with him, and went at once to the cathedral, where he found the Grand Master completing the arrangement of these banners. Having asked by whose authority he had thus arranged the banners, the Grand Master replied to him, with much irritation, that he knew what he was about, and that the banners would remain as he had placed them. Unable to brook this answer, Vieilleville ordered the gentlemen of his suite to pull them all down, except that of M. de Montmorency, and this they did with no little

violence. The Grand Master and heralds at once went off to complain to the King and Constable. Montmorency, thinking that his son's banner had been pulled down with the others, entreated the King to reprimand Vieilleville for his "intolerable audacity"; and hearing this, and remarking how angry the King was, several courtiers came to tell Vieilleville, and advise him to keep out of sight for a little. But Vieilleville's custom was not to shrink from answering any charge, and instead of keeping away, he boldly presented himself before the King, and not waiting to be questioned, began to complain on his own account, and ask for justice. In a long and animated discussion upon genealogy, he began by admitting the validity of the claim made by the Montmorencys, whose banner he had not interfered with, and when the Constable, who was considerably mollified when he learnt this, asked him if he was ignorant of the merit of the House of Luxemburg, to which M. de Martigue belonged, and out of which three or four Emperors had proceeded, he replied in the

affirmative. "But then," he said, "M. de Rieux descended from a younger son of the second Duke of Burgundy, and as foreign princes had no recognized rank in France, they could not at a coronation take precedence of those who belonged to the crown." The King, not well up in the genealogy of his own family, was unaware of this relationship of the Rieux, observing—

"We had never heard of this, and did not know the Rieux family was of such rank or condition."

The King then summoned the Chancellor Olivier, who was "familiar with all the French families," and M. du Tillet, the deputy of the châtelet, "which was another registry of the ancient histories and antiquities of France." They confirmed the truth of what Vieilleville had said, adding some observations of their own, so the King allowed that he was right, ordering, at the same time, the Grand Master to plant the banner of de Rieux opposite that of Montmorency, with that of le Trémouille below that of de Rieux.

This being done—in the cathedral church as well as in the Abbey of St. Remi—in the presence of the King's guard, peace was restored at Court, despite some little display of ill-humour on the part of the *Sieur de Martigue*.*

On leaving Rheims, the King halted at St. Marcoul, in order to spend, in obedience to the ancient tradition of the kings after their coronation, the well-known "neuvaine" (nine days of prayer), during which they obtain the virtue enabling them to heal the king's evil. St. Marcoul, who suffered much from this malady during his life, had obtained by his prayers the power to cure others of it after his death, and during this period of nine days he transmitted it to the kings of France. Howbeit, when the King touched the sufferers, at the four great festivals of the year, by placing his hand upon them in the shape of a cross, he merely said, without invoking St. Marcoul, "The King touches you; God heals you." But the dignitaries

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 76 to 84.

of the church, who marched in front of him, mentioned the saint in their prayers.

It was customary to spend this period of nine days in great devotion. The King prepared for it by fasting for three or four days, and by prayer with the bishops and abbots who accompanied him. During his stay he appeared very little in public, and no sort of amusement was heard of. The ladies of the court and the Queen's maids of honour were very simply attired.

Henri II. carried out the ceremonial in its entirety. When he had "completed his devotions," he repaired to Commercy, where he had ordered his "companies of Germans, horse and foot, to be drawn up in battle array." He passed them in review, congratulated them upon their soldierly bearing, thanked them for their zeal in his service, and after having presented a gold chain to each officer, dismissed them until he should require them for an attack on Boulogne, which he was secretly planning. Not being ready for this, however, he determined first to make a tour in the provinces, and

went back to Fontainebleau to prepare for it.

Before following him in this tour, I will first notice a singular event which occurred between the death of the father and the coronation of the son—the celebrated judicial duel of Jarnac and La Chateigneraye.*

* ' Vieilleville,' vol. xxix., page 84.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE JUDICIAL DUEL OF JARNAC AND LA CHATEIGNERAYE.



HE “tests,” or “judgments of God”—water, fire, single combat, etc.—date from the earliest days of French history. The object of this singular legislation was to give God an opportunity of enlightening justice by designating the guilty. In the Middle Ages it was constantly observed ; but the abuses which resulted from it were so flagrant, that it gradually fell into disuse. The only test which was allowed to survive for some little time was the judicial duel, and this because it was in harmony with the manners of the time, though since the twelfth century the Crown had endeavoured to limit the application even of this.

In 1108, a royal decree restricted it to disputes which exceeded five sous (a considerable sum in those days). St. Louis forbade it in his dominions, and his successors made the use of it subject to the King's authority.*

In the sixteenth century these combats were very rarely resorted to, though, as no law or ordinance had abolished them, they remained part of the feudal tradition and public law of the kingdom.

The most celebrated of all was that of Jarnac and La Chateigneraye, which had all the character of a political event; for behind the frivolous pretexts involved stood the two parties which had so long divided the Court:

* One of the capitularies of Dagobert I. contains the formalities usual in these kinds of combats: "If two neighbours," it is said, "are at variance as to the boundaries of their fields, let a piece of turf be cut out at the spot in dispute; let the judge take it to the *malle* (place where justice is meted out), and let the two parties, touching it with the point of the sword, take God to witness as to the justice of their claims; let them combat afterwards, and let victory decide the right." Philip the Bold and Philip-le-Bel decreed what the form of combat should be. The ordinance of the first will be found in the "Coutumier," published in 1283 by Philippe de Beaumanoir.—Vieilleville, "Observations," vol. xxix., page 347.

the party of the King, the Duc d'Orléans, the Duchesse d'Etampes and de Brion-Chabot, against the party of the Dauphin, of Diane de Poitiers, of Montmorency and the Guises.* Death had terminated the rivalry of the two brothers, and granted a complete victory to the Dauphin, by placing him on the throne. But the quarrel was kept alive by the rancour of the survivors, and the duel in question was an echo of the enmities which it had excited.

Guy de Chabot, who was also called Jarnac, to distinguish him from his father, Baron de Chabot, was a near relative of the Admiral, and allied to the Duchesse d'Etampes. Brought up in the household of François I. as a page of honour, the King had attached him to the person of the Duc d'Orléans. As a matter of fact, therefore, he belonged to the party of that Prince, though no one could be less of a party man than he was. Jarnac, though not deficient in courage, was not of a quarrelsome dispo-

* "François I.," page 331.

sition. Not very robust, tall and thin, by nature timid and reserved, more inclined to musing than to action, he had never—though like most young men of his class he had received a military training—acquired much honour or proficiency in arms. Devoid of ambition, too, and a stranger to Court intrigues, he had, from his early youth, developed mystical tendencies, and displayed a fondness for solitude and communing with God. He eventually turned Huguenot.

François de Vivonne, Sire de La Chateigneraye, ten years younger than Jarnac, brought up like him in the King's household, and attached to the person of the Dauphin, was of the very opposite nature. Rather under the average height, very full-blooded, with brown hair, and a complexion which, pink and white when he was a boy, had gradually become scarlet, he had from his youth given evidence of a very active and impetuous disposition. Witty and bright, very frank, and full of "go," he was a great favourite with the late King, who often called him "mon filleul" or "ma nourriture." From

his childhood, La Chateigneraye had shown a liking for warlike games and tactics, and had displayed his address therein. "He became," as his nephew Brantôme informs us, "one of the strongest and most adroit gentlemen in France with all kinds of arms and at all kinds of athletics. He could throw the best Breton wrestler, and he was very fond of his abilities and very quick to take offence. His wife having given birth to a daughter, he was much disappointed, and while she was still an infant in the cradle he always put a sword and a naked dagger in her hand, saying that if he had failed to beget a man, at all events he would have an amazon."*

He was singularly presumptuous, being very fond of boasting loudly as to what he could do. It is true that he had much distinguished himself at the camp of Avignon, the capture of Coni, at Landrecy, Therouanne, and other places; and the Dauphin was so fond of him that he liked always to have

* "Brantôme," vol. i., pages 506 to 714.

him in attendance, and made him very fine promises for the future.

The natural hostility between Jarnac and La Chateigneraye was augmented by the hostilities of party. These La Chateigneraye liked to fan by an ostentatious display of his sentiments for the Dauphin. There was some whisper, too, of his being a favourite of Diane, but nothing is known on the subject beyond Court gossip.

The quarrel which led to this famous combat dates from the last years of François I. "The pretext," according to Le Laboureur, was derived from the licence of the time, everyone making himself out worse than he really was, and when it was not thought to reflect on a gentleman to accuse him of anything relating to gallantry.*

The truth was that Baron Chabot, the father of Jarnac, who had not much money himself, had recently contracted a second marriage with Madlle. de Puy-Guyon, who was very rich. They lived in a very un-

* "Additions aux Mémoires de Castelnau."

ostentatious way, in proximity to the Court.

One day, when some one remarked to young Jarnac that he was spending a good deal of money, he replied that his step-mother was very good to him, and that she "kept" him. This remark, having been repeated before the Dauphin and several young nobles, was interpreted by them in a manner most insulting to Jarnac and Madame de Chabot. The Dauphin, grossly distorting the meaning of this simple remark, made great fun of it, and when this came to the ears of Jarnac, he was very indignant, declaring that he had never said anything of the kind, and that whoever stated that he had was a deliberate liar. This placed the Dauphin in a great fix, as he did not like to declare himself, for fear of displeasing his father. La Chateigneraye at once put himself forward as a cover for his master, and took the whole affair upon himself, saying that he had heard the story and repeated it to the Dauphin, and that if Jarnac denied it, he would insist upon satisfaction.

The affair might have been settled by an

ordinary duel, as so often happened in those days. But this did not suit La Chateigneraye's views, as he was anxious to create a sensation, and to dazzle the Court by crushing an adversary whom he regarded as incapable of offering any great resistance. He accordingly applied to the King to permit a judicial combat, but François I. hesitated to give his assent, declaring that "Kings and Princes should not sanction a combat, the issue of which can bring no profit to the kingdom."* Moreover, he formally forbade the two adversaries to fight at all. Thus they had their hands tied for two years, and were obliged to keep their angry feelings in check, and merely glare at each other. La Chateigneraye was so infuriated, that his friend, Pietro Strozzi, advised him to disregard the royal interdict, to kill his man, and to take refuge at Venice until the King was dead, or until his anger had cooled down, offering him 150,000 crowns to carry out this very Italian proceeding. But La Chateigneraye preferred

*"Brantôme."

to wait, knowing that it could not be for long. As a matter of fact, no sooner had François died, than the first request which Henri II. received was, that he would permit this combat. Jarnac, feeling how scandalous it was, did all he could to prevent it. He went to Compiègne and begged the King to say a word which would repair the insult and bring the quarrel to an end. But the matter had excited such violent passions, that the whole of the Court insisted upon the duel taking place, Diane being especially vindictive, while the King, personally involved in the matter, could not well intervene to bring about an arrangement. It was decided, therefore, that the duel should take place, and La Chateigneraye wished it to be hurried on, so that he might air his victory, of which every one felt confident, at the coming coronation. The challenges were exchanged, and they were as follows:—

La Chateigneraye addressed the King thus: “Sire, having learnt that Guy Chabot has recently been to Compiègne, and said that whoever declared he had boasted of

having misconducted himself with his step-mother was a mischievous wretch, I reply, if it please your Majesty, that he has lied; for he has several times made this boast before me. In this matter, I think only of the upholding of my own honour, without wishing to cast any slight upon that of ladies, whom I would rather defend than accuse. This is why I humbly pray your Majesty to be pleased to give me full licence to prove by the sword to the said Chabot the truth of what I have said. May it please you also to allow me to send him letters of combat with the contents of the proof which I propose to offer, so that by my right arm may be purified the offence he has committed against God, his father, and justice.”

“Sire,” replied Jarnac, “I came expressly from my house to defend myself against the false imputation of which I spoke to you at Compiègne, and I pray of you to believe in my honour. Sire, with your good pleasure and permission, I maintain that François de Vivonne has made a false imputation upon my character, and I therefore pray you to

allow him free course to meet me in combat.”

To this La Chateigneraye rejoined : “ Sire, you have been pleased to consider the differences between Guy Chabot and myself. I have seen a letter signed by him in which he offers at once to enter into camp and bear arms against me. He adds, too, that his bravery will testify to the sustenance and honour which he has received from the late King and yourself. As he has therefore come at last to the point to which I wished to bring him, I very humbly pray of you to give me full liberty in your kingdom to settle our quarrel, or to meet in combat elsewhere.”

The King’s reply was : “ The King, wishing to settle the point of honour raised between François de Vivonne, Sieur de La Chateigneraye, assailant, and Guy de Chabot, Sieur de Jarnac, defendant, laid the matter before his Privy Council, the Constable, the Marshals of France, and several Captains. There being no other means of settling the question and protecting the honour of these

two nobles, the King, after deliberation and advice of his Council, has granted the letters patent which they demanded. By these letters, he has intimated to the pursuer and pursued that they are to present themselves in the said camp upon the fortieth day after the issue of these letters, which will be on the 10th of July, 1547, for the verification of their honour.”*

The character of the two adversaries came out in their respective preparations for the combat. La Chateigneraye, inebriated by his own exuberance and by the sensation which the affair was causing, became quite unendurable. Far from seeking to conciliate the Divine favour, he regarded the Church and its offices as being at his disposal. God could not refuse His favour to the champion of the King and of the Court. He was here, there, and everywhere, announcing his

* The minutes of the whole affair are to be found in the "Additions aux Mémoires de Castelnau," which are closely followed above, with some further details later from "Vieilleville." See also "Fontanieu," 258, and "Béthunes," 8615, folio 95, and 8651, folio 9.

coming triumphs, strutting about, boasting of his prowess, and treating his adversary "as a lion would a dog." No expressions were too insulting, and they were, of course, retailed by the young courtiers who surrounded him, and who were only too pleased to add fuel to the fire. He ordered in advance a grand supper to celebrate his triumph, which supper was to take place on the field of battle, and to which he invited the whole of the Court. A tent was to be erected, and a host of serving men were engaged; and in inviting his friends, he said, "I invite you to my marriage feast; and it will be a feast!"

Jarnac, the while, was getting ready to meet his fate with the quiet courage which persons of timid disposition sometimes exhibit when driven to an extremity. Maintaining a calm attitude and a proud silence in face of the insults of his adversary, he went resolutely on his way without being blind to the peril in which he stood. His chances of success were small; but he neglected nothing which was calculated to

improve them, and he took fencing lessons from a very skilful Italian professor, who taught him several thrusts very little known, and also to use old arms, among others, a certain armpiece, without articulations, which keeps the right arm extended and stiff. Jarnac, as the challenged party, had the choice of arms, and he selected swords, which gave him all the greater an advantage over La Chateigneraye, that the latter, wounded in the right arm at the assault on Coni, had never quite regained the free use of it.*

Thus Jarnac, while preparing for the combat as one prepares for death, retained in his heart the supreme hope which is inspired by faith. He knew that the strength and skill of man is not everything, and he placed himself in the hands of God. As the hour of the combat drew near his piety acquired fresh force. "He was constantly in the churches and monasteries, praying himself and getting others to pray for him." Upon the morning of the combat, he took the

* Brantôme's "Discours sur les Duels," vol. i., page 714.

sacrament, after having devoutly assisted at mass.

It must not be imagined that, for all the inflexible determination of the King, the whole of his entourage were pleased at this duel taking place. Upon the contrary; those who were not part and parcel of the Dauphin's original faction, repudiated it as being compromising to the monarchy, which ought not to have condescended to so scandalous a quarrel. Moreover, the insolent bearing of La Chateigneraye made many friends for Jarnac even outside his own party. The Princes of the younger branch made no secret of their sympathies for him. M. de Vendôme asked the King for permission to be one of his seconds, and when it was refused him he withdrew from the royal presence, followed by the other Princes. M. de la Roche-sur-Yon refused the invitation to the triumphal feast prepared by La Chateigneraye, and Vieilleville accepted it, much against his inclination, being too intimately connected with the King's household to be able to refuse it.

