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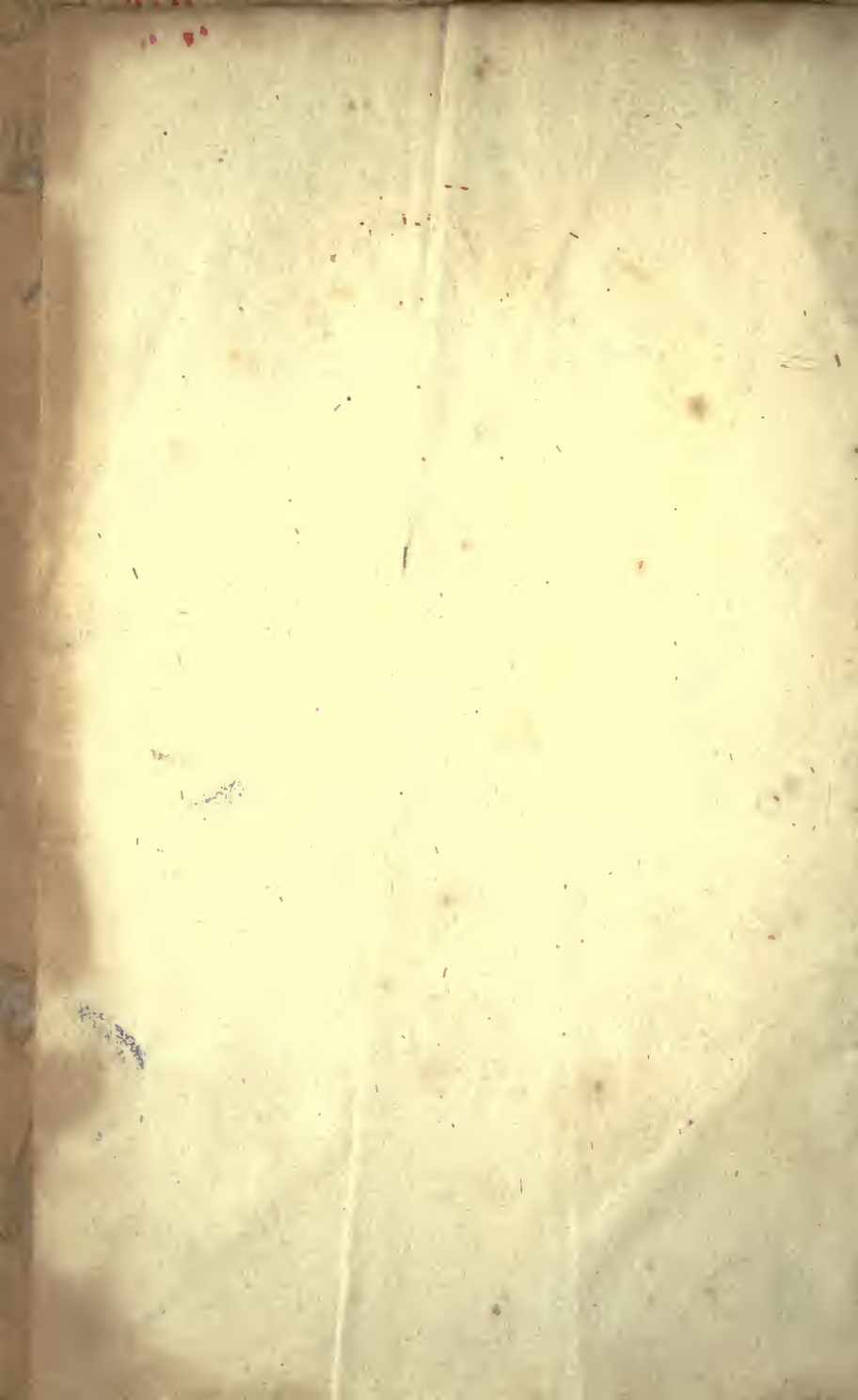
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THE
I S T O R Y
OF
FRANCE,
FROM THE ACCESSION OF
HENRY THE THIRD,
TO THE DEATH OF
LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH.

PRECEDED BY
A V I E W
OF THE
CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL
STATE OF EUROPE,
BETWEEN THE MIDDLE, AND THE CLOSE,
OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY
NATHANIEL WILLIAM WRAXALL.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

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F R A N C E,
Under HENRY the FOURTH.

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State of the French crown and nation, at the extinction of the family of Valois.—Nature and foundations of the king of Navarre's title.—Obstacles to his accession.—His character.—Transactions in the royal camp, after the death of Henry the Third.—Recognition of Henry the Fourth, by the nobility and troops.—Conditions annexed to it.—Epernon quits the camp.—Critical situation of the new king.—Transactions in Paris.—Conduct, and qualities of the duke of Mayenne.—Retreat of Henry, into Normandy.—He is pursued by Mayenne.—Combat of Arques.—Henry marches to Paris.—Attacks the suburbs.—Exploits of the royal army.—Cardinal of Bourbon, proclaimed king, by the League.—State of that faction.—View of the principal European powers, amicable or hostile to Henry the Fourth.—Condition of Spain at this period.

BY the sudden and unexpected death of Henry the Third, and the total extinction of the male descendants of the house of Valois, in his person; the right of succession to the crown of France seemed

CH A P. I. 1589. Right of succession to the crown.

incontestibly to devolve on the king of Navarre, as first prince of the blood. His title had even been solemnly recognized, and strenuously recommended by the late king, to the principal nobility and officers, who surrounded him, as he lay expiring. But, notwithstanding the justice and legitimacy of his pretensions, there existed many circumstances, which, if they did not totally subvert, might yet greatly invalidate their force, in the general opinion of the nation. The king of Navarre not only adhered with apparent zeal and fervour, to the reformed religion; but, he had pertinaciously rejected the warmest solicitations, and the most flattering offers, made to shake his faith. Henry the Third had vainly endeavoured, by every motive of interest, ambition, and by their common danger, to induce him to return into the bosom of the Catholic church. Even the confidential embassy of Epernon, and the expostulations of the queen-mother, Catherine of Medecis; together with the prospect of the crown itself, as the reward of his conversion, had been found unequal to effect so salutary a change. He had been, only a few years preceding, involved in the penalties annexed to a sentence of excommunication. Sixtus the Fifth, who occupied the chair of St. Peter, and whose irascible temper was inflamed by the suggestions of the emissaries of Spain and of the Guises; acting in virtue of the apostolic power, arrogated by the Romish pontiffs, declared the king of Navarre a relapsed, and apostate heretic. The inabilities, inflicted by the Papal anathema, included the patrimonial inheritance and possessions of the family of Bourbon, as well as the crown of France, which he was pronounced incapable to inherit (1). It is not easy for us, in the present age, to calculate, or to appreciate the effects of this malediction, among a people, accustomed to regard the decisions of the Holy See, as dictated by infallibility, and inspired by more than human wisdom.

Adherence of the king of Navarre, to the reformed religion.

(1) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 297, 298.

The sceptre itself, in the unskilful, or inactive hands of Henry the Third, had ceased to enforce obedience, or to inspire respect. The effeminacy, and insurmountable indolence, rather than the crimes of that infatuated prince, had rendered him an object of contumely to his own subjects. A great, and powerful faction, availing itself of the pretence of religion; sustained on one hand, by the spiritual approbation and authority of the sovereign pontiff; and supported on the other, by the arms and treasures of Philip the Second; had risen in rebellion. At its head, was the duke of Mayenne, a leader neither deficient in capacity, nor ambition; and who was impelled by every incitement of honour, affection, and interest, to revenge the recent assassination of his brothers, at Blois. He was in possession of the capital, of the richest provinces, of the most commodious harbours, and of the affections of a great proportion of the inhabitants of France. The rapid success of the royal arms, after Henry the Third had been awakened from his habitual apathy, had, it is true, promised a speedy and prosperous termination of the contest. Paris, invested by superior forces, elated with advantages of various kinds, seemed to be on the point of unconditional submission. But, the knife of Clement had deprived Henry at once of life and victory, in the moment when fortune appeared to be most propitious. The nobility, who, from a sense of duty and allegiance, had flocked to his standard, and crowded round the throne, might not easily be induced to own a Hugonot successor. Still less could it be expected, that the minions, whom the improvident profusion or partiality of Henry had elevated to the summit of favour and preferment, would transfer their affections and services to a stranger, scarcely their superior. The army, composed of mercenaries and stipendiaries, of opposite religions, was only to be retained under its banners, by the powerful inducement of constant and regular pay. In the exhausted state of the finances, and the unsettled condition

C H A P.
I.
1589.
Contempt of
the royal
power.