At the same time, this duel, which was in keeping with all the traditions of chivalry, created a deep impression in the kingdom. The provincial nobility more especially, which was beginning to cordially dislike the nobility of the court, sided with Jarnac. They had remained true to the memory of the late King, and, moreover, Jarnac represented the principle of family honour. The middle classes and the people, having no personal interest in the event, looked forward to it as to a spectacle, and displayed great anxiety to witness it.

The day appointed, July 10th, at length arrived. The heralds mapped out the camp at St. Germain-en-Laye, in the royal park, which extended from the extremity of the terrace above the plain facing Paris. At each end were the tents of the combatants, decked with their colours and with all kinds of mottoes, flags, and streamers; and in the centre, occupying the most conspicuous position, the royal tribune, magnificently decorated, with another stand at the side for the ladies of the Court. At the foot of the

stands places were reserved for the Constable and the Marshals who formed the court of honour.

From sundawn, spectators began to pour in from all the country round. In contiguity to the noble warriors, who gazed upon the field of combat with eager eyes, recalling the deeds of prowess which they had done in their youth, was the crowd of common people, surging in upon the barriers of the enclosure. Vieilleville tells us that all Paris was there: "An endless array of people of all sorts, students, artisans, and vagabonds. They were all anxious to enjoy the pastime."*

A sudden hum announced the arrival of the King, gorgeously attired; and then came the ladies, who filled the side-stand, arrayed in their most brilliant toilettes. The two combatants then came forward, each with his second. The second of La Chateigneraye was the Comte d'Aumale, François de Guise,†

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 27.

† He did not take the title of Duc de Guise until after the death of his father, in the following year.

while Jarnac was, in the absence of the Duc de Vendôme, supported by the Grand Equerry de Boissy. In their train were the relatives and friends of each, La Chateigneraye having a following of five hundred young nobles and squires, wearing his colours of white and scarlet. They were "the elect of the Court," and they marched behind their leader, carrying their heads very high, and with an air of disdain for the other side:

Jarnac had a following of about a hundred, also wearing his colours—white and black; but they did not "sniff the odour of victory in advance," and were modest and retiring in their demeanour.

Both of these groups came close up to the barrier, but did not enter the field of combat. A silence came over the vast multitude, and the herald, Guyenne, coming forward, made the following proclamation:—

"This day our lord the King has promised and granted full freedom of the camp to François de Vivonne, Sieur de La Chateigneraye, assailant, and to Guy Chabot, Sieur

de Jarnac, defender and pursued, to settle by arms the question of honour at issue between them; and I do hereby make known to all that it is the King's order that they shall not hinder the course of the present combat, nor give aid nor interfere with either of the combatants under pain of death."

After he had uttered these words, the herald withdrew, and the assailant stood forward. He was conducted to his tent on the right, by his second and the men in his train, to the sound of the drum and the trumpet. The same ceremonial was observed with his adversary, and then, in the presence of the court of honour, the seconds proceeded to measure out the camp and examine the weapons.

After having decided that if one sword broke, another should be substituted for it, the series of arms was presented by the *Sieur d'Ursé*, upon behalf of Jarnac—coats of mail and sleevelets, gauntlets, helmets, etc., a list of which had been communicated to *La Chateigneraye* some days before. No objection was made to any of them except

the sleevelets of the Italian fencing-master, and a buckler which was held to be heavy and too large; M. d'Aumale maintaining that these arms were not generally used. The question was submitted to the arbitrators, who gave it against M. de La Chateigneraye.

The herald then made the following announcements:—

“By order of the King, I expressly command all those who are present at the combat not to make any noise; not to speak; not to cough or spit; not to make any sign with the foot, hand, or finger, which may aid or injure either of the combatants. Moreover, I hereby enjoin, by the King's order, upon all present, of whatsoever rank or quality they may be, that they are not to enter into the camp to assist either of the combatants, under any circumstances whatever, without the permission of the Constables and Marshals of France; and this under penalty of death.”

This proclamation being made, the seconds, accompanied by the heralds, pro-

ceeded, to the sound of drum and trumpet, to fetch the combatants in their respective camps, and bring them out towards the camp. The latter greeted them upon the threshold, and then, passing in succession before the royal tribune, where the King was seated on a bench covered with a cloth of gold, reaching to the ground, they renewed, in his presence and in that of the other princes and nobles, the solemn oaths which they had already taken before the Constable. The assailant said :—“ I, Francois de Vivonne, swear upon the Holy Gospels, upon the True Cross, and the faith of baptism, that in a just and good cause I have come to do battle with Guy Chabot, who has a wrongful and unjust cause to defend against me. I also swear that I have not upon my person, nor among my arms, any words, charms, or incantations, with which I can injure my adversary. My sole confidence is in God and in my right—in my body and in the strength of my right arm.”

Guy Chabot took a like oath ; after which their weapons of attack were, upon due

examination, handed back to them : viz., two short pointed daggers, attached to tags upon the thigh ; two swords in their hands, and two reserve swords given in charge of the Constable. When they were thus armed and equipped, their seconds took leave of them, and the heralds shouted, "Let the honourable combatants proceed to battle."

They then both rushed furiously forward, making several thrusts, and hewing and hacking at each other. One of these thrusts wounded La Chateigneraye in the leg, while he pierced Jarnac in the arm. But Jarnac dealt him a second thrust in the same place, and gradually got him to the ground.

In combats of this description, the vanquished foe became, as in war, the property of his victorious adversary, who had the right to kill him, to hold him to ransom, to make him over to a third person, or to set him at liberty. Jarnac, accordingly, finding that he had so soon got La Chateigneraye at his mercy, said: "Render me back my honour, and implore God and the King to

pardon you for the insult you have put upon me ; render me back my honour !”

As La Chateigneraye made no reply, and as he could not get up, Jarnac left him, went up to the King's tribune, and kneeling before him, said : “ Sire, I pray of you, give me happiness by showing me that you consider me to be a man of honour. I give you La Chateigneraye. Take him, your Majesty, and let my honour be restored to me. It is our youth which is the cause of all this. I am anxious that no calamity should befall him or his, on this account. I give him to you.”

The unexpected outcome of this affair had struck the King, the Court, and the crowd dumb with surprise. No one could realize what had taken place. The King made no answer, and Jarnac went back to where La Chateigneraye was lying prostrate. Seeing him still in the same position, he went down upon both knees before him, and, raising both his hands and his face heavenward, he exclaimed : “ Domine, non sum dignus ! It is not to my own arm that I give thanks !”

As he spoke, he smote his breast with

his gauntlet. He then leant over upon La Chateigneraye, and endeavoured to bring him to. La Chateigneraye then made a movement as if to rise, and to open a fresh attack upon his adversary. But Jarnac, holding out the point of his sword, said: "If you move, you are a dead man!" To which La Chateigneraye rejoined: "Well, kill me then." As he spoke, he fell back again. Jarnac, without saying another word, again went down upon his knees before the King, and said: "Your Majesty, I give him to you, and entreat you to accept in remembrance of having brought him up, and as a proof that you esteem me to be a man of honour. All I ask is that my honour be restored to me. I am your servant. If ever you engage in battle and I am employed in your service, no knight will defend your cause with a more willing heart. I give you my word that I love you, and I am anxious to prove to you my gratitude for the sustenance I have received from the late King your father and from you. Take him, therefore, your Majesty!"

The King was still too much surprised to

reply, and Jarnac once more went back to La Chateigneraye, who was lying at full length on the ground, his sword having slipped out of his hand, saying to him : "Chateigneraye, my old comrade, acknowledge thy Creator, and let us be friends !" Finding that he was still making a movement as if to turn upon him, he picked up his sword and one of his daggers which had dropped out of the sheath, and handed them to the Angoulême herald. Then, seeing that La Chateigneraye was in a very critical state, he went to the King for the third time, and said : "Your Majesty, I pray of you to accept him for the love of God, as you will not do so otherwise !"

The King still remaining silent, the Duc de Vendôme came forward and said : "Sire, accept him, inasmuch as Chabot offers him to you."

The Constable, who had accompanied Jarnac to where La Chateigneraye was lying, added : "Sire, give reply, for he must be removed." While they were speaking, Jarnac, turning his face towards the ladies' stand,

and addressing one of them, said : "Madame, you always told me that it would be so."

The King was at last moved to pity, and said to Jarnac : "Then you give him to me?" To which Jarnac replied : "Yes, your Majesty. Am I not a man of honour? I give him to you for the love of God."

The King rejoined : "You have done your duty, and your honour may be rightly rendered to you."

He then ordered the Constable to have La Chateigneraye removed, and the heralds-at-arms entered the camp with four gentlemen to carry him back to his tent, so that he might be relieved of the weight of his armour. Soon after he was taken back to his house.

Jarnac having remained standing before the King, the Grand Equerry, his sponsor, came forward and embraced him. Then the Constable, the Marshals, and the Admiral, turning towards the King, observed that it was only right to afford Jarnac the customary triumph, and to escort him back in pomp with his followers, the heralds leading the

way, and the drum and trumpets sounding. But the Grand Equerry refused this upon his principal's behalf, saying : " Your Majesty, he does not desire any triumph. It is enough for him to have been received into your good graces." Jarnac spoke in the same sense to the King, who called him up to the stand with his sponsor, and as he was about to go upon his knees, the King embraced him, and remarked : " You have fought like a Cæsar and spoken like an Aristotle."

Jarnac returned hearty thanks to the King, and also to his sponsor, to whom, next after God, he ascribed his triumph.

While this scene was being enacted before the royal tribune, the young men who formed La Chateigneraye's suite, when they had recovered from the stupor into which their chief's unexpected humiliation had plunged them, were moved to violent anger. They could not make up their minds to accept the defeat, and were inclined to do some violent deed. With shouts of rage, they brandished their arms, burning to enter the field of battle, overthrowing the guards and the

whole Court, and to take vengeance upon the partisans of Jarnac. If M. d'Aumale had given them the slightest encouragement, or even if Jarnac had consented to a triumphal procession, "the game would have been played with much effusion of blood, and with much disgrace for the Court."* The modest demeanour of the victor prevented all this. There was some fighting and disturbance, but it had its origin elsewhere.

The motley crowd of spectators, irritated at being deprived of the grand triumphal procession which was to have followed the combat, was surging tumultuously around the arena, and giving signs of great discontent. Close beside them was the tent put up for La Chateigneraye's supper, and their eyes lighted upon the provisions which had been spread out, and which had not been consumed, with the serving men standing about and not knowing what to do. In the twinkling of an eye the crowd rushed in, and carried the tent by assault. The supper was seized upon, still

* "Brantôme," vol. i., page 716.

uncooked, for the fires had not been lighted until the ceremony was over. "The pots and pans were upset," the soups and sauces were either devoured or upset by "an infinity of harpies." The cooking utensils, the silver plate, the handsome sideboards which had been borrowed from seven or eight establishments of the Court, were broken, pillaged, and stolen, amid a scene of indescribable disorder and confusion, and "the desert consisted of a hundred thousand blows with javelins and batons," dealt out by the captains, archers of the guard, and provosts who tried to pull something out of the fire.*

As soon as the combat was over, Jarnac went as quickly as possible to St. Cloud, where his father and stepmother were awaiting him, in order to give them an account of this marvellous victory, all the glory of which he ascribed to God.

La Chateigneraye's wounds were not mortal. Although weakened by the loss of blood, he recovered consciousness, and there

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 27.

were good hopes of his recovering. But he did not care to survive the loss of his reputation as the boldest man at the Court, and when he had recovered consciousness, he made away with himself, by tearing off the bandages from his wounds. The King did not appear to take the death of his champion and friend much to heart, and it may be that he felt a certain amount of relief, for if he had survived, a great deal of trouble would have been caused by his despair and anguish, whereas the whole business may have been said to have been buried with him. Jarnac, from this time forward, was a favourite with the King and the whole Court.



CHAPTER IX.

GREEDINESS OF THE COURT—DISINTERESTED-
NESS OF VIEILLEVILLE—M. DE ST. ANDRÉ'S
COMPANY—THE KING'S JOURNEY—REVOLT
OF LA GUYENNE.



FROM the very date of his accession to the throne, Henri II. gave proof of his extreme weakness towards his favourites by making Diane and St. André two presents, the value of which it was impossible to estimate off-hand.

At the commencement of every reign, the holders of venal offices, functions, and privileges, were wont to pay a special tax, in order that they might be confirmed in it. The King handed over the proceeds of this tax to Diane, and at the same time he made a grant to St. André of all the lands in France

which were occupied by persons who had a defective title to them, and of the unoccupied lands which belonged *de jure* to the Crown. This was equivalent to making over the whole kingdom to him. One gift succeeded another. In the following year, Diane received the freehold of the castle and domain of Valentinois, which had formerly belonged to her family,* with the title of Duchess; as well as Chenonceaux, Chaumont, Limours, Beynes, Breuil, Arcy-sur-Aube, Rouvray, Chevrier, Pinet, Pizançon, etc., etc., hotels in Paris, large sums of money stowed away in strong boxes, appointments and abbeys for all her friends and relatives. St André, Montmorency, and the Guises were equally favoured, and they stood like a body-guard around the throne to prevent anyone else coming near it. When they had kept all the others at a distance, they quarrelled for

* The lordship of Valentinois had been raised to a duchy by Louis XII., in favour of Cæsar Borgia, upon his marriage with Isabelle d'Albret (1488). Borgia having afterwards formed an alliance with the enemies of France, this lordship was taken away from him.

the plums among themselves, just as pioneers in a mine dispute for the gold nuggets.

They were, as Vieilleville tells us, "so unabashed and covetous to make their families flourish, that appointments, dignities, bishoprics, and abbeys, no more escaped them than the fly does a swallow. The dainty bits were always snapped up in a moment. They had, in all parts of the kingdom, paid agents to give them notice of any crimes or deaths, so that they might profit by any conspiracy or vacant inheritance. Moreover, they had doctors in Paris who always kept them informed as to the progress of the malady of any patient who was rich, and in some cases these doctors were not slow to get rid of a patient in consideration of a gift of a thousand crowns, or a yearly pension."*

It was especially with the unfortunate Protestants that their conduct was so odious and cruel. The decrees issued against them were very severe, but as a rule they were allowed to lie dormant. The favourites, how-

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 1 to 5.

ever, called them into activity as a means of extorting money. As a sentence of death was always followed by the confiscation of property, the "hungry pack" got such-and-such a province made over to it, in return for which it undertook to discover and root out heresy in it. Lawyers of the lowest type, such as Boys, the despised judge at Périgueux, were entrusted with the prosecution. Ready to discern heresy, and indefatigable in their search of it, they spread suspicion everywhere, discovered and denounced the guilty, inventing evidence if necessary, and compelling the magistrates to pass severe sentences.

The favourites of the favourites also received sometimes the small change of a confiscation, as a reward for their services. Finding that Vieilleville was on very good terms with the King, some of them conceived the idea, upon one occasion, of using his credit towards carrying out one of these infamous acts. M. d'Apchon, brother-in-law of St. André, MM. de Senneterre, de Biron, de Fargueil, and de La Noue, brought him a patent from the King, with his name at the

head, conferring upon them a share in the confiscations of La Guyenne, the Limousin, the Quercy, the Périgord, the Saintonge, and the Aunis districts. They asked him to contribute towards the payment of Boys, their agent, whom they were sending into the country to set the ball rolling. Boys had undertaken that each of them should receive more than twenty thousand crowns in less than four months ; he had even offered to pay down half the amount in advance within a month.