Factions.
Duke of
Mayenne.

Paris.

The nobi-
lity.

The army.

C H A P. I.
 1589.
 dition of the crown, it was hardly possible that the king of Navarre could, by any expedient, supply so essential a defect, or hope to prevent the desertion of his forces.

Nature of the king of Navarre's title.

Nor was even his title, however incontestible, altogether exempt from some degree of obscurity, doubt, and uncertainty. He was, indeed, lineally descended, in common with Henry the Third, from the same ancestor, Louis the Ninth; and he was related to his predecessor, in the tenth to the eleventh degree (2). But, history furnished no example of a crown, inherited, or obtained, in virtue of so remote a right of consanguinity; and it was questioned amongst the most eminent civilians, whether in cases of private succession, all claims derived from blood, did not cease and extinguish after the sixth generation.

Competitors.

Cardinal of Bourbon.

The family of Bourbon itself might produce numerous and formidable competitors to the king of Navarre. His uncle, the cardinal of Bourbon, had been publicly declared by a royal edict, issued in the preceding year, the nearest relation of the reigning sovereign; and as such, entitled to various privileges, or prerogatives, usually conferred exclusively on the presumptive heir to the throne (3). His zeal for the Catholic religion rose to bigotry; and as he had lent his name and co-operation to all the machinations of the League, that faction affected to consider him as the only rightful successor. His title had not wanted advocates; and writings were composed and disseminated, to prove it superior to the claim of his nephew (4). Even though his age, infirmities, and ecclesiastical profession, should be thought to disqualify him for swaying the sceptre, or devolving it to his immediate posterity; and though his detention in confinement rendered him unable to mix personally in the contest; yet, other rivals might be found in the house of Bourbon. The prince of Conti, the count

Sons of Louis, prince of Condé.

(2) Chronol. Noven. vol. i. p. 18, and p. 253. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 405.

(3) De Thou, vol. x. p. 349.

(4) Ibid. p. 350, 351. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 18, 19.

of Soiffons, and the young cardinal of Vendome, sons of Louis, prince of Condé, who fell at Jarnac, had all been educated in the Romish persuasion. They had, indeed, hitherto, manifested the most unshaken zeal and devotion towards the chief and head of their race, whom they had favoured, or openly aided, during the preceding reign. But, it was not impossible, that their virtue might be unequal to the temptation and prospect of a crown; or, that ambition might altogether extinguish their loyalty and allegiance.

C H A P.
I.
1589.

The Salic law itself, on which alone rested all the pretensions of the king of Navarre, however venerable and sacred from long prescription; was, like all human institutions, subject to change, and liable to be annulled, or abrogated. In the present situation of France, no revolution could be regarded as improbable. The States General, if convoked, might, as the representatives of the nation, proceed to exercise their inherent and inalienable right, to elect a new sovereign, on the complete extinction of the reigning family. If proximity of blood, independent of paternal descent, should be regarded as conferring a title to the crown, the king of Navarre must be necessarily removed to an immeasurable distance. Catherine of Medecis, who dreaded, and deprecated the accession of the branch of Bourbon, which she beheld as certain, if not imminent, after the decease of the duke of Anjou; had endeavoured to subvert, or to elude the Salic law. She attempted to persuade the king her son to adopt his nephew, the prince of Lorraine, son to Claudia of France, daughter of Henry the Second; and to procure his recognition as successor to the throne (5). Nor was it improbable, that the scheme might have been realized, if the prince, for whom she projected to secure so rich an inheritance, had possessed the great endowments which distinguished his relation, the duke of Guise. Philip the Second might prefer the claim of the infanta,

The Salic law.

Plan of Catherine of Medecis, to alter the succession.

Other pretenders.

(5) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 276, 277.

C H A P. I. Clara Isabella, his daughter by Elizabeth, the elder sister of Claudia, duchess of Lorraine. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, whose aspiring mind, and enterprising ambition, were ill assorted to the barren and contracted nature of his dominions; could, with equal reason, urge his descent on the maternal side, from Francis the First. Above all these competitors, the duke of Mayenne himself, elevated by a coincidence of circumstances, to the supreme command of the League, and disposed to avail himself of the bounty of fortune, might seize the vacant sceptre, and become, like Hugh Capet, the founder of a new dynasty of kings:

Character of
Henry, king
of Navarre.

His educa-
tion.

Such were the critical, and almost desperate circumstances, in which the French monarchy was left, at the extinction of the family of Valois. It must, indeed, be owned, that the king of Navarre was more indebted for his ultimate attainment of the crown, to the great qualities, intellectual and personal, conferred on him by nature; than to the justice of his pretensions, however manifest and acknowledged. He was at this time, in the prime of life, and in the vigour of his talents, not having accomplished his thirty-sixth year. His body, accustomed from the earliest infancy, among the Pyrenean mountains, to endure the inclemency of the elements, and the vicissitudes of the seasons; had become habituated to the boldest exertions, and capable of supporting the severest privations (6). His childhood had been familiarized with danger, and trained to war, under one of the most eminent commanders of the age, Coligni. He was present, though rather as a spectator, than an actor, at the battle of Montcontour; not having been permitted to mix in the shock: yet, at that early period of life, he had shewn an aptitude for military affairs; and had even pointed out the defect in Coligni's disposition, which produced the defeat of the Hugonot forces (7). Exempted, after

(6) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 243.

(7) Ibid. vol. i. p. 251.

long debates, from the indiscriminate slaughter of his friends and adherents, at the massacre of St. Bartholomew; he was only reserved for every species of insult, menace, and severity. His captivity did not terminate with the life of Charles the Ninth. Under the succeeding reign, he was transferred as a prisoner of state, by Catherine of Medecis, wherever the court removed; exposed to perpetual machinations against his life; compelled to profess a religion contrary to his conviction; and finally reduced to a state of oblivion and insignificance.

C H A P.
I.
1589.
Captivity.

During more than thirteen years, which had elapsed since his escape from the court of Henry the Third, he had remained a fugitive and an exile, in a remoter corner of the kingdom, beyond the Garonne; sometimes forgotten, but, more frequently persecuted by the Guises, and driven to the last extremities, by the hostile invasion of the royal armies, which pursued him even to the gates of his capital. Destitute of territories; and beholding his antient patrimony of Navarre incorporated with the Spanish monarchy; he was equally deprived of political power; and Bourdeaux, though the chief city of the province of Guienne, of which he was the nominal governor, constantly refused to permit his entrance into the place. Yet, under so many adverse circumstances, the superiority of his talents, the heroism of his character, and the affability of his deportment, procured him numerous adherents. The little court of Navarre was crowded with gentlemen and adventurers, who, attracted by the amenity of Henry's manners, and sustained by the flattering prospect of his probable, or possible succession to the French crown, waited with firmness and constancy, for the future and distant recompence of their fidelity. We must admit, that Providence has rarely united in any one individual, a greater number of qualities calculated to support a sinking monarchy, to extricate from anarchy a whole nation, and to contribute to the general felicity of mankind. His courage, ardent and impetuous

Exile in Gascony.

Want of Power.

His talents.

Courage.

C H A P. I.
 1589. impetuous in the field, was yet void of temerity, controuled by reason, and directed by judgment. On a day of battle, he knew how to unite the functions of a general, with the valour of a private soldier. At Coutras, after making the ablest disposition to secure a victory, he mingled in the fray, like a common man, at the head of the squadrons; took many prisoners with his own hand; and pursued the flying enemy, his sword covered with blood (8). No prince ever sacrificed less to ease or indolence; and he possessed a body capable of seconding the energy of his mind. In the camp, he was indefatigable, patient of hunger, content with short and interrupted repose; present at every post; and committing nothing to delegates, which could be superintended in person. Tolerant, in an age of persecution, he was free from all the asperity, characteristic of the period; and he extended the same equal protection to the Catholic, as to the Protestant followers, who adhered to his cause. He had displayed the expansion of his mind, by inducing the inhabitants of Rochelle to admit the celebration of the Romish worship within their walls; and when, at the head of a victorious army of Hugonots, he advanced through Poitou, into the province of Berry, only a short time preceding his reconciliation with Henry the Third, he maintained the Catholics in the full possession and enjoyment of all their civil and ecclesiastical rights (9). A conduct so enlarged and beneficent, excited universal esteem, and endeared him to the nation.

Activity.

Tolerance,
and libe-
rality.

Courtesy.

Accustomed to live on terms of familiarity, and almost of equality, with his courtiers; the king of Navarre might rather be considered as a distinguished individual, than a sovereign prince. Unable to reward his servants, like other monarchs; the paucity of his revenues, and the deficiency of his pecuniary resources, necessitated him to supply the defect by

(8) Sully, vol. i. p. 59. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 54, 55.

(9) De Thou, vol. x. p. 584—586.

augmented affability and courtesy. Possessing a heart C H A P. I. capable of the impressions of esteem and attachment, 1589. he enjoyed a privilege, rarely accorded to those who occupy a throne; and he could boast of having friends, as well as flatterers. We may see in the writings of Sully and of d'Aubigné, with what sincerity, and even severity, those steady and inflexible followers ventured, on various and delicate occasions, to treat their master. We follow with sympathy and interest, the narration of their frequent quarrels, reconciliations, and mutual forgiveness. Born with a temper naturally disposed to cheerfulness and gaiety, he was never dejected by adverse fortune, or overcome by difficulties. Observant of his promises, and tenacious of his word, in a period of general treachery and duplicity; he stood strikingly opposed in that particular, to the character of the time. In the magnanimous contempt of injuries, he was not inferior to Louis the Twelfth; and in clemency, he equalled the Roman dictator. Clemency. Economical from temper, he was, nevertheless, free from avarice; and he knew how to reward with promptitude, or to dispense favours with liberality. His education had been such as befitted his high birth; and he had been early familiarized with the great writers of Greece and Rome; though his disposition was averse to study, and little calculated or inclined to sedentary occupations (10).

These eminent virtues, and splendid endowments, Defects of that prince. were not unmixed with frailties and weaknesses. Yet, even here, we may find much to extenuate, and much to pardon. The sallies of his anger were violent; but, they speedily gave place to the natural placability and benignity of his nature. The accusations of insensibility, parsimony, and ingratitude, Parsimony. towards the friends or servants, who had expended their fortunes, and exposed their lives in his service; may not be altogether destitute of truth, or foundation (11). But, such imputations might be affixed

(10) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 247, 248.

(11) D'Aubigné, Memoires, p. 60 and 63, and 104.

C H A P. on Trajan, or Marcus Aurelius; and must be, in a degree, laid to the charge of every sovereign. In order to decide on their validity, concurring testimonies are requisite to produce conviction. The predominant and characteristic vice of the king of Navarre, was his unrestrained libertinism, and attachment to the pleasures of women. Nor did it affix a greater blemish on his moral reputation, than it was injurious to his views and enterprizes of every kind. It enervated his valour, checked his progress, and impelled him on actions the most unjustifiable, or pernicious. Such was the empire of gallantry and debauch in the court of Navarre, that it mixed with all the operations of policy, and had an influence on the decision of peace and war. It was well known, that the renewal of hostilities, in 1580, between Henry the Third and his Hugonot subjects, was not only unprovoked on the part of the crown; but, that it originated wholly on the resentment of the ladies of the court of Nerac, who induced their lovers to take up arms, and to involve the kingdom in civil dissension (12). Some years afterwards, in 1587, the same passion suspended the exertions of the king of Navarre, when he had defeated the duke of Joyeuse, at Coutras. Instead of advancing, as he might and ought to have done, towards the Loire, at the head of his victorious troops, and extricating the German army which had entered France; he quitted so fair a prospect of renown and advantage, to return into Gascony, in order to lay the trophies of his late triumph, at the feet of his mistress, the countess of Guiche (13). If we seek to draw a veil over these defects, or to find reasons for palliating them; we may be furnished with some materials, in the universal profligacy and licentiousness of the age; in the youth and complexion of the king of Navarre; and above all, in the abandoned excesses of his queen,

Libertinism.

Pernicious effects of his passion for women.

Reflections.

(12) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 223. D'Aubigné, Memoires, p. 78, 79.

(13) D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 58.

Margaret of Valois ; who, not satisfied with dishonouring his bed by her infidelities, condescended to become the instrument of his lawless pleasures, and to facilitate his projects of debauchery and seduction (14).

C H A P.
I.
1589.

During the course of the night in which Henry the Third expired, the king of Navarre, who had retired to his quarters at Meudon, followed by a considerable number of the nobility ; convened his select and confidential friends, in order to deliberate on the measures necessary to be adopted. The crisis was one of the most awful, and important, which could occur in the history of nations ; and on the wisdom, vigour, and promptitude of his counsels, might, in a great measure, depend, his eventual attainment of the throne of France. A moment of pause and stupefaction had succeeded to the death of his predecessor, and the extinction of a line of princes, who had swayed the sceptre for above two hundred and sixty years. The nobility, officers, and troops, were all alike agitated with contending emotions, and uncertain of their own future destiny, as well as of the fate of the monarchy itself. It was requisite to avail himself of the instant ; and to embrace a system, either of prudence and safety, or of enterprize and audacity, before the general impression of rage and indignation for the murder of their common sovereign, had been weakened or dissipated by time. Above all, it imported, to retain the army under its banners, and to procure the universal recognition of the king of Navarre, as the only and lawful successor.

State of the royal camp, at the time of Henry the Third's decease.

Momentous crisis.

The most cautious, or timid, of that prince's adherents, doubtful of the allegiance of the nobility, and the fidelity of the troops, who might even seize and deliver him up to his enemies ; thought that his personal safety ought to be alone considered as the first object. They advised him instantly to direct his march towards the Loire ; and to establish his authority at Tours ; in which city Henry the Third had

Advice of his adherents.

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Opposite
opinion and
counsel.

fixed the Parliament of Paris; and from whence he might with ease maintain a communication with the provinces of Poitou, Guienne, and Gascony, where his friends were numerous and powerful (15). But, this sentiment, equally inglorious and injudicious, was warmly and successfully combated by others of his counsellors. It was ably and eloquently stated, that, to abandon the country north of the Loire, and to make a precipitate retreat from the capital, would be followed by the most fatal consequences, at the commencement of a new reign. That such a step could only be deemed a flight, and must necessarily produce all the effects of so pusillanimous and ignominious a determination. That vigour and firmness would confirm the wavering, awe the disaffected, and inspire with confidence the loyal. That the nobility, if forsaken by their prince, would consult their separate interests, and either join the League, or retire to their castles, as uninterested spectators of the contest. They added, that only immediate and spirited exertions were requisite, to retain the Swiss auxiliaries, whom Sancy had brought to the aid of the late king; and whose assistance, or desertion, might be decisive of the future success of the royal cause (16).

Henry embraces the
latter sentiment.Exertions of
Sancy,

Counsels so analogous to the genius of the king of Navarre, and so incontestably dictated by the nature of his situation, were instantly pursued. Sancy, whose loyalty and zeal had not waited to be impelled to action, anticipated the application which he foresaw would be made to him; and having convoked the principal officers of the Swiss forces under his command, he disclosed to them the intelligence of Henry the Third's decease. He then besought them, by the recollection of their antient virtue, fidelity, and national honour, not to abandon the new sovereign, Henry of Bourbon, become king of France. He represented to them, that the alliance and engagements of the Helvetic confederacy were made, not

(15) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 4.