· Vieilleville indignantly refused, exclaiming, “What! enrich myself by such odious and sinister means ; ruin whole families often upon unfounded accusations ; have my name bandied about in courts, in police offices, and other places of legal resort, in presence of the accused ; to hear the maledictions of a number of women, maidens, and children, who will die in a hospital ; and, moreover, to entrench upon the duties of the advocates and procurators, to whom alone these researches belong, would be to incur the pains of hell for next to nothing.” Suiting the

action to the words, he drew his dagger, ran the point of it through his name, and departed. MM. d'Apchon and Biron, feeling at once shame and annoyance, also took their departure, in high dudgeon. But the three others, all of them very young, who had no money of their own, and had been reckoning upon the proceeds of this patent to secure a little amusement, were very much disappointed. They picked the document up, and would have much liked to have had it renewed in their own names. But as they had not sufficient influence for that, they had to content themselves with tearing it up into still smaller pieces, and indulging in furious invective against Vieilleville for having spoilt the whole affair.*

So weak-minded was the King that he could scarcely give any assistance to any but his favourites ; or else, when the latter asked him for any benefice, he was obliged to tell a falsehood, and say that he had already disposed of it. Even this did not always settle

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 174.

the matter, for they would argue with him that this could not be, as they knew that they had been informed of the vacancy almost as soon as it had occurred.

Thus, for instance, the Abbey of St. Thierry-lez-Reims fell vacant. It was a fine domain, consisting of a large house, called Lafère, and of a vineyard which yielded, in an average year, two hundred measures (*queues*) of an excellent white wine; the income being about twelve thousand francs. The late abbot was a priest, and held the abbey for life, so that at his death the whole of his property, under the denomination of *robbe morte*, lapsed to the King. When he learnt this, the Duc de Guise applied for the domain, upon behalf of Charles de Lorraine, who was in holy orders; while Montmorency wanted it for his nephew, the Cardinal de Châtillon, and Diane for a relative of her late husband, M. de Brézé. But the King, having in his mind an absent friend who never asked for anything, said that it was too late, as a courier had started two hours before, with a message, granting it to Vieille-

ville, at his residence of St. Michel-en-Bois. Having said this, he sent for his secretary, Bochetel, and ordered him to lose no time in preparing the necessary dispatches for Rome and other places, and for advising the new holder.

Vieilleville, much touched by this mark of his Sovereign's affection, learning the avidity of the "three harpies" who had been, unknown to each other, "harassing" the King all the morning, in order to "snap up" this benefice, was not sorry to have this opportunity of showing them how a gentleman should behave when thus honoured by the King's generosity. He gave the abbey to his brother, who was in the Church,* without keeping back anything for himself, in the form of income or pension. He distributed one hundred and twenty measures of wine, then in the cellars, to the noblemen at Court; a quantity of corn to the monks and to the poor; the furniture, the tapestry, and the kitchen utensils to the family of the late

* A brother on the mother's side, M. de Mas.

Abbot, and the linen of Flanders, which was very fine and delicate, to Madame Diane, and the Countesses de Tonnerre and St. Aignan, his own relations. All he kept for himself was a couple of Champagne greyhounds, which were reputed to be very swift of foot, for the pursuit of the hare and other game.*

Soon after this, the King again remembered Vieilleville. The trial of Marshal de Biez drawing to a close, and it being evident that he would be found guilty,† the King made over fifty men of his company to M. de Humières, Governor of the Dauphin, and reserved the fifty others to Vieilleville. Henri II. informed St. André of this, but asked him to keep it a secret, as the Constable had already applied to him upon behalf of one of his lieutenants.

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 5 to 10.

† He was sentenced to death upon the 3rd of August, 1551, but the sentence being commuted, he was imprisoned in the Château de Loches. He seems, however, to have been set at liberty, and to have died in his own house in Paris. During the reign of Henri III., his memory, and that of Verveins, his son-in-law, were re-established by letters dated Sept. 1575.—"Montluc," vol. xxv., page 66.

St. André, with his usual selfishness, asked the King to reconsider the matter. His own company was in a very unsatisfactory condition, and he would like the King to order Vieilleville to take the lieutenancy of it, so as to bring it into good order. The King shook his head, saying that it was full time to make Vieilleville captain, after eight years' lieutenancy at Châteaubriand. It was only the other day that M. de la Rochesur-Yon, having a lieutenancy to dispose of, did not venture to offer it to him, but merely asked him if he could suggest a suitable person for the appointment. It was only fair to give him the step. St. André could not insist after this, and the King sent for Vieilleville to inform him of his promotion. But Vieilleville declined with thanks; and when the King pressed him for his reasons, he said: "Your Majesty, I should think that I had married the widow of a man who had been hung if I accepted the inheritance of a traitor. I am not in any hurry; moreover, you have determined to recapture Boulogne, and it may be that 'some honour-

able captain ' may be killed during the attack whose succession you will confer on me— unless, indeed, I am killed myself; in which event I should not want any company.”

As the King still insisted upon his accepting the offer, he went on to say: “ I would sooner be lieutenant of M. de St. André here present than have the hundred men of Marshal de Biez.”

On hearing this, St. André joyously exclaimed, “ Don't forget what you have just said, Monsieur mon meilleur ami ” (he always called him by this name), “ and that you have said it in the King's presence.”

“ But I put my own interpretation upon it,” added Vieilleville. “ I will never be lieutenant under any one, not even a prince of the blood, unless I have as absolute authority in his company as I had in that of Châteaubriand. During the wars in Picardy I lost four ensigns, six standard-bearers, and nine marshals, whose places I always filled with gendarmes of the same company, and in the same way I replaced those who had died by the oldest archers, whose places I filled with

the flower of the youth of Anjou and Brittany. I would rather have died than have lent myself to any unworthy compromise or makeshift."

"You must," rejoined the King, "have been very much liked and respected by your men."

"Yes, indeed, your Majesty. This due observance of rank, and the hope common to all that they might one day carry the standard, animated them with so much courage in combat, that they were ready literally to lay down their lives."

"And how about the captains' purchase-money?" inquired St. André.

"M. de Châteaubriand never touched a penny of it. I used it for helping some of the poorer archers, or for assisting those who had lost their horses in battle, to buy fresh ones, or else as an instalment of ransom money."

The King continued to express his approval, whereupon St. André clinched the matter by addressing the King as follows: "Inasmuch as M. de Vieilleville has offered

in your Majesty's presence to accept my lieutenancy, I accord him all the conditions and authority which he had in that of M. de Châteaubriand." Vieilleville, who had only made this offer to get out of succeeding to the traitor Marshal, found himself caught in his own trap; and as St. André went on to say that he would not henceforward give an order, even as to the colour or shape of a jacket, and would only concern himself with the company to give it good pay and get it favoured in the way of garrison quarters, Vieilleville said that he was ready to obey the King's orders. His age, name, wealth, and credit seemed far above the post he consented to occupy, so that his acceptance created great surprise at Court. The ladies extolled his humility; but his brother-in-law, M. de Thevalle, who had reckoned upon the lieutenancy if he had been appointed captain, and M. d'Apchon upon that of St. André, could not conceal their vexation. M. de la Roche-sur-Yon also said to him, with much ill-humour: "Really, my cousin, if I had known you had such a weakness for a

lieutenancy, I would have given you a taste of mine, and you would have found that the sauce of a Prince of the blood is at least as good as that of a Marshal of France." When Vieilleville had told him all the details of the affair, the Prince added :—

"You may say what you please ; you are playing your last card, for St. André will do all he can to prevent the King from raising you in rank, so that he may not lose your services as lieutenant. I know the man's disposition, and you will see by the end of the year whether I am not right."

"We must leave all this to Providence," rejoined Vieilleville, who went off to sup with the Cardinal de Bourbon.

This celebrated company had been given to the father of St. André, Governor to the Dauphin, together with the city of Lyons, as a compensation when his pupil attained his majority. He, caring only for the profit accruing from the office, had gone to reside upon his property and obtain a little rest, appointing as lieutenant a gentleman of the long robe named Peyrat, who had never so

much as had a lance in his hand. The latter, who was left to do as he pleased, formed the company in a very curious fashion. Most of the men-at-arms were the valets of the commissioners of taxes and farmers-general, sons of concierges, or tavern keepers, whose parents could do nothing with them, the latter being a particularly numerous class. As most of the hotels and inns in France were named after some saint, the young men enlisted under these names, as being more stylish than their own, such as St. André, St. Germain-sur-Allier, St. Vincent, St. Martin, etc. The inhabitants of Lyons, who know all about them, jeered at this "scum," as they called them, thanking Providence for having sent a "company from out of Paradise," and giving them the nickname of "the gendarmes of the Kyrielle." None of them knew their business. Most of their arms and horses were borrowed, and only put in an appearance at reviews. So that, however much the King might be pressed for men, young St. André made use of his credit at Court to get his father's company exempted, under the

pretext that he required it to maintain order in such a large and motley city as Lyons. The controller of the company was the secretary of M. de St. André, while the treasurer was his late silversmith. The War Commissary had been appointed Provincial of Dauphiny through his son's influence, and the payments of men and arms were made at the Lyons treasury, which was under his own control. So the whole business was confined to his family, and there was a conspiracy of silence with regard to the pilfering and corruption which impoverished the Crown.

This had been going on for ten years under the reign of François I., and when St. André the elder died, the company was given to the son. The latter, however, refrained from having anything to do with it, "being quite sure of how much mud would be stirred up if the bottom of the pool was moved." This is why he was anxious to secure Vieilleville for lieutenant, knowing his brother-in-law, Apchon, to be incapable of carrying out the necessary changes.

The patent had scarcely been issued

when, according to the general publication of the reviews (monstres) of gendarmerie, Vieilleville assigned St. André's company to Clermont-en-Auvergne, in order to avoid the borrowing of horses and arms, which was so easily done at Lyons, where the men had all their friends. He then selected between seventy-five and eighty young men, all of high spirit, good family, and well trained, to complete his company, and started for Clermont. Upon his arrival, he was presented with thirty or forty medical certificates, stating that the persons whom they concerned were ill; but he declined to accept them, and cashiered the whole of the men. He also struck off the roll all the serving men who had been put on the list by favour, and as there remained twenty-five or thirty gendarmes drawn up in battle array, he ordered them to manœuvre upon their horses so that the Commissary might see what they were fit for. As they could not ride, the horses ran away with them, and threw them all, much to the delight of the veterans present. So they were in turn sent back to their taverns,

and were too much ashamed of their exhibition to ask for any indemnity. Three only, including St. Agathe, of the Dauphin Inn, at Roanne, attempted to protest; but four or five of the gentlemen present fell on them with sticks, and they made off in all haste.

Vieilleville, having thus "done good service to the Crown," selected with great care his men at arms and officers, and drilled them so well that at the next review, at Moulins, his company was considered a model one. Well satisfied at the result, he went to stay with the Court at Fontainebleau, and to look after his property, while in the spring of 1548 he rejoined the King at Troyes, and accompanied him during his tour through the Eastern Provinces, principally in Savoy and Piedmont.

Henri II., for whom it was very important to retain these faithful provinces, made a state entry into Chambéry, in order to mark his sense of its worth, and the next day he resumed his journey, intending to cross the Alps in hunting attire. But the town of St. Jean de Maurienne was also anxious to

witness a state entry, and induced the King to grant its request by promising him a novel form of enjoyment.

While the King was walking beneath the canopy, a troop of about a hundred men suddenly appeared, clothed in the skins of bears, "head, body, arms and hands, thighs, legs, and feet, and so clever was the disguise, that they might have been taken for real bears." They came from out of a side street, with drums beating and flags flying, carrying a boar-spear on their shoulders, and forced their way in between the King and his Swiss guard, following him on all-fours, to the infinite astonishment of the Court and the people. They accompanied him in this guise as far as the church, where the bishops and clergy were awaiting him with the Cross and with relics, in their copes and other ornaments, "chanting some bars of very good music." At the church door, the King alighted from his horse to make his devotions, and the men who had disguised themselves in this fashion afterwards escorted him back to his residence, simulating the movements of

bears, climbing up the walls of houses and the columns of the markets, and imitating their cries and howlings. Seeing that their gambols amused the King, they wound up their display with such a din that the horses, who were tied up, pending the arrival of their riders, broke loose, and trampled upon all who came in their way, many people being severely injured. This did not prevent a round dance, called the "carrolle," being got through in the evening, at which the Swiss, "being compatriots in their mountains called the Alps, joined in with the bears. The King confessed that he had never in his life been so much amused.

The next day, he started, by way of Susa and Veillane, for Turin. The Governorship of Piedmont, comprising from twelve to fifteen strongly fortified towns, and a garrison always on the alert, was one of the most important in the kingdom. The late King had given it to the Prince de Melfi, who, through the influence of Vieilleville, had given his allegiance to the French flag, and whose wife and children had been saved by

Vieilleville during the Italian campaign. The Prince had never forgotten this, so when he heard that his benefactor was accompanying the King, he secured for him a very luxurious lodging, next to his own, with the hotel of the Three Kings for his suite. As ill luck would have it, the messengers sent on in advance by the Constable had already got the lodging ready for the Cardinal de Bourbon, and the hotel for the suite of the Duc de Vendôme. This gave rise to a very hot dispute, the result of which was, that the Governor turned out the persons who were acting for the Constable, the latter, when he heard of what had occurred, being, of course, very angry.

The Prince of Melfi went out to Veilane to meet the King, to whom he presented Vieilleville, saying :—

“Your Majesty, I am under greater obligations to him than to anyone alive. In order to have him near me at Turin, I acted as a house-agent for him. I am told that this has given offence, but neither fear nor hope will ever make me ungrateful.”

As this seemed likely to bring about a dispute with the Constable, the King put an end to it by observing that it would be very hard if a Governor could not "accommodate a friend as he pleased" in his own town.

Throughout the whole of Vieilleville's stay at Turin, he was treated with great distinction by the Prince, who even asked him each day to give the pass-word, though Vieilleville only consented to do so once, for fear of creating jealousy.

While the honours which the city of Turin was showing the King were in full progress, came the news of the revolt in Guyenne, Saintonge, and Angoulême in connection with the salt tax. This tax, which touches so directly the poorer classes, was in former times the most unpopular of all, especially among the inhabitants along the sea coast. Nothing, indeed, could be more annoying for them than to be compelled to go, at great expense, to the royal granaries for what salt they wanted, when the sea brought it to their very doors. The way in

which the tax was collected made it all the more odious.

“All along the coast of Guyenne you met numbers of ravenous men who swept down like grasshoppers upon these unfortunate provinces, devouring the substance of the people, and only going away when they had made enormous fortunes.”*

Those whom the people nick-named the “gabelleurs,” went about, as Paradin tells us, day and night, keeping watch upon the dealers called “faulx saulniers,” who conveyed the salt from the islands to other places without any certificate or licence from the receivers. . . . They confiscated all the salt they found on them, together with their horses and mares, and detained them in custody. For each horse load they had to pay a fine of seven livres fifteen sols to the parish to which they were going, besides a heavy fine. The collectors, moreover, were able to increase or relax their severity, as the

* “Continuateur de la nouvelle histoire de France,” quoted in the “Observations aux Mémoires de Vieilleville,” vol. xxix., page 376.

fancy took them, and committed so many abuses, that "their insolence was more unbearable than the tax itself." In addition, "those who had charge of the salt depôts were accused of mixing sand with the salt."*

The populace, driven to extremities by this treatment, rose in rebellion, and the feeling of discontent, which at first did not go beyond a lawful form of remonstrance, gradually developed into open revolt. The rebels were joined by a number of beggars, highwaymen, and bad characters. The tax-collectors were the first to suffer; and when a small body of regular troops endeavoured to put down these lawless proceedings, they were soon beaten back. Emboldened by success, the rioters got out of all control, and began to set fire to the castles of the landed gentry, to pillage the houses of the tradesmen, and to massacre the residents in both. "All rich men were tax-collectors in their eyes." The term was a signal for murder and devastation. They chose leaders

* Paradin's "Histoire de notre temps," pages 710 to 714.

to whom they gave the title of colonel. "And no traveller in the country was safe, for the most respectable of traders and gentlemen were robbed under the pretence that they were 'gabelleurs'; nor were the scoundrels content with despoiling them, but must needs also address them familiarly in the second person singular, without any rhyme or reason, so enraged was the populace at the abuse of the tax."*

The rebellion reached Bordeaux. The magistrates, greatly alarmed, sent for Tristan de Monneins, a nobleman in the Basque country, related to the Constable, and Lieutenant of the King of Navarre in Guyenne. He answered to their appeal, and, not choosing to concert any measures with the Parliament, he summoned a general meeting of the inhabitants at the Hotel de Ville. He spoke to them in a very haughty and threatening tone, and informed them that the gibbet would be the fate of all the rebels. The meeting displayed great indignation, and a

* "Paradin," page 714.

lawyer apostrophised Monneins in very insolent terms, reproaching him with treating as rebels those who were merely asking for justice. He suggested that Monneins should be dismissed from his post; and the latter, amazed at this bold proposal, imagined the rebels to be strong enough to carry their point, and shut himself up in the Château Trompette. The tocsin was at once sounded, the whole city rose, and everyone supposed to be connected with the salt tax was put to death. The tax offices were plundered, and upon the Parliament assembling in haste, a deputation was sent to confer with the rebels, headed by President Chassagne, renowned for his virtues, and very popular. He addressed himself to the leaders, pointing out the folly and danger of the enterprise upon which they had embarked, and finally induced them to lay down their arms and come with him to see Monneins, who, believing the riot to be at an end, returned with them to the town hall. But the disturbances broke out afresh in another part of the city, and Chassagne went off to try and quell it. Some

of the rioters, taking advantage of his absence, surrounded Monneins, and upon a locksmith cutting open his cheek with a halberd, a number of others stabbed him with their daggers. While they were doing this, Chassagne returned, and, in attempting to defend Monneins, was stabbed himself. He had a narrow escape of sharing Monneins's tragic fate; for, according to Paradin, "a priest only just managed to drag him off, more dead than alive, to a neighbouring house; he had tasted no food or drink all day." * When Chassagne came to, he was in despair at having let this crime be committed through his overweening confidence, and he took refuge in a church. The mutineers dragged him out of it, and, with their swords at his throat, called upon him to become their leader. Chassagne, though horror-stricken at the idea, finally accepted the proposal, as the sole means of establishing some sort of order, and his parliamentary colleagues followed his example.

* "Paradin," page 699.

“It was a grievous thing,” writes the author of the “*Annales de France*,” who was an eye-witness of these events, “to see the senators stripped of their robes of justice, wearing a doublet, with a sailor’s cap on their heads, carrying a pike, and insulted by this vile horde, if they did not bear their arms properly. . . . Nameless were the cruelties, inhumanities, murders, pillages, ransomings, larcenies, and other sanguinary excesses committed in this sea of population, lashed by all the winds of sedition.”*

It was not long, however, before the bourgeoisie, alarmed by the excesses of the mob, against which they were helpless, went over clean to the side of the magistrates, who, fortified by their help, recovered their authority and put down the rebellion with a high hand. The leaders were seized, and Lavergne, who had given orders to sound the tocsin, was broken at the wheel.

It was after this that the Parliament wrote to the King, sending him a copy of

* “*Paradin*,” page 705.

their register from day to day. Order was re-established, and with the help of a few troops the magistrates would be able to restore complete peace, so they implored the royal clemency for the repentant offenders.

This message moved the King very much. His natural impulse was to deal mercifully with them; but the Constable, who had no patience with popular rebellion, and who was especially angry at the murder of Monneins, his relative, urged him to be stern. "He pointed out to him that this was not the first time that the populace had been capricious, rebellious, and mutinous." During the reign of the late King there had been revolts at La Rochelle and the country round. To prevent their recurrence, it would be necessary to exterminate the population and settle a fresh one upon the soil, a task which he himself offered to undertake. With ten companies of trained troops and as many of lansquenets, "he would undertake to do the job and satisfy the King." The King, however, moderated his fury, and said that, though he should have the troops, the repression must be

effected in a legal way. Unless it met with open resistance, the army was to do no deed of violence—was neither to slay nor to plunder; and the provosts of the King and of the Constable were alone to have the power of carrying out executions. François de Guise was to accompany the Constable.

Having arrived at these decisions, the King crossed over into France with all his suite, and came to Lyons, and it was from that city that the two leaders started for Bordeaux: the Constable by the Rhône and Toulouse; François de Guise by the Loire, Tours, and Poitiers—Vieilleville accompanying the latter.*

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 105—121. See also, in the Fontanieu Collection, 259, 260, the letters from the King to M. de Humières and from the Constable to M. de la Rochepot, with reference to these disturbances.—"Béthunes," 8639, folio 65, and 8635, folios 51—55



CHAPTER X.

SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLT IN GUYENNE.
—MARRIAGE OF MADEMOISELLE DE SCÉ-
PEAUX.—SIEGE OF BOULOGNE.—MISSION OF
ST. ANDRÉ TO ENGLAND.



UPON hearing of the Constable's arrival, the inhabitants of Bordeaux, knowing how cruel he was, were much alarmed. They endeavoured to appease him in advance by sending to meet him at Langon "a large and very magnificent boat, which contained rooms and saloons with glass windows, painted in gold and azure, and decorated with his arms," to bring him down the river. Three or four deputies presented it to him, taking the opportunity to deliver an eloquent harangue in order to excite his sympathy and pity. But Montmorency haughtily refused the present, and, casting a glance at the twenty pieces ofartil-

lery which he had with him, declared that "he would not enter Bordeaux by water, or by the gates, and that he had got something with him to effect an opening."*

However, despite this charitable frame of mind, he could not, finding its inhabitants perfectly peaceful and submissive when he entered the city, do more than disarm them, and order a Master of the Requests notorious for his severity, Charles de Neuilly, to proceed against the rebels.

The judgment pronounced was a crushing one.† "The city, the corporate bodies, and the University" were to be deprived of all privileges, franchises, liberties, rights, actions, exemptions, immunities, juries and councils, steeples, justice, and jurisdiction. The letters, charts, transactions, and documents relating to the said privileges were to be burnt in presence of the wardens, the steeples were

* De Thou, Mézeray, and subsequent writers, say that the Constable made a breach in the walls, through which he entered with his army; but Paradin, Belleforest, and other contemporary writers, are silent on the point.

† See "Fontanieu," pages 255—260.—"Béthunes," 8665, folio 27.

to be pulled down, the town hall to be razed to the ground, and the inhabitants compelled to fortify, at their own cost, the Château Trompette, and maintain an armed fleet for the protection of it and of the garrison. The body of the Seigneur de Mouneins was to be removed from the Carmelite Church by the wardens and members of the town council, arrayed in mourning robes, with bared heads, and carrying in their hand a lighted torch, with the arms of the defunct. The body was to be taken to the Cathedral of St. André by the above, accompanied by all the inhabitants, male and female, halting on the way at the different churches. When they reached the residence of the Constable, they were all to go down on their knees and implore in a loud voice:—"Pardon from God, the King and Justice, crying for mercy." The funeral service was to be held in the Cathedral, and the defunct buried in the choir, with an inscription over the tomb to commemorate the crime and its punishment, a chapel being afterwards built to perpetuate the recollection of it. This judgment was carried out

to the letter, except the clause relating to the demolition of the town hall; the tower from which the tocsin was sounded being alone pulled down. The Parliament was dissolved, and a new one chosen, and the hapless Chassagne was loaded with irons, and remitted for trial before the Parliament of Toulouse, which, however, let him off. Then began the executions. More than 140 persons were hung from the clappers of the bells which they had rung. Others were decapitated, broken on the wheel, impaled, torn to pieces by four horses, or burnt. In fact, new forms of punishment were invented for the most guilty of the offenders.*

The Saintonge did not get off any better.†

In the meanwhile, all that François de Guise, who had rejoined the Constable just as he entered the city, did, was to seek to

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 122. "Paradin," pages 730—742.

† Paradin has preserved for us the letters-patent addressed by the Constable to the Seneschal of this province, dated October 26th, 1548.

mitigate the severity of the punishment.* Vieilleville, who was of his following, had kept his company in a high state of discipline during the journey. When within three leagues of Bordeaux, his grooms, while preparing his billet, discovered in a barn, concealed beneath the straw, a quantity of very fine arms: pikes, arquebuses, halberds, javelins, corslets, etc., but all of them old-fashioned in make. There were enough to arm a whole troop.

Vieilleville, upon receiving information of this, sent for his host, who was the mayor of the village, and who answered the summons in great fear and trembling, for this was more than enough to hang a man in those days. Upon being questioned, he stated, speaking in quite a natural tone, but with a scared look in the eyes, that they had been given him to take care of, and, in order to mollify

* Letter from Cardinal de Guise to the Duc d'Aumale, regarding the revolt of Bordeaux, October 17th, 1548; "Gaignières," page 465; French MS., 20,577. In the same MS. is a long memorandum upon the apparent clemency of the Duc de Guise, who eventually obtained pardon for the city on certain terms.

Vieilleville, he added that he had also walled up in the cellar thirty-five boxes and chests which had been entrusted to his keeping, and which contained very valuable articles.

Convinced of his innocence, Vieilleville had the arms locked up in a room of which he retained the key, but he did not touch the valuables, and dismissed his host, with a recommendation to hold his tongue about them, for fear he should come across some one more unscrupulous.

The next day Vieilleville slept at his last halt, a league and a-half from Bordeaux. He left his company in charge of one of his officers, and on the following day took up his quarters in the city, at a lodging which his servants had prepared for him in the house of M. de Valryn, a Councillor of Parliament. M. de Valryn received him at the doorway, expressing the pleasure he felt at having a nobleman of such mark in his house, at the same time pouring out his grievances. He was, he said, a prisoner in his own house, and was threatened with the most severe punishment for having lodged during six

days a colonel of the Commune. The truth was that this colonel was a relative, and that part of the house belonged to him; besides which, he had at his back five or six thousand men, to resist whom was, of course, impossible.

Vieilleville replied that, under the circumstances, confinement was the best thing which could happen to him; but as regarded other matters he would enquire into them, and see what could be done. Upon going into the house, he found there "Mademoiselle" de Valryn, her two daughters, and her two nieces, "all of exceeding beauty." The nieces had sought refuge with their aunt, as the house of their widowed mother had been attacked the previous night. All these ladies, half wild with fright, sought to throw themselves at Vieilleville's feet and implore his protection. But he would not hear of their putting themselves in this posture, telling them that he had daughters of his own, and would protect them from all danger. Upon being questioned, Madame de Valryn said that the culprit was the gentleman who

had been quartered upon her sister, and whom she called the Comte de Sancerre. She said that he had tried to burst open the door of her nieces' bedroom, and that they had jumped out of the window on to some faggots, in order to make their escape. Vieilleville asked them if they did not mean the Bastard de Bueil,* and they at once replied that they had heard him called by that name.

“This being the case, you must not be surprised at his behaviour, for he is the son of a loose woman, and this is such a source of humiliation to him that he would like all honourable damsels to be like his mother.”

Vieilleville was then informed that his dinner was served, whereupon he asked his hosts to share it with him, and after it was over he took leave of them, and went to pay his respects to the Constable.

Montmorency received him very cordially, and took him back to the Council. The Comte de Sancerre was among those present,

* Louis de Bueil, natural son of the Comte de Sancerre

and Vieilleville told him how his son had misconducted himself. The Count sent at once for the young man, and when he came "they both gave him such a dressing that he wished himself below ground." He afterwards accompanied Vieilleville to the house of the Valryn family to ask for forgiveness, and to entreat the young ladies to return to their home, assuring them that they should not have reason to complain again. However, they preferred to remain under the protection of Vieilleville, and it was lucky for them that they did so.

Upon the day when the people had to do penance, each man being responsible for his neighbour, the neighbours of Valryn, followed by the provost's bailiffs, appeared at his door to compel him and his family to accompany them to the public square. Valryn gave as an excuse that he had been ordered to remain under custody, and his womenfolk concealed themselves, while Vieilleville, who was very much opposed to the severe measure which had been ordered, took the part of his hosts, and turned the archers

out. The matter was reported to the Constable, who was very much annoyed, and told Vieilleville that he considered "his conduct very strange, and that his hosts must comply with an ordinance which had been made public, if only to avoid setting a bad example." Vieilleville rejoined that if they were compelled to make amends in public, he would accompany them, and that would create no little stir. "Though these were strong words, and spoken in great wrath to one who was regarded as the Second King of France," the Constable, knowing how popular Vieilleville was with the captains of the trained bands which kept the city gates, and anxious not to quarrel with him, took no notice of the threat. He merely requested that nothing might be said about the matter, so as not to create a precedent. The next day Vieilleville asked him to grant Valryn a written pardon, so that it might not be retracted. This was granted at once, and Vieilleville took his host to the Constable, at whose knees Valryn threw himself in gratitude.

Another anecdote relating to Vieilleville may also be worth telling. Having left his company about a league from Bordeaux, the gendarmes and archers came into the city by turns, with leave granted by the ensign or standard-bearer, to receive his orders, hear the news, and witness the executions. Three of them, two men-at-arms and an archer, went to the priest and informed him that, while looking on at the executions, they had heard two of the culprits denounce him for having had the tocsin sounded from his belfry, and that the judge had ordered him to be arrested and cast into prison. They offered, however, to facilitate his escape if he would give them a good round sum, and they proceeded at once to seize him by the collar, and half-strangled him.

The unhappy priest, knowing by the reports he had heard of what was going on at Bordeaux, that people were put to death upon the strength of a simple denunciation, and without a shred of evidence, handed them over a sum of eight hundred crowns, and, as they had a dagger at his throat, told them

where they would find the chalices, crosses, relics, communion-plate, and the gold and silver ornaments of the church, which he had hidden away. The soldiers seized all this, and began to pack it up, drinking a little in the course of their proceedings.

In the meanwhile, the priest's nephew, who had got out of the house, went to see Vieilleville, and told him what was taking place. The latter at once got on to his horse, and rode up to the priest's house, "much to the discomfiture of the varlets," who had already got three horses loaded with their spoil. Vieilleville killed one of them in an instant, exclaiming: "Poltroon! are we Lutherans to attack priests and pillage churches in this fashion?" The two others, being unable to make their escape, were arrested, and two of their comrades who wore the same uniform killed them, to avoid the humiliation of seeing them hung.

The nephew, who had shown Vieilleville the way through the garden, so that he might enter the house without knocking at the door, then took him to the room in which

his uncle was tied to a bench, two men threatening him with a dagger to prevent him calling for help. Vieilleville set him at liberty, restored his goods to him, and had the two men hung on the spot.

When the executions were over at Bordeaux, and the whole country had been brought into subjection to the King, the Constable ordered a grand review just before he left. Knowing how well Vieilleville had reorganized the St. André company, he said to him one day, in jest, that he would like to be his commissary; that he had heard that the company was not in a condition to do its service, and that it did not number twenty sound horses. Vieilleville thanked him, with a modest smile, begging him to show no favour to him or his companions. He advised him, however, to be careful, for he should treat him as he did the other commissaries.