(16) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 4, 5.

with the late monarch, but, with the French crown, which was permanent and unchangeable. In every event, he adjured them to give an example of temporary obedience and submission, by remaining firm in their allegiance, till a deputation could be sent to the Cantons: and in the intermediate time, not to demand, or exact the arrears of their pay, which it must be difficult, if not impossible to furnish, in the present conjuncture of affairs (17).

To these weighty and powerful exhortations, were added the entreaties of marshal Biron; who, though he regarded the extinction, or dismemberment of the monarchy as imminent, and inevitable, yet, adhered inviolably to the order of succession, and exerted himself to maintain the crown on the head of the king of Navarre (18). The Switzers, after manifesting some symptoms of irresolution; sensible that they must not only lose the arrears already due to them; but, might, with difficulty, effect their return to their own country, through so many hostile provinces; expressed their readiness to comply with the request of Sancy. He himself was deputed, at the head of the most distinguished officers, to convey the welcome information to the new king. Henry received it with testimonies of joy, and expressions of gratitude, proportioned to the magnitude and importance of the service. It was scarcely possible to perform one of greater consequence, or which was likely to be attended with more beneficial effects. Already he began to feel the crown confirmed upon his head; and renouncing every idea of marching towards Tours, it was unanimously resolved to prosecute the war in the provinces to the north of the Loire, and to embrace the most vigorous measures for extinguishing the rebellion of the League (19).

Prosperous as this commencement of affairs might be esteemed, a more arduous and doubtful task remained

(17) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 5, 6.
 (19) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 7, 8.

(18) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 406.

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and of Biron.

The Switzers agree to remain firm to Henry.

Vigorous measures embraced.

Convocation of the Catholic nobility.

mained

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 1589.
 3d August.
 Debates in the assembly.
 Proposition, ultimately adopted.
 Magnanimous answer of the king.

remained to undertake. Neither the adherence of the Hugonots, nor the co-operation of the foreign troops, if unsupported by the Catholic princes, nobility, and officers in the royal army, could maintain the king of Navarre on the throne. Even his title appeared to want its best stamp of authenticity, and to be essentially deficient, till it was recognized by the latter illustrious body. They had already met, in the house where Henry the Third expired, in order to deliberate on the steps requisite to be taken, under circumstances so new and extraordinary. The debates were long, violent, and tumultuous. Those who were either bigotted, or disaffected, declared their resolution to prefer the spiritual interests of religion before all other considerations: and peremptorily refused to acknowledge a prince, excommunicated by the Holy See, inimical to the Catholic faith, and incorrigible in error (20). The smaller number, whose loyalty to the crown, and desire of preserving the integrity and indivisibility of the monarchy, extinguished their scruples, and surmounted their apprehensions, professed a readiness to own the king of Navarre unconditionally; and thought that it imported, even for the interests of religion, to let that recognition precede every other measure. Between the two extremes, arose a third proposition, which was at length adopted with a degree of general consent. It was agreed, to send a deputation to offer to declare Henry king of France, and to maintain him with their lives and fortunes, on the express condition, that he would immediately renounce his religious tenets, and assume the public exercise of the Romish worship. The dukes of Longueville, and Luxembourg, were empowered and enjoined to communicate to him the determination of the assembly (21).

In the answer of Henry, to so unanimous and important a notification, we are at a loss whether most

(20) Davila, p. 823, 824. p. 407, 408.

(21) Davila, p. 822—825. Mezerai, vol. ix.

to admire his judgment, his magnanimity, or the elevation and dignity of his sentiments. After having deliberated on the message, and weighed its nature, in a select convocation of his most faithful adherents; he replied, without perturbation, or uneasiness; that he could not accept the tender made him of the sceptre, on the condition annexed to it by the donors. He represented to the Catholic deputies, that the immediate desertion of a religion, which he had followed from conviction, and the assumption of another, without examination or information of any sort; would dishonour him in his own estimation, and in that of all mankind. He professed, nevertheless, his desire of being instructed, and his disposition to submit himself, and his opinions, to the decisions of a general, or a national council, legitimately assembled. He reminded them of the invariable and steady adherence to his promises, on which he had always piqued himself; and offered to submit to any conditions or limitations, which might be judged necessary to secure the Catholic faith and ecclesiastical establishment. While he assured the nobility of France, in terms of gratitude and affection, that they were the objects of his paternal solicitude, and the especial support of the throne, shaken and convulsed by faction; he conjured them not to dishonour their order, by abandoning the lineal heir of their antient monarchs, by leaving unavenged the recent murder of his predecessor, and by exposing the kingdom to the utmost efforts of anarchy and rebellion (22).

A resolution, at once so temperate and so conciliating, yet, blended with majesty and firmness, produced the effect for which it was intended. An instrument was prepared, and signed by the contracting parties, in virtue of which the princes of the blood, the lords, gentlemen, and great officers of every description in the royal camp, acknowledged Henry of Bourbon for their only and rightful sovereign. He

Its beneficial effect.

(22) Davila, p. 825, 826. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 11—14.

C H A P. engaged on his part, to maintain inviolate the antient, national religion; to cause himself to be instructed in the principles and doctrines of the Romish persuasion, within the space of six months; to exclude from public offices, or employments, such as made profession of the Hugonot worship, or belief; and to adhere strictly to all the limitations, contained in the edicts issued by his predecessor, granting liberty of conscience to the Protestants. By an express article, he permitted the nobility to depute one of their own body, to express their filial obedience to the sovereign pontiff, and to explain to his holiness the motives, which had induced them to own and support a heretic, excommunicated by the see of Rome (23). Such were the conditions, upon which the king of Navarre received the homage and the oaths of allegiance of his Catholic subjects. He was immediately proclaimed, by the title of Henry the Fourth: a name which history has consecrated; and which in all the revolutions of human affairs, will continue to present to every mind not totally insensible or uncultivated, the image of a prince, born for the delight and for the felicity of mankind.

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Engage-
ment, con-
tracted by
Henry.

4th August.
His procla-
mation.

Conduct of
the duke of
Epernon.

Notwithstanding the degree of unanimity which had appeared in the proceedings relative to so great an object, and the apparent submission of all ranks to the new king; there were not wanting persons of the highest quality, who refused, or declined to support his pretensions. The duke of Epernon, long accustomed to exercise an almost uncontrouled authority under his late master, could ill submit to bend beneath a stranger. He had, indeed, from a sort of rivalry to Joyeuse, and from his hatred to the Guises, declared himself a partizan of the house of Bourbon, and endeavoured to effect the reconciliation of Henry the Third with his presumptive successor. But, many recent causes of disunion and alienation had

(23) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 408, 409. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 244, 245. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 9, 10. Davila, p. 827, 828.

arisen between him and the king of Navarre; nor was the high and independent spirit of the latter, formed to receive laws from an insolent and haughty minion (24). Epernon, apprehensive that Henry might, besides, solicit him in his present distress, for pecuniary assistance; and unwilling to extend any relief to his sovereign; not only refused to sign the declaration subscribed by the nobility, upon a slight pretence of punctilio; but, demanded his immediate dismissal. Quitting the camp, at the head of his numerous followers, and professing his determination neither to join the faction of the League, nor that of Spain; he retired into the province of Touraine, and ultimately fixed his residence in the city of Angouleme (25).

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He quits the camp.

Nor did the spirit of desertion stop with Epernon. Many other noblemen, imitating his example, withdrew under various pretexts, or excuses, and retreated to their castles. Vitry, unrestrained by gratitude to his benefactor Henry the Third, or by duty to his successor, openly joined the party of the League. Happily, the precedent was copied by few, and reprobated by all. Yet, such was the general coldness or disaffection among the soldiery, that the exertions of Biron, with difficulty, retained the Switzers under their colours; and so great was the desertion among the French, that in the space of only five days subsequent to the assassination of the king, the army was reduced to less than half its numbers, and continued rapidly to diminish. Even the Hugonots themselves, doubtful of the adherence of their chief to his religious principles; and already dreading, or anticipating his reconciliation to the Romish church, as neither distant nor problematical; began to murmur at Henry's partiality towards the Catholics, and accused him of ingratitude towards those who had originally raised him to his present greatness (26).