“And how is that, pray?” inquired the Constable, whose curiosity was excited.

“I ask them to dinner,” replied Vieilleville. “If you will do me this honour, you

will not find it at all out of your way, as the village in which I have my quarters is upon your road when you leave this city.”

The Constable, laughing heartily — as heartily, at least, as it was in his nature to do—at once accepted the invitation.

The review, which was held two days afterwards upon a large plain, near Bordeaux, was a great triumph for Vieilleville, and not less so was the dinner which followed it, served in a field near the village. M. de Guise was present at it, with the Constable, and there was both good cheer and no lack of good humour. At the end of dinner, Vieilleville’s company amused his guests with some gymnastic exercises, and then escorted them back to Bordeaux, the leave-taking being accompanied by a grand flourish of trumpets.

Vieilleville returned to his quarters, and, as was his habit, paid the expenses, so as to satisfy all the inhabitants before leaving. He then conducted his company to Saintes, where it was in garrison, and left it in the hands of his officers, after having come to

an understanding with the authorities of the town. This done, he set out for his property at Duretal, having arranged to pay a visit on the way to the Prince and Princesse de la Roche-sur-Yon.

These latter had him to thank for their good fortune, and they had not forgotten it; so they were delighted to receive him in their château at Montaigne. As soon as he had alighted from his horse, without giving him time to go to his room, they took him to see their son, only three months old, to whom his brother, M. de St. Thierry,* had stood proxy for the King—the child being named after the Sovereign.

“My cousin,” said the Princess, with great pride, as she entered the room, “here is Henri de Bourbon, who will prevent you from being my heir. The Prince and myself have so much reliance upon your friendship, that you will pray God that such may be the case, and that He will cause our son to increase in happiness and all prosperity.”

* The brother, on the mother's side, to whom Vieilleville had presented the abbey of that name.

To which Vieilleville replied that they would do him a grievous wrong "if they thought otherwise; but that none the less, he wished them at least one more son, to render his succession all the more unlikely."

The child, however, was somewhat ailing, and Vieilleville, strange to say, gave the parents some very matronly advice. He said that there was not enough air in the room with the windows closed; and that the curtains were too heavy. Then, again, the wet-nurse—a woman of good family—was too advanced in years, too thin, and two melancholy, being often obliged to resort to apothecary's drugs to increase her supply of milk. He would advise a peasant girl in rude health and with a hearty appetite, to be substituted for her. This advice was taken, and the child did all the better for it.

The Prince and Princess then took him to their château de Baupréau, which had just been created a duchy in favour of the infant Prince, and showed him the magnificent costumes prepared for the entry of the King into Paris, and the coronation of the Queen.

The Prince was particularly proud of the trappings made for his Spanish horse, and the Princess of her gold crown—a present from Catherine de Médicis, in accordance with the custom of the French Queens to make these presents to Princesses of the blood, after a coronation.

When Vieilleville's visit was over, he asked his hosts to honour him with their presence at an approaching family festival in his own household—the marriage of his daughter.

Vieilleville had no son; but the elder of his two daughters was gifted with many charms. The contemporary chronicler does not, nevertheless, follow the custom of his age, and compare her to the sun, the moon, and the stars. He is content to tell us that she was tall, upright, and well made, with “bright” fair hair, and with a complexion of white and pink, without any speckles; that she was of a gentle and graceful disposition, and, by way of a finishing touch, barely sixteen. She had been asked in marriage the year before by M. d’Epinay, for his eldest son and heir. M. d’Epinay, who had

been a friend of Vieilleville's from boyhood, was of good family;* with an income of about forty thousand livres, and a fine castle in Brittany. The marriage was in every respect a very suitable one.

The Prince and Princess accepted the invitation with pleasure, and Vieilleville returned home, where his family was anxiously awaiting him, to commence the preparations for the wedding. As a matter of fact, a wedding of this kind was quite a business. The Princes and Princesses invited to attend it comprised the greatest names in the kingdom, so that as the date selected was the 14th of February, 1549, guests began to arrive in the early part of the month.

The houses in the neighbourhood, for three leagues round the château, were called into requisition for the guests. The villages, hamlets, farmhouses, etc., were filled with the retinue of the personages of distinction, and there was not a corner that had not its contingent of men and horses. It might

* See his coat of arms, French MS., 1473, folio 539.

have been imagined that the neighbourhood had been selected for the encampment of a royal progress, or even of an army. The chronicler candidly confesses his inability to “undertake the specification of the great things which were done at this wedding, the variety of the pastimes, the sumptuous diversity of the dresses, the opulent abundance of the food (there being fourteen tables constantly served), and the stately arrangement of the service.” He merely adds that “among so many nations—French, Bretons, Normans, and natives of Anjou, Mayenne, and Poitou,” and upon an occasion when wine flowed like water—not a single quarrel occurred, even among the serving-men, who “drank without stint from morning till night.” This harmony was considered to be of good omen for the happiness of the wedded pair.

When the wedding was over, the guests separated rather sooner than usual, as Vieilleville had received a courier from the King, summoning him to the Court. A great discussion then arose as to what should be the

destination of the bridegroom. Vieilleville was anxious that he should accompany him, as an attack on Boulogne was projected, and M. d'Epinay, who had received from the King as a wedding gift the rank of Gentleman of the Chamber, should, he thought, establish his claim to this distinction. But it was, upon the other hand, hard that the young people should be separated within a fortnight of their wedding. They did not give expression to their sorrow themselves, but their respective mothers spoke up for them, Madame de Vieilleville being particularly angry, and going so far as to say that she formally forbade her son-in-law to go. Her husband's determination, however, was not to be shaken, and so he took off M. d'Epinay with him.*

When they reached St. Germain, they found the Court absorbed in preparations for the state entry into Paris, which was to take place with great pomp on the 16th of June. The whole of the nobility summoned

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 164.

to it flocked in from all parts of the kingdom, marching at the head of the cortège. Two thousand pages preceded the knights, carrying lances, pikes, short swords, bourguignotes, etc., riding handsome horses, and attired in all the colours, motley devices, and embroideries of their masters. The Princes and nobles each walked according to his rank, and then came twelve hundred sons of merchants and traders, in equipages as rich and sumptuous as those of the nobles, and riding their horses, and making them caper and rear "as if they had passed all their lives in the stable of the Prince." The inhabitants, bearing arms, about twelve or fifteen thousand of all classes, also took part in this entry.

The city had gone to great expense on this occasion, there not being a single square, cross-way, or open space which had not its theatre, triumphal arch, pyramid, obelisk, or "colossal figure of the ancient kings very ingeniously constructed, with no stint of gold and azure." The whole city was decorated with festoons, trophies, emblems illustrated

with learned Greek or Latin verses, and French odes by Ronsard, the Poet Laureate.

The mass of people on foot also marched in very good order, "with a very bold, and magnificent accoutrement, which need not create any surprise," for at that time there were in Paris at least twenty households with incomes of from fifty to sixty thousand livres, either in land or securities; a hundred with incomes of thirty thousand; two hundred with incomes of ten thousand; and four or five hundred, not to speak of the ecclesiastical property, with incomes of from five to six thousand livres.*

Upon the following days, some magnificent tournaments took place, notice of which had been given in advance throughout Italy, Germany, Spain, and England, so that the nobles from those countries might come and take part in them. The full particulars of these tournaments are to be found in the chronicles of Tavannes, who, much as the King and his Court distinguished themselves,

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 177.

was the real hero of them. He broke as many as sixty lances a day, and after all this, he would soak his arm in oil of sweet almonds, and bind it up tightly, to prevent it from getting stiff, so that he might go to a ball and dance, while the others, their limbs blackened and aching, had gone to bed. He was considered to have maintained the honour of France better than any of his companions.

After pleasure came business, and first of all came the disputes between England and Scotland, in which France found herself mixed up. These two kingdoms, whose natural frontiers seemed to destine them to be united, were separated by long-standing rivalry. England, more powerful and more highly developed, was longing to absorb Scotland, and Scotland, unable to exercise any influence over England, was most jealous as to the maintenance of her national independence. Several attempts at fusion had, however, already been made. In the reign of Henry VIII., a treaty had been concluded, under the date of March 12th, 1543,

containing a covenant of marriage between the heiress to the Scottish throne, Mary Stuart, who was then only just born, and the heir to the English throne, afterwards Edward VI., who was but a few years old. But Henry died before the covenant could be executed, and the two countries, with minors as sovereigns, and under the government of Regents, found themselves even more divided by the religious question than by national antagonism. Somerset was a partisan of the Reformation, which, freed from the theological pretensions of Henry VIII., was making rapid progress. In Scotland, the national tendency was in the same direction, but the two Regents, the Earl of Arran, and especially the Queen Dowager, Marie de Guise, opposed it with all their might. An ardent Catholic, Marie showed no scruple in persecuting those whom she regarded as heretics, and when the Duke of Somerset insisted upon the marriage of the two youthful sovereigns, in accordance with the treaty of 1543, she peremptorily refused, and offered the hand of the young Princess to the

Dauphin François. The Guises, to whose ambition this scheme was probably due, warmly supported it, and there was little difficulty in obtaining the King's consent, by showing what a hold he would in this way obtain in Scotland as against England.

The Scotch Protestants at first were in favour of the marriage with Edward VI., but when Somerset sought to impose it upon them with an English army, the national pride rose, and the whole country rose against him. The Earl of Arran, at the head of thirty thousand Scotch troops, went to meet him, but sustained a crushing defeat at Musselburgh on the 10th of December. Fortunately for Scotland, the Duke of Somerset, a prey to Court factions, could not follow up his victory, and had to return to England. The Queen Regent then took refuge with her daughter in, Dumbarton Castle, and availed herself of the fear of an English invasion to press on an alliance with France. She even proposed to send her daughter to the Court of Henri II., to be brought up there until she and the Dauphin

were old enough to be married. Henri accepted her proposal, and sent a force of from six to eight thousand men, under the command of André de Montalembert, Baron Essé, to bring Mary Stuart, then six years old, back with them. The French landed at Dunbar on the 18th of June, 1548, and Durand de Villegagnon, Commander of Malta, who had command of the fleet, apprehending an attack of the English vessels, deceived the enemy by a stratagem, and making suddenly for the North, received the young Queen in his charge at Dumbarton, and got back to France by St. George's Channel, landing her in Brittany on the 13th of July. She was accompanied by her illegitimate brother, James Stuart, and on landing, was received by Philippe de Maillé-Brézé upon behalf of the King.

In the meanwhile, d'Essé, who had remained in Scotland, was defending the frontier against the English, but as he treated the Scotch as if they were so many barbarians, displaying the utmost contempt, he became so unpopular that the Queen

Regent got alarmed as to the consequences, and induced her brother to recall him. He was succeeded by Termes, who got on very much better with the Scotch.

Henri II., who took every advantage of the difficulties in which Somerset was placed, commenced secret preparations for an attack upon Boulogne, and upon July 11th, 1549, Leo Strozzi started from the port of Havre with twelve galleys, took the English fleet by surprise, sinking several vessels, compelling the rest to take refuge at Guernsey. The King, getting his troops together, proceeded to Abbeville, Vieilleville and d'Epinay being in his suite, and the Constable began to concentrate his army at Neuchâtel, near the Forest of Ardelot. As the Imperial forces were just then in motion along the Flemish frontier, before getting beyond Abbeville, Vieilleville was sent to reconnoitre in the neighbourhood, and while he was gone, a herald from the Emperor came to Montreuil to complain to the King that his soldiers had crossed the frontier in search of forage. This herald, a native of Mons, in Hainault,

detested the French, and when he was delivering his message, he added, with much insolence, that if the King did not keep his soldiers in order, the Emperor, his master, would treat him "as a youth." The King felt a strong inclination to have a good drubbing administered to him, but at the advice of the other princes, he merely replied to the herald that if his master applied to him, personally, he should treat him as "an old dreamer."*

Vieilleville, upon returning from his expedition, reported satisfactorily to the King as to the state of the country, and then abruptly added:—

"I was very sorry, your Majesty, to have been unable to capture the bastard de Myrande." This bastard, it should be explained, was commanding a troop of Italians under his father.

"What!" said the King, "did he insult the camp with his troop? He is quite capable of it."

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 182. This anecdote is only to be found in these memoirs.

“Worse than that,” rejoined Vieilleville. “The fellow has abandoned your service for that of England, and has taken his company with him. If I had been made aware of his treachery an hour sooner, I would have charged and worsted him with the forty or fifty horsemen I had with me, for he had not more than 120 men with him, and they were encumbered with baggage. I have seized a dozen of them, and have brought them back with me.”

“And what was the cause of the defection?” enquired the King.

“He asserts that it was the refusal to grant him a patent of gentility, the refusal being accompanied by an intimation from a secretary of the Chamber that the King does not grant such a patent to bastards, unless they are Princes.”

Upon this, the Count de la Myrande, who was a great gambler, and had won the night before 6,000 crowns from M. de Nevers, came in a great state of mind to see the King, and said, in a mixture of French and Italian :—
“Corps de Dieu, your Majesty, I am ruined !

That wretched bastard of mine has robbed me of 30,000 gold crowns and of all my most precious valuables, including the collar and mantle of the Order. He has also taken off my mules and trunks, and has gone over to the King of England. What am I to do?"

The King, perceiving that the theft was the real cause of the desertion, merely laughed, and the nobles imitated his example, much to M. de Myrande's disgust. When the soldiers who had been captured were brought before the King, he questioned them as to their motives, asking whether French money was not as good as English. They said that they were natives of Parma, and too good patriots not to follow the fortune of their master to the death.

"Very good," rejoined the King, "if I had your master here, I would hang him most assuredly; so you shall go on in advance."

All twelve of them were then handed over to the provost, and hung up to the branches of the first oaks in the Forest of Ardelot.

The King and his army at length arrived

before Boulogne, on the 23rd of August, and the King entered his camp, and was received by "a wonderful thunder of artillery." Early the next day, the attack on the forts began. It was conducted with great vigour, and the ardour of the troops was such that they even gained possession of Ambleteuse and Blacquenay. Some Flemish vessels which were assisting the English also fell into the hands of Leo Strozzi. "We cannot doubt," wrote Cardinal de Lorraine, who was following the operations, "that in this enterprise we have God with us, for in the course of a single day He has favoured us in respect of no fewer than four elements: in water, as exemplified in the spoils taken by the frigates; in earth, by the capture of two fortresses; in air, by the fine weather; and in fire, by the burning of the lower town."*

But with all this, the Tower of the Order, built by François I., the most important of all the forts, remained in the hands of the English. This tower, which was a very high

* "Ribier," vol. ii., page 241.

one, commanded a very wide range, and it was not easy to come within approach of it. The King accordingly encamped in a village called Huyville, within half a league of the tower, and the trenches were commenced.

While these operations were in progress, Vieilleville, remembering his quarrel with the Duke of Somerset, determined to send him a challenge. He accordingly proceeded, in great state, accompanied by M. d'Epinay, three gentlemen and a trumpeter, to the gate of Boulogne, on the Montalembert side. Upon his giving the usual signals, he was asked what he wanted, whereupon he replied that his name was Vieilleville, and that if the Duke of Somerset was there, he should like to break a lance with him. He was told that the Duke of Somerset was detained by illness in London; and to this he replied that perhaps there might be some son of a Lord who would like to measure strength with a young Breton noble, named d'Epinay, not yet twenty; if so, he asked him to step forward, so that they might not have to return to the camp without having shown of

what metal they were made. The honour of the nation, he added, was involved in this challenge being accepted.

The son of Lord Dudley* — who was of the same age as d'Epinay — then very generously accepted the challenge, against the wish of all the English present. He came forward, mounted upon a high-mettled Spanish horse, accepted the challenge, and rode out of the town, accompanied by quite a bevy of nobles. Taillade, however, one of the gentlemen in Vieilleville's suite, said to d'Epinay, "I leave this lord for you to deal with. Look how unsteadily he rides. His knees touch the saddle-bow. Keep steady; and don't lower your lance until you are within three paces. If you lower it from a distance the tip gets unsteady, and you do not see clearly from the visor."

The conditions of the combat were arranged, one of these being that the one who brought his adversary to the ground

* Dudley, Earl of Warwick, had four sons; the eldest married the Duke of Somerset's daughter, and the youngest, Lady Jane Grey.

should hold him prisoner, and that the horse and arms should also be his.

The young men advanced against each other, their suite following up in their rear. At the first attack, M. d'Epinaÿ overthrew Dudley, striking him in the side, about six inches above the saddle-bow. Dudley's lance failed to touch d'Epinaÿ, and dropped out of his grasp as he fell. Taillade at once dismounted, seized Dudley's horse and got on to it; while Chesnay, the other gentleman in attendance on Vieilleville, got Dudley to mount his own horse, with every mark of respect, and bestrode himself his companion's horse, the pages and lacqueys of the suite lending their assistance. The trumpets then sounded the retreat, and the French left the English very much humiliated, and returned to their camp, taking with them their prisoner, who was slightly wounded in the arm-pit, though he was more stunned by the blow than anything else. They were met soon after by the King, who, having learnt what had happened, had come out to meet them. They all alighted from

their horses, and M. d'Epinay presented his prisoner to the King, begging him to accept him as a gift. The King consented; but at once restored him to d'Epinay, whom he made a Chevalier on the spot. They then parted, and Dudley remained with the gentlemen of Vieilleville's suite, who treated him with the utmost courtesy.

The siege of Boulogne dragged on, and the King began to be tired of it, when a terrible thunderstorm burst over the camp, not a single tent or pavilion being left standing.

Most of the occupants were obliged to swim for their lives, and nearly all the horses were drowned and the baggage lost. The storm lasted all night, and was so intense that the earth seemed "changed into water." The rain lasted two days and nights without stopping. The King, in disgust, then raised the camp, and after having well armed the forts taken from the enemy, he disbanded the army and returned to the interior of his kingdom.*

* See in "Ribier," vol. ii., page 245, a letter from Henri II. to the Cardinal de Ferrare, giving particulars of this siege.

Young Dudley, finding that the French army was retiring from Boulogne, entreated d'Epinaÿ to ransom him.

“ You bore yourself then, in our society, do you ? And would you not like to come as far as Paris, at all events, with us ? ”

The young lord refused, offering to pay double if he could get away at once, as he had very important business on hand in England within a month.

At the same time, one of his gentlemen, taking d'Epinaÿ upon one side, gave him to understand that the business in question was his marriage with the daughter of the Earl of Bedford, and that Dudley was so much in love with her that he would certainly fall ill if he was kept in captivity. D'Epinaÿ thereupon declared that he was at liberty to go, and that he would give him a passport. With regard to ransom, as this was their maiden combat, he would not accept any money, and would not even keep his horse. All that Dudley need send him was four *guilledines* (hackneys) from England, and he hoped that he would remember that the

d'Epinays went into battle not for money but to gain honour.

Dudley, full of gratitude, threw himself into d'Epinay's arms, and swore him friendship and service. He refused, however, to take back his horse, but asked d'Epinay to call it Bedford, out of compliment to his betrothed, after which they parted.

On returning to London and telling his father of what had occurred, they picked out six of the best hackneys they could find and sent them, with six bulldogs, to M. d'Epinay, while, in recognition of his courtesy, they combined his arms with theirs in all the windows of their residence.

M. d'Epinay himself had gone back to his young wife, proud to be able to give her this token of his prowess, and as he had been made Chevalier, she was entitled to the rank of *Dame*. But she declined to use it, out of deference to her mother-in-law, as long as the latter was alive.*

* The title of *Dame* was reserved to the wives of Chevaliers. The wives of equerries had, like the wives of the burghers or bourgeois, the right to the title of *Demoiselle* only.

The Boulogne affair, under the conduct of the Constable, ended in a compromise, much to the annoyance of Vieilleville, who looked upon the town as being to all intents and purposes taken. He accordingly refused to have anything to do with the negotiations, large as were the bribes given on such occasions. Montmorency was not sorry for this, and he appointed for this purpose his brother, the Sieur de la Rochepot.*

In the end, the English Ambassadors came to France to sign a fresh peace. The King received them at Orleans, so that they might be able to judge of the prosperity of the kingdom, for from Paris to Nantes the country seemed like the outskirts of a great city, so numerous were the castles, small towns and villages.† The embassy paid a four days' visit to Vieilleville upon his domain

* See in "Fontanieu," pages 259—260, and in "Béthunes," 533, folios 8635 to 8653, the collection of letters from the Constable and Henri II. upon this business. See also a letter from the Constable to the Duc de Guise, "Gaignières," page 465, French MS., 20,577.—*Extract.*

† See an ode by Ronsard with reference to this peace. —Vol. i., page 232, edition of 1623, folio.

at Duretal, where they were received with great hospitality.* Soon after this, Henri II. returned the compliment by sending St. André on a special mission to thank King Edward VI., when he was accompanied by Vieilleville.

As they apprehended an attack of the Flemish fleet, they decided at the last moment to embark at Dieppe, so they landed at Rye instead of at Dover, where they were expected. No preparations, therefore, had been made for their reception, and it was with the utmost difficulty that twenty-four transport horses were found for the heads of the Embassy, the others being obliged to come on as best they could. They were very thankful to get bullock waggons, for some of them, attired in satin and velvet, had to walk, including the Comte de

* Among other details of this hospitality, the chronicler relates that in order to entertain all the suite, 120 pipes of excellent Anjou wine were broached in the cellars, and given out in jugs, barrels, and bottles like water from a spring. The suite appreciated it so much that they emptied the cellar.—“Vieilleville,” vol. xxix., page 268.

Montgommery, whom M. d'Epinaÿ took up behind him part of the way.

A grand reception was given them in London. They resided at first in Westminster, and afterwards at Richmond Palace. They were asked, however, not to have Mass said there on account of the religious differences which were then so intense. Vieilleville went to stay, as before, at Darompler (?).

The young King, being very anxious to see this brilliant Embassy, of which he had heard so much, readily fixed an early date for granting it an audience at Hampton Court, while preparations were being made for the state reception. Upon the day appointed twelve Chevaliers of England, in sumptuous equipages, came to fetch St. André, and conducted him to the audience chamber, where the King was awaiting him, "in very great majesty." St. André advanced, walking between Vieilleville and M. de Gié, the ordinary ambassador, and made a deep obeisance; but the King, unable to contain himself for joy, embraced him very heartily, and said to him in French that his presence was very welcome

for three reasons: the first, because it confirmed the peace concluded with his brother of France; the second, because the King had deputed for that purpose the nobleman whom it gave him the most pleasure to receive; and the third, because as the compact was sealed by, so great a friend of the King, he would use his influence to render it unalterable. Having repeated his welcome, he then took Vieilleville, whom he had recognised again, by the hand, and honouring him "with a very cordial caress," said: "I take you as witness of all I have said; and feel sure that you, on your part, will never have cause to stir up France against England." Speaking again to M. de St. André, he went on to say: "But as you are going, I know, to deprive me of M. de Gié—for which I am very sorry, as we like him extremely—will you not leave M. de Vieilleville in his place?"

St. André said no; and, upon the King asking who was to be the successor of M. de Gié, he was told that his name was the Seigneur de Bois-Dauphin. This personage was

so stout that he could not mount a horse, and he was the first of the French nobles who used a carriage. St. André having called him up, the King could not help smiling, and, taking them all three on one side, observed jocularly that this ambassador would give England a bad name, for, "as he would not be able to live as well as he would in France, he would lose flesh."

This joke made them all laugh, and the gentlemen of the suite, "who could not help staring at a gentleman so tall, so large, and so fat," joined in the merriment.

The King, with outstretched arms and bare head, afterwards embraced all the noblemen, each according to his rank, and they were all of them charmed with this Prince, who, in his early youth, spoke French, Italian, and Spanish, in addition to his own language. He also spoke a little Latin, and was well grounded in Greek.

Upon the following day the state reception took place, with great pomp, in the same audience chamber at Hampton Court. St. André, upon entering the room, between

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157e

Vieilleville and M. de Gié, had in his train sixty French nobles and six pages of the King's Chamber, all of the highest families and magnificently attired. The King of England was at the farther end of the room, and his beauty, his youth, and the singular charm of adolescence which he possessed, exercised so much prestige that, as he appeared at the head of his nobles so covered with diamonds, rubies, pearls, emeralds, and sapphires that the room literally glistened, he "might have been taken for an angel in human form." He came forward with his gracious smile to meet St. André, took him by the hand, and led him to the chapel, each of them followed by his suite, between the two lines of the guard, which was made up of four hundred very tall and powerful men, all upright and fair of complexion, arrayed in crimson velvet doublets embroidered with golden roses.

The Chancellor of England then brought the Bible, upon which the King, in a kneeling attitude, attested the confirmation of peace. Upon his rising, St. André placed

round his neck the collar of the Order of France, the King then embracing first him, as a Brother of the same Order, next M. de Gié, as ambassador, and lastly Vieilleville, as a witness of the transaction—ordering, too, that his name should be inserted in the official record.

The trumpets and hautbois sounded lustily, while English lords and French nobles were “embracing each other so warmly and affectionately that several of them wept for joy.” The whole company then repaired to the royal banquet, all the seats at which were reserved for the French, while M. d’Apchon, the brother-in-law of St. André, received the English at his table.

The remainder of the day was passed amid manifestations of joy and salutes, not only at Hampton Court but in London. The next day the King took all the French noblemen to Windsor, where three days were devoted to feasting, hunting, and pastimes of every kind. When the time came for saying good-bye, Edward presented to the Embassy two hundred hackneys, one hundred and

twenty of which had saddles and trappings of velvet and the rest of morocco leather of all colours—black, grey, tan, sea-green, pink, and pale yellow—together with gilt stirrups. Fresh assurances of peace and friendship were exchanged at parting.

Vieilleville and d'Epinau, on their way through Richmond, met Lord Dudley and his son, who presented them with eight hackneys as white as snow, with saddles and harness, six greyhounds with collars, and six bulldogs, besides a dozen bows and as many quivers filled with arrows to match the saddles; the whole of this having been manufactured in Turkey, and being of the very finest quality.

The Embassy, in due course, embarked at Dover, and was escorted across the Channel by the English fleet. On reaching Amiens most of the nobles left St. André, and Vieilleville and d'Epinau, who followed him to Court, then took leave of the King and returned to Duretal.*

* "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., pages 219—245.



CHAPTER XI.

THE GENERAL CONDITION OF EUROPE—PREPARATION FOR WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE EMPIRE.



THE religious questions which, in the sixteenth century, were so mixed up with politics in Europe, led to the utmost confusion and trouble. Not only were Roman Catholicism and the Reformation at war, but upon the one hand the interests of the German Princes clashed, while, upon the other, the rivalry of the Pope and Emperor was a perpetual cause of intrigue and strife. If the common hatred of heresy united them for the moment, they had no sooner overcome it than they began to regard each other with suspicion, and often called in the aid of the adversary whom they had just combined to crush. Guelphs

and Ghibellines were still in existence, and Italy was, as before, the prize at stake. France, siding first with one and then with the other, made confusion worse confounded.

This policy, without principle or conformity, which characterised the reign of François I., went on under Henri II. with the difference that the hatred of the King against the Emperor never relaxed.

The first idea of a general council, for the purpose of conciliating opposite doctrines, had been put forward by the Diet of Spire, convoked by Charles V. in 1526, in order to form a barrier against the Pope, just at the time that Bourbon was marching upon Rome. This Diet had asked for the formation of a council, composed in part of Lutherans and in part of Catholics, and pending its assembly, had declared that each Prince should be free to govern his State, so far as religious questions were concerned, in the way that pleased him best. This phase of tolerance lasted four years, and they were very favourable to the progress of the Reformation. After the

peace of Cambrai, and the Coronation at Bologna, Charles V., reconciled to the Pope, turned round upon the Protestant Princes, who then formed a confederation for their mutual defence, in the famous League of Smalkalde.* The Emperor retorted by maintaining his decrees, and assembling a Diet at Cologne to elect his brother, Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and so assure to the Emperor a Catholic survivor. The Confederates protested against the election, and prepared for war. They were, however, drawn together by a common danger—the invasion of the Turks—and in presence of this, Charles V. reverted to the policy of Spire, and even renewed it in the pacification of Nuremberg (July 23rd, 1532), which remitted the decision of religious questions to some future council. At the same time he confirmed the expropriation of ecclesiastical property, and composed the Imperial Chambers, in part of Catholics, and in part of Lutherans. The whole of

* "François I.," page 254.

Germany then united against Soliman, and drove him back without a struggle to Constantinople. Two years afterwards, in view of France arming for combat, the pacification of Nuremberg was confirmed by the treaty of Kadan, and in return for this the Princes recognized Ferdinand as King of the Romans.

In the same year (1534) the ardent Farnese succeeded, under the title of Paul III., the sceptical and lettered Médicis upon the Papal throne. A new era dawned for the Catholic faith, as Paul III., who was of a morose and fanatic disposition, of a resolute and persevering character, began the internal reform of the Church, and endeavoured, without, to unite Christendom against the Turks. After having induced Charles V. and François I. to sign the truce of Nice, he endeavoured, at the Diet of Ratisbon, to win back the Protestants, but he was checked by the opposition of the Princes, who felt that beneath the unity of the Church lay concealed Imperial despotism, and that they were secretly supported by François I. The Diet

separated without coming to any conclusion, and Charles V., who was afraid of throwing the Princes back into the arms of France, confirmed the treaties of Nuremberg and Kadan, while undertaking, as a token of his religious zeal, the Tunisian and Algerian expeditions. The Pope was indignant, but all to no purpose, and there was no help for it. Continuing, at the same time, his apostolic work, Paul III. created the Order of the Jesuits, reorganised the Inquisition, and convoked at Trent, in 1542, a Council, the object of which was not to conciliate opposing doctrines, but to crush heresy. So, when the time arrived, the Lutherans refused to attend it, and as the foreign bishops were prevented from going to it by the war between France and the Empire, it could not be held until three years later, opening on the 13th of December, 1545.

Charles V. had just signed the Peace of Crespy. Feeling himself at liberty in regard to France, he made no attempt to conceal his hatred of the Reformation, and joined with the Pope in shaping the deliberations of the

Council, the first decrees of which unhesitatingly and sternly condemned the Protestant doctrines. Immediate preparations were made for war. Charles V. at the head of the Catholics, obtained from the Pope a body of 12,000 men, under the command of his grandson, Ottavio Farnese, but asked him to keep the matter secret in order to gain time and lure the Princes on to their ruin. But the fanaticism of Paul III., who always reproached Charles V. with being equivocal in his policy, could not brook this mode of action, and he divulged the treaty in order to make an irreparable breach between the Emperor and the Protestants. The effect was magical; for Germany, who was still undecided, rose as one man, and the Princes and the free cities got together an army, and negotiated with Venice, Switzerland, England, and France, in order to obtain aid. The Emperor thereupon hurried on his action, and put under the ban of the Empire the Princes of Saxony and Hesse, who were at the head of the Reform party, declaring them to be rebels and proscribers, confiscating their

property, and marching against them with his army.