Discontent, and desertion in the royal army

7th August.

Hugonots.

(24) Davila, p. 822. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 409.

(25) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 11. (26) Davila, p. 829, 830.

Davila, p. 828.

C H A P. In so delicate a situation, surrounded with perils, and distrustful of all, the king betrayed no dejection. ^{1.} Assuming from necessity, a dissimulation foreign to his character; and exerting the affability natural to him, he soothed, caressed, and promised, by turns. To the Hugonots, as the companions of his early life, and adverse fortune, he affected to shew confidence and unreserve. Towards the ecclesiastics, he behaved with marks of consideration and respect; accompanied with expressions of veneration for the Holy See, and a disposition to be informed on points of doctrine. He honoured the nobility and military officers, with the flattering appellations of the restorers of their country and of the royal dignity. Nor did he omit to conciliate the meanest of his subjects, by gracious speeches; by a commiseration of their distress; and by excuses for the unhappy necessity to which his enemies reduced him, of quartering his forces upon the peasants, and exacting from them contributions (27). We are compelled to acknowledge, at every page of the reign of Henry the Fourth, that he owed his acquisition of the crown, not so much to the virtues, as to the various and sublime endowments, which nature had united in his composition.

1589.
Able conduct and
behaviour
of Henry.

Conciliating
manners.

Events in
Paris.

Indecent
joy of the
inhabitants.

Duchess of
Montpensier.

While these transactions were performed in the royal camp, events not less interesting and important had taken place in Paris. During the interval which elapsed between the first intelligence of Clement's attempt upon the person of Henry the Third, and the knowledge of its final consequences; all was suspense, amazement, and agitation, throughout the capital. But, no sooner was the intelligence of his death divulged, than the Parisians abandoned themselves to the most immoderate transports of universal and indecent joy. The duchess of Montpensier, whose thirst of revenge for the loss of her brothers, could only be satiated by the blood of the king; and

who is, not without reason, supposed to have been privy to the enterprize itself, and even to have stimulated the fanaticism of the assassin; betrayed her fierce and inexorable spirit in its utmost force (28). Unrestrained either by the decorum of her sex, or by any considerations of general propriety, she lavished encomiums on the act, as an effort of pious and patriotic zeal; and did not hesitate to distribute, with her own hand, badges of exultation to the principal adherents of the League (29). Nor were the inhabitants of the metropolis, though their rage and detestation of the late king, as the murderer of the Guises, was, in some measure, extinguished by his death; less unanimous or violent in their determination to exclude from the throne, his presumptive successor. In order to maintain this spirit, so essential to all his views, the duke of Mayenne, after communicating to the cities of his party, the information of Henry the Third's assassination and decease; of which he, however, denied any previous knowledge, or participation; prepared to embrace measures for the support and prolongation of his own power (30).

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Duke of
Mayenne.

The vacancy of the throne, and the complete extinction of the reigning family, opened to an ambitious mind, prospects equally dazzling, and unbounded. He beheld himself at the head of a faction, possessed of authority, revenues, and resources, little short of royal. Various paths, and modes of conduct, presented themselves to him for his choice and preference. If moderation, repose, and solid greatness, were the objects of his research, he might gratify them to his utmost wish, by opening a negotiation with the new king; who, he well knew, was ready to grant him any terms, however exorbitant, and almost to divide with him the monarchy itself. On a supposition that his scruples of conscience, or his

Objects, and
prospects of
Mayenne.

(28) De Thou, vol. x. p. 670.
p. 286, 287.

(29) Mem. pour ser. a l'Hist. de Fra.

(30) De Thou. vol. xi. p. 19, 20.

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apprehensions of the resentment of the zealous partizans of the League, might deter him from treating with a Hugonot; a still more glorious and disinterested track lay before his view. He might address himself to the Catholic lords and officers in the royal camp; and call upon them, to aid him in compelling their common sovereign to abjure his errors, and return into the bosom of the Catholic church; or, to join with him and his adherents, in electing another of the royal blood, to fill the vacancy. So elevated a proceeding would have placed him among the most illustrious names in history; diffused felicity, restored general peace, secured religion, and entitled him to the applause of his own, as well as of future times. If ambition and the thirst of power predominated above every other consideration of private safety, or public virtue, he might place the crown on his own head. Promptitude, energy, and decision, were alone wanting to effect so vast an object. His sister, the duchess of Montpensier, whose masculine mind, and enterprising character, fitted her for the most daring projects; urged him, in defiance of open enemies, or secret machinations, to seize the occasion, which, if lost, could never be retrieved (31). Nor can it be questioned, that, however adverse Philip the Second, or Sixtus the Fifth, might have been to his usurpation; and, whatever repugnance the council of union, which, under the duke of Mayenne, conducted the affairs of the League, might manifest at his elevation to the throne; that his instant assumption of it must have extinguished, or overborne all opposition (32). Perhaps, a situation more arduous, and critical, has never been realized; or, which demanded a greater assemblage of talents, and more elevation of mind, to decide on the preferable line of action.

Critical and arduous situation.

Character of Mayenne.

It is in the character of the duke of Mayenne himself, that we must seek for the explication of the

(31) Davila, p. 834, 835.

(32) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 412. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. i. avis au duc de Mayenne, p. 502—547.

alternative,

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His quali-
ties.

alternative, which he ultimately embraced. He was, at this time, in the vigour of life, and nearly of the same age with the king of Navarre. His reputation for valour and military skill, was high; nor had the defects of his temper and disposition been disclosed, by his election to a post the most perilous, which could be occupied by a subject. Naturally moderate, and averse to violent counsels, he had disapproved the measures of his brother, the duke of Guise; and had even warned the late king to beware of his intentions and machinations (33). A sense of honour and indignation, rather than a spirit of revenge, or rebellion, had impelled him to take up arms. He possessed few of the essential qualifications for the head and chief of a great party. Irresolute in his determinations; slow in execution; distrustful of those about him, and negligent of affairs; he was an unequal antagonist to the king of Navarre. Indulgent to his appetites; inert and sluggish in his person; and attached to the gratifications or pleasures of the table; he allowed the favourable moment of action to escape. Profuse from habit, he was always destitute of pecuniary resources, and compelled to recur to the Spanish monarch for assistance. His gravity was tinged with pride, and not far removed from moroseness. Procrastinating and undecided, he always preferred delay; and embraced counsels of safety, rather than of energy (34). In the present conjuncture, he neither aspired to render himself king of France; nor accepted the overtures, which Henry the Fourth contrived to make for a definitive agreement, through the medium of Villeroy; who had, after his dismissal from the office of secretary of state in the late reign, embraced the party of the League (35). Anxious only, by some temporary expedient, to postpone the decision on a point of such magnitude and importance, he determined to place a phantom

Procrastination, and indecision.

(33) De Thou, vol. x. p. 444.

(35) Davila, p. 831—833.

(34) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 415.

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1589.
Recognition
of the car-
dinal of
Bourbon's
title.

on the throne; while, as lieutenant-general of the crown, and head of the union, he retained the exclusive power in his own hands. The cardinal of Bourbon, whose age and incapacities of various kinds did not more disable him from swaying the sceptre, than his confinement removed him from the scene of action, was chosen to represent the pageant of royalty. An edict was published by the parliament of Paris, at the duke's desire, enjoining obedience to the imprisoned prelate, as the only rightful sovereign; and exhorting the people throughout all the provinces, to remain firm to the Catholic faith, and to oppose, in every shape, the progress of heresy (36). Notwithstanding this public recognition of the cardinal's title, he was not solemnly proclaimed by the name of Charles the Tenth, for some months afterwards.

Henry re-
treats from
Paris.

The king, meanwhile, incapable of continuing the siege of Paris, with an army so reduced in its numbers; and unable to induce the duke of Mayenne to listen to any terms of accommodation; began to meditate his retreat. Having divided his forces into three separate bodies; and deposited the remains of his predecessor, without other pomp or ceremony than the necessity of the times would admit, in the church of Compiègne; he took the road towards Normandy. In that fertile province, of which a great portion was devoted to his cause, he hoped to recruit his troops, to augment his adherents, and to receive the supplies of men and money, which he expected from Elizabeth, queen of England. Dieppe, a port, capable by its situation of greatly facilitating the latter succours, declared in his favour, and admitted him into the place (37). Elated with this, and other advantages; stimulated by the inhabitants of Dieppe; and unopposed by any army in the field; he ventured to approach Rouen, where the duke of

He is re-
ceived into
Dieppe.

(36) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 20, 21. Davila, p. 835—837. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 413.

(37) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 16, 17.

Aumale commanded, having under him twelve hundred cavalry. Though Henry was not possessed of sufficient strength to form the siege of so considerable a city, secured by an ample garrison; yet, the enemy, alarmed at his appearance, and apprehensive of being invested, sent immediate intimation of their danger to the duke of Mayenne, and loudly invoked his assistance (38).

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That general, having provided for the internal safety and tranquillity of the capital, was not inattentive to the summons; and began his march at the head of about twenty thousand men, nearly a fourth part of whom were cavalry. As he advanced along the Seine, he retook several of the towns situated upon its banks, which had previously fallen into the king's possession. Such was his superiority, that, if he had improved the favourable occasion with celerity, it is probable he might have crushed the royal forces, or, compelled them to engage under every circumstance of disadvantage. But, the duke having quitted his army for a few days, in order to concert measures in person with the duke of Parma, commander of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands; his absence, and the necessary delay, occasioned by it, gave Henry a short interval, in which to take measures for his defence. Retiring, therefore, from the vicinity of Rouen, towards the sea-coast, he ultimately fixed his camp at Arques, a small, and defenceless town, at an inconsiderable distance from Dieppe. Conscious that he must be speedily surrounded and attacked by the united military force of the enemy, he exerted the utmost diligence and skill in fortifying the position, which was naturally strong, and capable of being maintained against superior numbers (39).

Duke of
Mayenne
marches out
of Paris.

2d Septem-
ber.

The king
encamps at
Arques.

It must be confessed, on the maturest consideration, that, although in his situation, no step more

His critical
situation.

(38) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 19. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 417. (39) Davila, p. 842, 843. Hist. Gen. d'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 219. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 24.

magnanimous,

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1589.

Superiority
of the forces
of the
League.

magnanimous, and at the same time, more judicious, could have been embraced by Henry; yet, that hope itself seemed to be almost extinguished by the difficulties and perils, with which he was reduced to struggle. His troops were diminished to only three thousand foot, two regiments of Swiss, and about twelve hundred cavalry; composing in the whole scarcely six thousand, five hundred men (40). On the other hand, the army of the League, augmented by various bodies of soldiers from Lorraine, Flanders, and the southern provinces, exceeded twenty-eight thousand. All the young nobility, attached to the party of the duke of Mayenne, and apprized that a battle was inevitable, crowded to be present at an action, which it was not doubted, would be decisive of the fate of the war. The two detachments of Henry's forces, commanded by marshal d'Aumont, and the duke of Longueville, whom he had sent into Champagne and Picardy, were too remote to arrive in time to his assistance. Elizabeth had not yet sent him her promised aid, pecuniary, nor military; while the enemy advanced towards him by rapid marches. So confident was their commander of success, that he did not hesitate to promise Philip the Second, to take the king of Navarre, either dead or alive; and the credulity of the Parisians, aiding and sustaining their enmity, made them anticipate his defeat and capture as certain (41). Even in the royal camp, a degree of dejection and terror began to manifest itself. It was apprehended, that while the duke of Mayenne invested Henry in front, his retreat towards the sea might be intercepted by the naval forces of Flanders; and it was agitated in the council of war, whether it might not be adviseable for the king to embark, while it was yet possible, and seek an asylum in the court of England. The remonstrances

Terror in
the royal
camp.

(40) D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 218. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 417.

(41) Me-

zeray, vol. ix. p. 418, 419.

of Biron are said to have influenced not a little, in the rejection of so pusillanimous and inglorious a proposition (42).

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1589.

The army of the League arriving in sight of the royal lines, began their attack by skirmishes, in expectation of forcing the entrenchments, or putting the troops into confusion. But, in these attempts, they were constantly repulsed with loss, notwithstanding their vast superiority; and it soon became evident, that the troops of Mayenne, in military discipline and veteran skill, were by no means equal to their opponents. The indefatigable activity, vigilance, and intrepidity of Henry, inspired his followers with a determination to make the most desperate exertions for the common safety; and the panic, diffused by the first appearance of the enemy, insensibly diminished. Aware of this circumstance, and desirous of availing himself of his numbers, the duke drew out all his forces, and made a furious attack upon the entrenchment. It was, during some time, attended with complete success. The German auxiliaries in the service of the League, by feigning a desire to surrender, and to enter into the king's employ, obtained an entrance within the lines. But, no sooner had they formed, than, encouraged by seeing the cavalry of Mayenne make a vigorous charge, they resumed their arms, fell furiously upon the division commanded by Biron, and threw the royalists into total confusion. It required all the valour and exertions of Henry, seconded by the coolness and bravery of his officers, to stem the torrent. The king was long abandoned by the greater part of his troops, exposed to the utmost danger, and hopeless of extrication. Even after the enemy had been compelled to evacuate the entrenchments, not without a long and obstinate contest; the duke of May-

Attack
made by
Mayenne.

21st Sep-
tember.
Combat of
Arques.

(42) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 418, 419.

C H A P. I.
 1589.

Repulse of the duke of Mayenne.

Consequences.

enne might still have renewed the engagement with fresh troops, against the harassed and inferior foldiers of the royal army. But, his habitual irresolution prevented him from improving his advantages. He caused a retreat to be sounded, and drew off his forces, who were incommoded by the cannon of the castle of Arques. His actual loss did not exceed five hundred men; but, the injury sustained in his reputation, was irretrievable, and gave the royalists a decided ascendant, during the remainder of the war (43). So forcibly did Henry himself feel the oversight, or incapacity of that general; and so desperate was his situation, after the entrance of the enemy's troops within his lines; that he did not even conceal his sense of both. On the evening of the day, he publicly declared, that the duke of Mayenne was either not the foldier, which the world believed him; or, else, that he had treated him with personal respect, and reserved him for a better occasion (44). It may, indeed, be asserted, that the combat of Arques was the crisis of his fate, and the ultimate point of his adverse fortune. From that period, his affairs began to return in a contrary direction; and he gradually re-ascended, as the League declined, in a similar proportion. Various accidents and circumstances, not unmixed with misfortune, perpetuated the duration of the civil wars, and delayed the conclusion of peace: but, the royal party never afterwards was reduced to extremities (45).

Notwithstanding

(43) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 263—267. Sully, vol. i. p. 69, 70. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 219—221. Davila, p. 844—851. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 27—30. (44) Davila, p. 851.

(45) A very diffuse narration of this celebrated combat, is to be found in Davila, in De Thou, and in Cayet's "Chronologie Novenaire." D'Aubigné, likewise, and Sully, the latter of whom was present in the action, have left us ample information relative to it. The descriptions of all general engagements, present, usually, only an indistinct picture of carnage: but, the combat of Arques is so, in an unusual degree. It is, indeed, impossible to comprehend clearly the nature of it, without a chart of the fortified camp of Henry the Fourth, which occupied two hills, and an intermediate valley, extending from the

Notwithstanding the repulse which he had recently sustained, the general of the League made another attempt to carry the trenches; but, having been compelled to desist with considerable loss, and conscious that Henry would soon be joined from various quarters; he determined to retreat. His march was directed towards Picardy, with a view of receiving the auxiliary forces, sent by Philip the Second to his support. Henry, liberated from the siege which he had undergone, was, in like manner, speedily rein-

C H A P.

I.

1589.

5th October.