The Confederates had plenty of troops, but they were lacking in cohesion. The death of Luther was a blow to them, and the desertion of Maurice of Saxony, the son-in-law of the Landgrave, and the first cousin of the Elector, whose property he coveted, put a finishing touch to their disunion. They dispersed before Charles V. without striking a blow. The Duke of Wurtemberg demanded pardon on his knees, and the different cities offered their submission. The Landgrave, and the Elector of Saxony alone remained in the field, and as the negotiations dragged along slowly, the fortune of war changed. The Elector succeeded in ousting Maurice from his states, and the Pope, still very dissatisfied, recalled the forces under Ottavio Farnese at the expiration of the term for which they were engaged, while he seized the excuse of an epidemic having broken out, to transfer the Council from Trent to Bologna, where it was outside the Emperor's influence. He also stirred up the irritation of François I.,

who was preparing to break the Peace of Crespy by negotiating with the Protestants and the Turks, and by sending money to the Princes. Moreover, agitation began to assume a dangerous form in Italy.

In the winter of 1547, the situation, therefore, was beginning to be a very critical one for Charles V., when the death of François I. liberated him from the peril in which he was placed, by dispersing the feelings of hatred which were accumulating against him. The opening of a new reign, the change of ministers, the disgrace of one set of favourites and the accession of another set, were all calculated to bring about delay and uncertainty in the course of affairs. Charles V. took advantage of this, and advancing promptly against the Princes, he won a great victory over them, on the 23rd of April, at Muhlberg.* The Elector of Saxony was made prisoner, and the Landgrave had to fly for his life. The whole country submitted itself to his authority,

* For an account of this battle see "Papiers d'Etat de Granville," vol. iii., page 262.

and Maurice, the son-in-law of the Landgrave, even prevailed upon his father-in-law to deliver himself up to Charles V., and sue for pardon on his knees.

The Emperor, thinking that he was the absolute master of Germany, treated his vanquished foes with the utmost rigour. The Elector was put into chains and condemned to death, only escaping with his life by abandoning all his property; while the Landgrave was cast into prison, in spite of the promise made that he should be granted his liberty. Charles V. then made a triumphal progress through the country, dragging them both in his train, and he displayed the true Spaniard's contempt for the Germans. Acting in concert with his brother, Ferdinand, he suppressed the privileges enjoyed by the towns, destroyed the charters, increased the taxes, and put a price upon the heads of the leaders of the Reformation. A Diet was convened at Augsburg on the 9th of Sept., 1547, and Charles V., entering the city at the head of his soldiers, took possession of the Cathedral, had it purified,

and re-established the Roman Catholic rite. In his opening speech, he insisted upon the necessity of submission to the Council, and the Diet, in fear and trembling, undertook to do as he bade it, and even entreated the Pope to bring it back to Trent.

Further difficulties were, however, raised by the Holy See. The duchies of Parma and Piacenza, which formerly were part of the Milanese State, had been reunited to the States of the Church. But Paul III., in his anxiety to invest the sovereignty of them in his son, Paul Louis Farnese, constituted them into a separate province. Charles V. refused to assent to this change, and claimed the duchies for himself, as master of the Milanese State. The Pope angrily declined to accede to the Emperor's demand, and maintained his son in the duchies. The latter, however, was so cruel and tyrannous a ruler, and made such an open display of his crimes and debauchery, that the nobles and people alike execrated him. So it was that Ferdinand de Gonzagua, who was Governor of Milan for Charles V., had no

difficulty in getting up a conspiracy against him. He was stabbed, and his body hung out from one of the windows of the palace, Gonzagua taking possession of Piacenza in the Emperor's name. He attempted also to seize Parma, but the population declared in favour of Ottavio Farnese, son of Paul Louis and proclaimed him Duke, Gonzagua agreeing to a suspension of arms.*

The Pope was infuriated beyond description when he heard of all this. He refused to let the Council return to Trent, and negotiated against the Emperor with France and the Protestant Princes. Charles V. thereupon declared that, failing the Pope, he would attend to the wants of the Church himself. With this view, he summoned a diet at Augsburg, for the 15th of May, 1548, and caused to be adopted, pending the Council, a rule of doctrine universally compulsory

* See, with regard to the affairs of Parma, a letter from Simon Renard, the Emperor's Ambassador in France, to M. de Vergy, dated Amboise, April 21, 1650, and two others from the Emperor and the Bishop of Arras to Simon Renard.—“Granville,” vol. iii., pages 522, 537, and 562.

under the style of *interim*. This ambiguous arrangement, which left certain contested points in doubt, but upheld all the main Catholic principles, failed to satisfy either the Protestants or the Pope, the latter of whom was most indignant at this usurpation of his authority by a layman. Charles V., feeling himself assured of being able to do as he pleased, then resolved to make the Empire an hereditary one; and he went to Brussels, whither he summoned Prince Philip of Spain, who had just attained his majority (twenty-one), in order to show him to his subjects. The young Prince travelled by way of Italy and Germany; but being devoid of all the charm of youth, as of all affability, grace, or cordiality, his sombre and haughty demeanour, and his marked partiality for Spaniards, made him very obnoxious to everyone else. Charles V., moreover, was unsuccessful in his efforts to induce Ferdinand to abdicate. Fortune, however, smiled upon him in another direction. Paul III. died on the 10th of November, and Julius III., who succeeded him, and who was devoid of all character and moral courage,

was a mere tool in his hands. The Council was again transferred to Trent, and Charles V. went to reside at Insprück, so as to be in a position to dictate to it. But, in the meanwhile, the insults which he had put upon her, awakened the indignation of Germany. Maurice himself was moved to wrath, and the want of good faith displayed towards his father-in-law, the Landgrave, provoked more than all else, profound resentment in him.* His ambition, too, had been satisfied by the despoiling of the Electorate; so he made advances to the Princes, while outwardly professing devotion and fidelity to the Emperor. The League of Smalkalde was revived in secret, and assistance was sought from France. The only reason why Henri II. did not, immediately upon his accession, declare war against the Emperor, was that

* Letter from King Ferdinand to the Emperor, in which he urges him to be moderate in his treatment of the Landgrave and the Duke of Saxony. He advises him to release them in order to secure peace, apologizing at the same time for speaking out so freely; which he would not have done if the Emperor had not asked his opinion.—“Correspondance des Kaisers,” vol. iii., page 84.

he was not prepared. But he lent his aid to the latter's enemies in every direction; seconding the efforts of those who were rebelling in Italy against the Imperial yoke; favouring the conspiracy of Fieschi, at Genoa; the insurrection against the cruel Don Pedro, at Naples, and the plot of Gonzagua, against Peter Louis Farnese, at Milan. He affected to sympathize with all the angry protests of the Pope; and did his utmost, through his ambassador, M. de Morvilliers, to induce the Republic of Venice to depart from its neutrality, and declare against the Emperor. It was by means of the Parma business that he found an occasion for regaining a footing in Italy.

After the death of Paul III., Charles V., having no longer any need to conciliate Ottavio Farnese, his son-in-law though he was,* summoned him to make over Parma to

° Marguerite, natural daughter of Charles V., recognized as such by him, who was born in 1521, was married first to Alessandro de Médicis, and afterwards to Ottavio Farnese. She had been brought up under the care of her aunts, Margaret of Austria and Mary of Hungary. After this, in 1559, her brother, Philip II., having inherited the Low Countries,

him. Ottavio, at a loss what to do, applied to France; and Henri II., by a treaty signed on May 17th, 1551, promised him two thousand foot soldiers, two hundred horsemen, and a yearly grant of twelve thousand gold crowns.* Thermes and Strozzi reached Italy in disguise, and succeeded in raising at Parma and Mirandola, with the money sent from France, two small Italian armies, which made good the independence of these cities, and ravaged the Romagna, while in Piedmont, Brissac commenced warlike operations, without making any formal declaration, and seized several towns, situated beyond the frontier.†

presented her, on the 6th of April, to the States of Ghent, as governor.—“Papiers d’Etat de Granville,” vol. iii., page 540.

* See, with reference to these negociations, the letters of the Bishop of Arras to Simon Renard, the Imperial Ambassador to France, dated Augsburg, March 7th, 1550.—“Papiers de Granville,” vol. iii., page 496. See also the letters of M. de Selves, dated Venice, May 16 and 18.—“Négociations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., page 144. Ottavio’s brother, Horatio Farnese, lived at the court of Henri II., whose natural daughter, Diane, he married in 1558.

† Letter from the Emperor to Queen Mary of Hungary, in which he relates the entry of the French into Piedmont, and his reasons for taking up his residence at Insprück.—“Correspondance des Kaisers,” vol. iii., page 75.

The same policy was pursued in the East, where a difference of opinion had already declared itself between M. de Wetwick, the Imperial Ambassador, and M. d'Aramon, the representative of France, who, after the peace of Crespy, had proceeded together to Constantinople in order to obtain a truce from the Sultan. M. d'Aramon was now hostile to the truce which M. de Wetwick continued to urge upon the Sultan.

The death of François I., which rendered a change of policy very possible, together with the victory gained by the Emperor at Mühlberg, led the Sultan to grant the truce.* A few months later, M. d'Huysen arrived at Constantinople as an Ambassador of Henri II., by way of Germany and Venice, and endeavoured to enlist the Sultan in an armed co-operation against the Empire.† But it

* Two letters written by M. d'Aramon from Constantinople, on the 15th and 20th of July, 1547, attribute the conclusion of the truce to the mistrust which Soliman felt as to what would be the policy of the new King, and to the victory of Mühlberg. See also the contemporary correspondence of M. de Morvilliers, Ambassador at Venice.—“Négoiations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., page 21.

† See his letters from Venice, whence he sailed for Con-

was to no purpose, as palace intrigues* had induced him to undertake an expedition against the Persians, and all that he would agree to was that France should be admitted to the truce, despite the objections raised by the Emperor.†

As the Sultan arranged to start for Persia on the 29th of March, 1548, M. d'Aramon received orders to accompany him, as much for the purpose of keeping up French influence with him as to maintain abroad the impression of an alliance calculated to favour the policy of France. Chesneau, who belonged to the Embassy, gives the following account of the preparations made for the voyage:—

stantinople in October. He draws favourable conclusions from the discontent which he found everywhere displayed against the Empire by the Swiss, the Germans, and the Italians. Upon arriving at Venice, he was received with much magnificence by the Signoria.—“Négociations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., pages 32—66. See also, “Ribier,” vol. ii., page 138.

* The Sultan Validé, whose influence was all-powerful, wished to get him away from Constantinople so as to favour the elevation of his son, Selim.

† “Négociations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., pages 56—66. “Ribier,” vol. ii., page 138.

“ We were between sixty and eighty in all, well mounted and in regular order, all carrying arms Turkish fashion, some arquebuses, and others lances and javelins, with streamers embroidered with fleur-de-lis; and never in our time did an Ambassador proceed in such order and state. We left behind us at Constantinople, for the despatch of current business and for the forwarding of official documents, etc., the Sieur de Cambrai, Canon of St. Etienne, at Bourges, a man of great wit, and much appreciated for the variety of languages which he spoke, among others, the vulgar Greek, which is as familiar to him as French.”

The travellers reached the Sultan's camp, in Persia, upon the 8th of July, 1548. “ The next day,” Chesneau goes on to say, “ we continued our journey with the said camp, which was quartered near Cassancala, a wooden castle built upon a mountain. Hither assembled several Georgian nobles, mounted upon small horses, very well dressed in the costume of the country. They came to kiss the hand of their suzerain, and to do homage

to him as his subjects, offering him their persons and everything which their country contained as being at his disposal. They presented him with sheep, cheese, and fruits. Hearing that the Ambassador of France was with the Sultan, they came to pay him a visit, and said that, hearing he was the representative of the greatest of Christian Kings, they, being Christians themselves, wished to see him. They gave us a little cheese and some barley for our horses, and we, in return, gave them a bottle of Malvoisie to drink, which we had left. They had never tasted any before, and were delighted with it, going back quite pleased to their native land, which was not far distant.”*

M. d'Aramon entered Aleppo upon the 23rd of November, and spent the winter with the Sultan, and as Soliman left Aleppo on the 8th of June, upon his return to Persia, M. d'Aramon, thinking it useless to follow him, took advantage of the opportunity to visit Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Alexandria.

* “Voyage de M. d'Aramon,” by Chesneau.—“Négociations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., page 68.

“Upon reaching Jerusalem,” writes Chesneau, “M. d’Aramon found the Governor and Lords of that city coming out to meet him with more than a hundred and fifty horsemen, followed by the whole population, and I do not believe that there was a single inhabitant, even among the Christians, but was there to greet the said Ambassador, who was awaited by the cordeliers of Mount Sion Monastery, even as the Jews awaited the Messiah.” The Grey Friars were at loggerheads with certain santons (Turkish priests), who had taken possession of a part of their church, and were constantly inflicting all sorts of annoyances upon them. M. d’Aramon induced the Governor to have them expelled, but though he complied with the request, the santons returned as soon as he had left, and the monks were obliged to go to Bethlehem.

M. d’Aramon then went to Egypt, returning to Jerusalem on the 9th of November, where he met the learned Guillaume Pastel, who attached himself to his embassy. Meeting there another learned scholar, Petrus

Gilleus, the two fell out, and Chesneau states that it was a very difficult matter to get them to settle their differences.*

The travellers, having overtaken the Sultan, joined his suite, and reached Constantinople on the 28th of January, 1550.

During these long peregrinations, the corsair Dragut, recognized by Soliman as Barbarossa had formerly been, was, at the instigation of Henri II., infesting and pillaging the coasts of Sicily and Spain; while Charles V. had, by way of reprisals, seized the town of Africa, upon the coast of Barbary.† Desiring, nevertheless, to avoid a rupture of the truce,‡ the Emperor, as soon as the Sultan returned, sent him from Brussels an Ambassador loaded with presents, together with a letter accusing Dragut of having, at the instigation of the King of France, attacked him the first.§ Soliman did not pay

* "Négociations dans le Levant," vol. ii., page 110.

† Ibid., page 131.

‡ Ibid., pages 84 and 85.

§ "Correspondance des Kaisers," vol. iii., pages 3—5. Letters from M. de Morvilliers, Ambassador at Venice, to Henri II., dated June 4th and July 3rd, advising him of the

any heed to this, and being annoyed by the capture of Africa and by certain intrigues of Ferdinand of Hungary, he received the Emperor's envoy very coldly, and replied to him in making several complaints as to his master's conduct. At the same time, partly on account of his great age, and partly on account of palace intrigues, he put off going to war until 1551, in which year only, M. d'Aramon, who had had time to come and arrange matters with François I., induced him to undertake a maritime expedition which would support in Italy the attack initiated by France.* Dragut sailed for the Mediterranean, and after an incursion into

arrival of that Ambassador. A few days after, Venice sent Bernard Navagero to the Sultan to congratulate him and request him to come to an understanding with M. d'Aramon on all subjects.—“*Négociations dans le Levant*,” vol. ii., page 114. Upon the 27th of September, in the same year, Henri II. wrote a long letter to the Sultan, couched in very friendly terms, to inform him of the purchasing back of Boulogne, of his successes in Scotland, and his treaty of peace with England, which enabled him to dispose of all his forces against the Empire.—“*Ribier*,” vol. ii., page 286.

* Letter from the Confessor to Ferdinand, which displays great uneasiness as to the movements of the Turkish fleet.—“*Correspondance des Kaisers*,” vol. iii., page 68.

Sicily, where he burnt the city of Agosta, instead of following up his attack upon the possessions of Charles V., made a diversion upon Malta, which had been given by the Emperor to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem after his defeat in Cyprus, and the Grand Master of which was completely devoted to him.* The attack having been very pluckily repelled, Dragut pillaged the island of Gozzo, and upon the 5th of August laid siege to Tripoli, which belonged also to the Order. M. d'Aramon, on his way from Constantinople to France, was then at Malta, and he protested in the most emphatic terms that his master had no intention of arming the infidel against the religion of St. John but against the Emperor, and at the request of the Grand Master he repaired to Tripoli as a mediator. But it was to no purpose, as the Turks entered the city on the 15th of August, by virtue of a capitulation which they failed to respect, and M. d'Aramon had

* Departure of the Turkish fleet related in a letter from M. de Selves, 9th to 17th June. — "Négociations dans le Levant," vol. ii., page 146.

great difficulty in bringing back forty chevaliers and two hundred soldiers,* all the rest being massacred.

All this caused a great outcry to be raised in Europe against France, and, as in the previous reign, Charles V. openly accused the French King of delivering over the Christians into the hands of the Infidel. Henri had great difficulty in exculpating himself, for the religious question had always been the stumbling-block in the politics of French sovereigns. Henri, who was passively submissive to the Church, had not the liberality of mind or the yearning of spirit which so often created a feeling of friendship between François I. and the Protestants, nor had he the necessary concentration of mind and energy required for making religious fanaticism a system of government, after the fashion of Charles V. As the necessities of the Imperial War compelled him, at the same time, to seek the alliance of the Protestants, his reign is marked by the same vacillations as that of

* "Négociations dans le Levant," vol. ii., page 154.

his father. "From the beginning of his reign," says Théodore de Béze, "Henri II. was bent upon carrying out to the last extremity the persecution and destruction of the churches begun by the King his father. In pursuance of this resolution, the fires were lighted more often than before, and the Chamber of the Paris Parliament more especially, which was called the *Chambre Ardente*, condemned to the stake all who fell into its clutches. Jean Morin, upon the one hand, was constantly making captures and sending them to trial; while Pierre Lizet, the First President, upon the other hand, did not let one of them escape."*

So much was this the case, that when the King made a state entry into Paris, in July, 1549, with a grand procession to Notre Dame, this very day was chosen for the burning of a number of heretics upon the Place de Grève in his presence. Their martyrdom was accompanied with great cruelty, for, according to Mézeray, "they were hoisted

* Théodore de Béze, "Histoire Ecclesiastique," vol. ii., page 78, quoted by Sismondi, vol. xvii., page 345.

up into the air with a pulley and iron chain, and then dropped into a roaring fire, this being repeated several times."* The compiler of the "Histoire des Cinq Rois" relates that among these victims was a former servitor ("cousturier," he calls him) of the King. A few days before, Diane, knowing that he was accused of heresy, had sent for him to cross-examine him and make fun of his answers; but he had replied to her in such a fashion that she at once had him put in the list for execution. During his execution, "this man, having identified the King, fastened his eyes on him in such a way that nothing could take them off the King, not even the lighting of the fire. The King was compelled to withdraw, and he was so moved that he confessed the man's shadow haunted him everywhere."†

These persecutions, creating a very hos-

* "Mézeray," vol. v., page 582.

† "Vieilleville," vol. xxix., page 398. Mézeray adds that the piercing shrieks of one of these poor men, who had been valet to the King, so haunted his imagination that during the whole of his life he was from time to time very much upset by the thought of them.

tile feeling among the Protestants in other countries, made it very difficult to conclude an alliance with Switzerland. They were, therefore, brought to an end, and a year later, when he wanted to form a league against the Emperor to conciliate the Germans, perhaps also because he was not sorry to annoy Cardinal de Tournon, who was rather too attached to his father, Henri went so far as to take into consideration the remonstrances of Madame de Cental against the Comte de Grignan and the Baron d'Oppède with respect to the massacres of Merindol and Cabrières, which inspired universal horror. He had the matter laid before his Council, and sent on for examination to the Full Chamber of the Parliament of Paris, the discussion on which brought to light the atrocity of these crimes.* At the same time, the Council, brought back to Trent by Julius

* Owing, however, to the clannish feeling of the Paris Parliament, and the protection of M. de Guise, the guilty were absolved, with the exception of the Advocate-General, Guerin, who was a scapegoat for them all, and was beheaded.—“Brienne,” 204, Evocation de la Cause, Plaidoyer, Arrêt de la Cour, folios 19, 29, and 382. “Collection Dupuy,” 346,

III.,* had been opened on May 1st, 1551, adjourned to the 1st of September, and further to the 11th of October, owing to there not being a quorum of members. The French King accused it of partiality, because it was under the control of the two enemies of his Crown—the Pope and the Emperor. He recalled all the French bishops, and forbade any money to be sent to Rome; and then, in order to evade the censure which he, of course, anticipated, he appealed to some future Council. He also met in a friendly spirit the overtures of the Protestant princes, and, after [some negotiations, an alliance was signed on October 5th, 1551.

The treaty at the outset announced the object of the League of Smalkalde as follows: “Charles V. having set himself to extirpate their religion, which they hold to be just, true, and beyond the pale of doubt, the

Plaidoyer et Arrêt, folios 10, 252, and 368. French MS., 16,642, *Le Procès et la Révision du Procès*. French MS., fresh acquisitions, 2402, *Plaidoyer et Procédure*, folios 86 and 117.

* Letter from M. de Selves to Henri II. on this topic.—“*Négociations dans le Levant*,” vol. ii., p. 135.

Princes have combined with one another to defend it, and they ally themselves with France to resist the devices of the Emperor, who is anxious to degrade their dear country, Germany, into a bestial, intolerable, and perpetual servitude, as he has done in Spain and elsewhere.”

By this treaty, Henri II., having undertaken to grant a subsidy to the Princes and to attack the Emperor in the Low Countries, was authorised, in return, to assume the protectorate of the cities which are not Germanic in their language, such as Cambrai, Toul, Metz, and Verdun, and to treat them in his capacity of Vicar of the Holy Empire.* Germany was to give the signal for the attack.

These arrangements were made in the utmost secrecy through the agency of Maurice, whose superiority was acknowledged by the Confederates, and whom they had chosen as their leader. The winter was

* This treaty, negotiated on behalf of the King by Jean de Fresse, Bishop of Bayonne, was ratified at Chamberd on the 15th January, 1552.

spent in making preparations. George of Mecklenburg, under the pretence of claiming a portion of his inheritance, had placed an army on foot while Maurice disbanded his excellent Saxon forces, being sure of his ability to call them together again as soon as he required them. Maurice pretended to be exclusively engaged in securing the admission to the Council of Trent of the Protestant theologians, who asked for safe-conducts similar to those of the Hussites at Basle, and he renewed his declarations of devotion to the Emperor, who suspected nothing wrong.

I have already pointed out, in reference to the Treaty of Madrid,* how devoid of foresight Charles V., suspicious as he was, showed himself to be when he was absorbed by his passion and his ambitious designs. At this juncture, in order to subject the Reformation to the Council, and to govern the one by the other, it was necessary, upon the one hand, to deprive Germany of her

* "François I.," page 160.

civil and religious liberties, and, upon the other hand, to make use of Germany to alarm and bring to reason the Pope. It was scarcely possible that the setting in motion of such complicated machinery, with all the intrigues and subtleties which this implied, could leave him the clearness of views, the liberty of observation, and the sureness of judgment which go to make up the true statesman. Thus it was that he was never more than half of a great man, of which we shall presently have a fresh proof.

It was in vain that the Duke of Alva and the German prelates called his attention to the preparations made by George of Mecklenburg, whose army was in the main composed of the soldiers of Maurice and the burghers of the towns. It was in vain, too, that Queen Mary of Hungary warned him of the movements of the young Landgrave.*

* Letter from Mary of Hungary informing her brother that the son of the Landgrave was preparing to invade the Electorate; he had made an alliance with the King of France, who had assumed the title of Protector of the Germanic Liberties, while Duke Maurice and his adherents took

He would not listen to anything, and the Chancellor Granville, replying to these warnings, even asked, with disdain, how these dull Germans, always in liquor, could expect to deceive so keen-witted and so consummate a politician.

From the beginning of November, 1551, Charles V. had taken up his residence at Insprück, three days' journey from the Council, and within easy reach of Hungary and Italy. In December, while in bed with a severe attack of gout, he received a formal embassy from Maurice, and from the Princes who demanded the release of the Landgrave. Thinking that this step was brought about by the necessity which Maurice, as son-in-law of the Landgrave, felt himself to be under, to make things smooth in his family, he replied that he would come to an arrangement with

that of Defenders of the Gospel. She advised the Emperor to take action against this movement, March 9th, 1552. Upon the 12th of March, she wrote a second letter on the same subject.—“Correspondance des Kaisers,” vol. iii., pages 113 and 125.

him when he arrived at Insprück himself.*

The negociations dragged on, while the Princes were continuing their preparations for war, and suddenly, upon the 18th of March, at the head of an army of twenty thousand infantry, and five thousand cavalry, Maurice marched upon the Tyrol, having first issued a manifesto, in which he demanded full liberty for the Protestant religion, the restoration of the ancient German rights, and the release of the Landgrave. At the same time, he advanced towards the south, and presented himself as the champion of the cities, which opened their gates to him, and received him with acclamation. Wherever he went, he re-established the ministers in their pulpits, the magistrates upon their bench, and restored their ancient liberties to the people. Before

* Letter from the Emperor to King Ferdinand with reference to his disputes with the Landgrave and the Duke of Saxony, dated March 11th, 1552; instructions from the Emperor to M. de Rye, in view of a war with the Princes, March 3rd and 22nd.—“Correspondance des Kaisers,” vol. iii., pages 114 and 133.

the 1st of April he reached Augsburg, and at his approach, the Council of Trent broke up in dismay. The Protestant theologians returned home; the Italians fled across the Adigio, and as the Legate of the Pope was ill, the Nuncios asked for a Bull to adjourn the Council. Adjourned it was, too, for many a long year.

This piece of news came like a thunder-clap upon Charles V., who was at that time confined to his bed with gout, besides being bereft of money and troops, having sent all his forces into Italy and Hungary.

Writing to his brother Ferdinand, under date of April 4th, 1552, he says* : "Having learned that Duke Maurice is at Augsburg in person, and seeing that, with very slender means of defence, I might be captured here one morning in my bed, I have decided to get off as soon as I can."

* Upon the 6th of April, he also wrote to Queen Mary, urging her to detain the Landgrave in Flanders, as he intended to send him to Spain. He meant to make his release one of the conditions of the treaty of peace.—"Correspondance des Kaisers," vol. iii., page 183.

Nevertheless, he put off his departure, being unable to bring himself to believe that the case was so desperate, and his brother, Ferdinand, endeavoured to arrest the advance of Duke Maurice, by asking him to hold a conference at Linz. Maurice accepted the proposal, but without allowing his army to halt in its march.* Ferdinand thought it prudent to try and gain time, so, under the pretence of having to consult his brother after their first interview, he adjourned the conference till the 26th of May, at Passau, the armistice to commence on that day. But Ferdinand had not taken account of the rapidity and decision with which his adversary was about to act.

For Maurice, who rejoined his army on the 9th of May, forced the passage of Passau, at the entrance to the Tyrol, upon the 10th, and seized the Castle of Ehremberg, which made him the master of Insprück. The Emperor was advised of this in the middle of

* The aforesaid Maurice, having reached Leuz upon the 19th of April, the conference commenced the next day.—“Correspondance des Kaisers,” vol. iii., page 183.

the night, so, though it was raining in torrents, and though his sufferings were intolerable, he had himself placed in a litter and removed to Villach, in Carinthia, by a mountain path. So precipitate was his flight, that the litter bearers could only avoid falling over the precipices by setting fire to straw as they went along, while the courtiers followed as best they could—some on horseback, or on donkeys, but the greater number on foot.

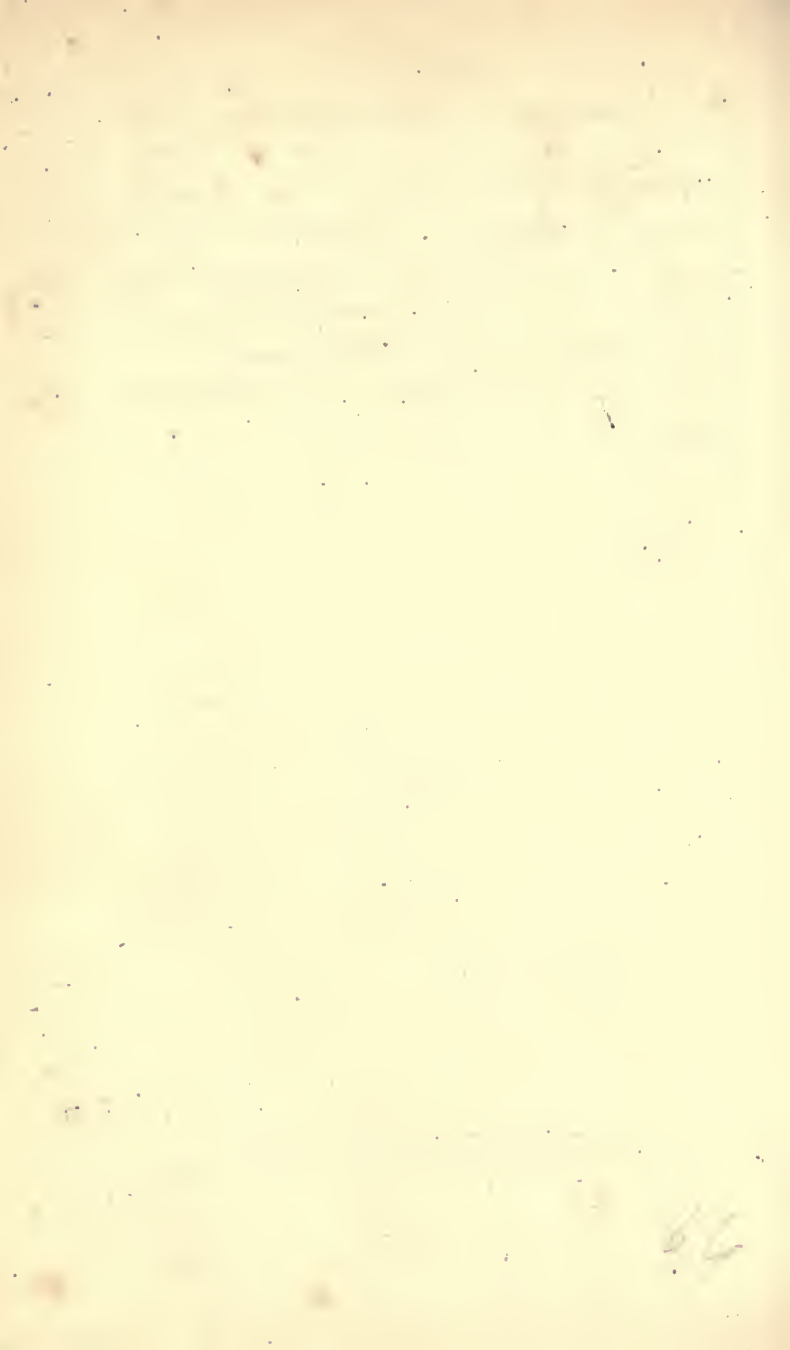
“Duke Maurice, and the other German Princes,” wrote M. de Selves from Venice to the Constable De Montmorency, “continuing their miracle, which consists in making the lame to walk, will have succeeded in compelling the Emperor to do what never an Emperor did before, if he has many more such days’ journeyings. The daughters of the King of the Romans are coming, it is said, to this city, as the safest place of refuge for them.”

Upon the morning of the 23rd, a few

* “Négociations dans le Levant,” vol. ii., page 194.

hours after his flight, Maurice entered Insprück with his army. Finding the palace empty, he abandoned his pursuit, and returned to Passau, where he arrived upon the 26th, according to his engagement. A truce was declared, and the conference began.

END OF VOL. I.





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