Retreat of
the army of
the League.

the town of Arques, to the suburbs of Dieppe. The action itself was a scene of more than ordinary confusion, from the circumstances of the German Lanquenets obtaining an entrance within the trenches, and turning their arms against the royal troops. That perfidious act had nearly given Mayenne a complete victory. Marshal Biron was unhorsed, and long surrounded by them. The enemy poured into the space, and carried terror every where. Henry was, for a considerable time, in the most imminent peril. Davila says, that he disdained to fly; and that he attempted to rally the scattered troops by exhortations and reproaches; exclaiming aloud, that "in all France there could not be found fifty gentlemen, who had sufficient courage to die in company with their king."

Various circumstances enabled the royal army to recover the honour of the day. The count of Auvergne, natural son of Charles the Ninth, made a vigorous charge at the head of the cavalry, killed with his own hand, Sagonne, who commanded the enemy's horse, and checked their fury. Chatillon, coming up with two regiments of infantry, cried, as he advanced, "Courage, fire! we are come to die with you!" Three hundred of the troops of the League were put to the sword, and the trenches recovered. Yet, all accounts concur in admitting, that if Mayenne had not unnecessarily retarded the march of the main body, and thereby given the king an interval in which to rally, the day must have been his own. In Sully, are to be found some most picturesque and affecting anecdotes of Henry's conduct, which inspire the highest idea of his valour, composure, and clemency. They bear so strong a stamp of truth and nature, that it is impossible to doubt their exactitude. Previous to the beginning of the action, the count de Belin, says Sully, was taken prisoner, by one of our parties, in the woods, and brought to the king. It was soon after day-break, and we were all seated at breakfast in a ditch, forming a circle round his majesty. Henry, with his usual affability, received and embraced the count; who looking round him, with a degree of surprize, acquainted the king, that in two hours, he would have thirty thousand enemies, horse and foot, to resist; and that, for his own part, he did not see with what forces his Majesty meant to oppose them. "You do not see them all, monsieur de Belin," said the king, smiling: "for you do not reckon God, and the justice of my cause, which assist me."

It can hardly admit of a doubt, that Henry the Fourth would not have survived a defeat, or have been led in chains to Paris. He would, if vanquished, have perished on the field of battle. It seems impossible to speculate on the consequences which must have taken place, if Mayenne had been victorious, and if the king had fallen at Arques. Such speculations, though natural and unavoidable, are not the province of history. Perhaps, in no portion of modern annals, is the interest excited by the events, so great; or, the apparent protection and interposition of Providence so marked and legible; as in the elevation of Henry the Fourth, to the French crown.

forced.

C H A P. forced. Marshal d'Aumont, and the duke of Longueville, arrived first; and were succeeded by four thousand English troops, together with a small supply of money, advanced him by Elizabeth, which the king immediately distributed among his soldiers. Without losing an instant in inactivity, he followed the enemy; retook the places captured by them; and endeavoured to provoke them to a general engagement. Finding that the duke of Mayenne was not inclined to hazard the issue of a battle; and that he continued his progress towards the frontier of Flanders, Henry turned short to Paris. The astonishment of the inhabitants of that metropolis was heightened by their terror, when they saw the prince, whom they had only a few days preceding, considered as a fugitive, and a prisoner; arriving before the walls, at the head of a numerous, and victorious army. Profiting of their first alarm, and of the absence of their commander, the king caused the suburbs, which were defended by an entrenchment, to be attacked on every quarter. The enterprize was executed with vigour; attended with complete success; and pushed with such celerity, that the Parisians had scarcely time sufficient to shut their gates against the royalists. If the cannon had been brought up without loss of time, nothing could have saved the capital from being entered by storm. The carnage was prodigious; and the ransoms, paid by those who fell into the hands of the conquerors, served to compensate for the defect of regular pay (46).

The king
marches to
Paris.

11th Novem-
ber.
He storms
the suburbs,

and retires
from the
city.

Alarmed at the danger which menaced Paris, the duke of Mayenne instantly returned to its relief, and entered it on the day subsequent to the capture of the suburbs. Henry, whose forces were not sufficient to besiege him in the place, on receiving the intelligence,

(46) D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 223, 224. Davila, p. 856. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 32—34. Sully, vol. i. p. 70. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 270, 271. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 426.

withdrew

withdrew slowly to the distance of a few miles; and drawing up his army in sight of the Parisians, waited to see if their leader was disposed to try anew the chance of war. But, the troops of the League had not recovered their disgrace at Arques; and the king finding that his challenge was not accepted, directed his course to Estampes, of which he made himself master in eight days. Incapable of compelling the enemy to face him in the field, he a second time divided his army into three bodies, and pursued his march towards the Loire; while the duke of Longueville, and Givry, at the head of two considerable detachments, sustained his adherents in Picardy, and in Champagne. Victory attended him; wherever he moved. Vendome, a city of his patrimonial domain, and capable from its strength, of making a long resistance, was entered by the soldiers, after a short and feeble defence (47). Notwithstanding the advanced season, he continued unremittingly to push his military operations. Having visited the city of Tours, into which he made his entry amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants; and having, on account of the distracted condition of the kingdom, postponed his promised convocation of the nobility for the settlement of religion, till the month of March ensuing; he rejoined his troops. Mans fell into his possession, by capitulation; and it was followed by the reduction of various other places. Entering Normandy, in defiance of the rigours of winter, he compelled Alençon to surrender; made the garrison of Falaise, and their commander, the count of Brissac, prisoners; and after an obstinate siege, became master of Honfleur, at the mouth of the Seine. The indefatigable activity of his exertions, and the rapidity of his success, while it increased the confidence

C H A P.
I.
1589.

Exploits of
Henry.

He takes
several
places.

(47) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 65, 66. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 275, 276.

C H A P. of his own forces, impressed his adversaries with
 I. amaze-ment and consternation (48).

1589.

Inactivity of
 Mayenne.

During these important transactions, the duke of Mayenne, dilatory and inert, either remained inactive at Paris, occupied with regulations of a political nature; or, made only feeble efforts for the recovery of his military character, and the re-establishment of the affairs of his party. After a species of interregnum of near four months, subsequent to Henry the Third's decease, that commander, fearful lest the king of Spain, in conjunction with the Holy See, should attempt to nominate a successor to the throne; caused the cardinal of Bourbon to be publicly proclaimed, under the title of Charles the Tenth. He did not less retain in his own hands the whole executive power of the crown; and his recognition of the imprisoned cardinal produced the effect which he had foreseen, and which he probably desired. Henry, apprehensive that if his uncle should, by any accident, be liberated, the League might derive advantages from his name; redoubled the precautions, for securing him in confinement. He had already been removed to the castle of Fontenay in Poitou, where he was guarded with the utmost vigilance (49).

21st No-
 vember.
 Cardinal of
 Bourbon,
 proclaimed
 king.

Internal
 feuds of the
 League.

The internal feuds and animosities of the League; the number of rival, and almost co-equal chiefs; and the opposite nature of their views, pretensions, and expectations; imposed great, if not insurmountable obstacles, to the success of their operations. Mendoza, the ambassador of Philip the Second, who resided in the capital, dispensed the largesses of his master, with politic attention to the Spanish interests; and was far from rendering the duke of Mayenne independent of the court of Madrid. The arrival of Gaetano, the Papal legate, dispatched by Sixtus,

(48) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 67—69, and p. 80—85. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 296—299, and p. 317, 318.

(49) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 429, 430.

Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 284.

tended to augment, rather than to diminish the jealous and distrust of that general, by his notorious partiality to the measures of Spain. Mayenne did not wait for his presence, to reject the proposition of Mendoza, for acknowledging Philip protector of the League; though he warmly demanded supplies of men and money for supporting the war. The dukes of Nemours and Aumale, as well as the hereditary prince of Lorraine, augmented by their continual dissensions, the general confusion: while, the Parisians, not less shaken and divided among themselves, seemed only to unite in one common sentiment; the detestation of heresy, and the resolution to undergo every extremity, rather than to submit to their rightful sovereign (50).

On the other hand, Henry, by his courage, activity, and success, not only attracted the respect of his own subjects; but, received the most flattering testimonies of friendship and consideration from foreign powers. The Republic of Venice, constantly attached to France as her natural ally, and equally apprehensive of the augmenting power of Philip the Second; exhibited the warmest demonstrations of general joy, at the intelligence of Henry's accession. The Senate did not even hesitate, or delay, notwithstanding the remonstrances and menaces of the Papal nuntio, instantly to recognize him as king of France, by a public decree (51). Ferdinand, great duke of Tuscany, though he had recently contracted a close alliance with the duke of Lorraine, by marrying his daughter; and though he was restrained by prudential considerations, from venturing on so bold a measure; yet, did not less transmit to the new king, assurances of his devotion. He even authorized Henry's agent at his court, to promise the same pecuniary

C H A P.
I.
1589.

Respect of
foreign
powers, for
Henry.

Venice.

Tuscany.

(50) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 284—289. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 430—432.

(51) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 59—63, and p. 67. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 296.

C H A P. I. loan, which he had engaged to advance for his predecessor; and to open a negotiation for the marriage of his niece, the princess Mary of Medecis, with one of the princes of the blood of France (52). Similar testimonies of affection and respect were conveyed by the duke of Mantua (53). The Swiss cantons had already deputed commissioners, to felicitate him on his succession; to enjoin their troops to remain faithful to his service; and to request a renewal of the antient treaties subsisting between the Helvetic union and Henry the Third (54). From the Protestant princes of the German empire, he was secure of effectual support; and Casimir, who administered the affairs of the palatinate, demonstrated his adherence, by giving directions to levy troops without delay, which were conducted to his assistance by Sancy, early in the ensuing year (55).

Switzerland.

German
princes.

England.

Elizabeth, queen of England, true to her own interests and those of her people, furnished Henry with a body of forces, soon after the action at Arques; and if her scanty revenues, added to the various demands on her exchequer, did not admit her to make considerable remittances of money, she had, nevertheless, accompanied her military aid, with a small pecuniary supply (56). Even James the Sixth, king of Scotland, a prince, whose pacific character, and inaptitude for war, seemed to disqualify him for active service in the field; yet, animated by enthusiasm for the maintenance of the Protestant religion, had, previous to Henry's elevation to the throne of France, offered to conduct six thousand Scots to his assistance in person, and to maintain them at his own expence (57). He had recently proved the sincerity of his former professions, by sending over to Dieppe a

Scotland.

(52) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 63, 64. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 422.

(53) De Thou, *ibid.* (54) *Ibid.*, p. 59. (55) *Ibid.*, p. 92—98. (56) *Ibid.*, p. 32. (57) Original Letter of Henry the Fourth, in Voltaire, vol. x. p. 239.

body of a thousand men (58). Prince Maurice of ^{C H A P.} Nassau, who commanded the armies of the Republic ^{I.} of Holland, induced the States General, even when ^{1589.} struggling themselves against the power of Spain, to ^{Holland.} assist the king of France with ammunition and money (59). The kingdoms of the north were too remote, or too feeble, to take any part in the troubles of the French monarchy. Denmark was governed by a minor prince, Christian the Fourth; and Sweden, under John the Third, had relapsed into oblivion. In Germany, the reigning branch of the ^{Imperial} house of Austria, which had excited such terror under Charles the Fifth; and which, under Ferdinand the First, and Maximilian the Second, continued still ^{house of} to inspire respect; was fallen into complete insignificance, in the hands of Rodolph the Second. ^{Austria.} That sovereign, who, before he ascended the Imperial throne, had given the most promising expectations of virtue and capacity, disappointed the general hopes entertained of his administration. Dissolute, relaxed, and governed by his mistresses, he abandoned the concerns of the empire, to ministers destitute of ability or resolution. Indolent, and averse to business, he suffered every species of abuse to be practised with impunity in his hereditary dominions. He was despised in Bohemia, nearly driven out of Hungary, and almost forgotten in the empire (60). Such a prince was ill qualified to second the ambitious projects of the court of Madrid; and he seemed to display as little inclination, as he possessed ability, to cooperate with the Spanish branch of his family.

Henry wanted not, however, powerful foreign ^{Lorraine.} enemies to impede his conquests, and to retard, if not totally prevent, the reduction of his rebellious subjects. The duke of Lorraine, impelled by the chimerical expectations of raising his son to the

(58) Davila, p. 854.

(59) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 240.

(60) Pffefel, vol. ii. p. 218.

C H A P. throne of France ; and connected by a common origin, with the duke of Mayenne ; continued to aid
 I. him with his forces (61). Charles Emanuel, duke
 1539. of Savoy, allied to Philip the Second, whose daughter
 Savoy. he had married ; sustained by Spanish troops ; and ready to embark in any projects which promised augmentation of power, or territory ; had already advanced his pretensions to the crown itself. Embarrassed with a war in which he was engaged against the city and Republic of Geneva, he was reluctantly compelled to defer the commencement of his plans, till the ensuing year. It would seem that they were limited to the conquest, or acquisition of the two provinces of Dauphiné and Provence, which lay contiguous to his own dominions (62). Sixtus the Fifth, at the beginning of his pontificate, had manifested his enmity to the family of Bourbon, in its utmost force. But, his impatience and indignation, at the species of captivity in which Philip the Second held the holy see, and at the tyranny exercised by the Spanish cardinals, who attempted to fetter, or to direct all his measures ; inspired him with other sentiments. At the pressing instances of the court of Madrid, and of the agents of Mayenne, he had, it is true, dispatched his legate, Gaetano, into France : but, his instructions were, by no means, decidedly hostile to Henry the Fourth. On the contrary, they manifested a disposition rather to conciliate, than to irritate ; and were such as the father and head of the Christian church might dictate, without degrading, or debasing his character (63).

Philip the Second. The united efforts of all the external enemies of the new king, were, however, weak and contemptible, compared with those of Philip the Second.

(61) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 261, 262.
 p. 72, 73, and p. 75—79. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 279—281. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 423.

(62) De Thou, vol. xi.

(63) Ibid. p. 428.

During the reign and life of Henry the Third, he had observed some degree of disguise; and imposed some restraint on his ambitious, or destructive projects. The alliance subsisting between the houses of Valois, and of Austria; together with the undoubted attachment of Henry to the Catholic faith, induced the cabinet of Madrid to negotiate in secret with the Guises, and to avoid an open rupture between the two crowns. But, when the sceptre devolved to a Hugonot, Philip instantly disdained all further concealment, or measures of reserve. The pretext of heresy, against which, throughout his whole life, he had declared unqualified hostility, was too convenient a mask for veiling his ultimate views, not to avail himself of it without delay. He was, besides, the hereditary enemy of the king of Navarre, whose antient and patrimonial dominions he retained, in virtue of the usurpation of Ferdinand of Arragon. The vacancy of the French throne seemed to open to him no distant prospect, either of placing on it his daughter, Clara Isabella; or, at least, of reducing the monarchy to a state of complete ruin. He had already determined to take an open part in favour of the League; to lavish his treasures; and even, if requisite, to send his forces to combat Henry. Yet, rendering his affected zeal and liberality completely subservient to his policy, he attempted to constitute himself the protector and arbiter of Mayenne himself. Baffled in that design, he did not desist from his plans; and contenting himself with the title only of an auxiliary, he expected from the effect of time and favourable accidents, the completion of his wishes (64).

C H A P.
I.
1589.

Measures of
that monarch.

His ambitious projects.

The enormous power of so great a monarch, appeared to be almost irresistible, when joined to the other enemies of Henry the Fourth. Besides his

Grandeur; and magnitude of the Spanish monarchy.

(64) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 431. Chron. Nav. vol. i. p. 285—289.

C H A P. numerous kingdoms and provinces in Europe, the
 I. richest portions of Asia, Africa, and of the New
 1589. World, belonged to Spain. Portugal, with all her
 colonies; the discoveries made by Gama, and the
 conquests effected by Albuquerque; had fallen into
 his hands, only a few years preceding. His revenues
 seemed to be as vast as his ambition, and as inexhaus-
 tible as his thirst of dominion. The veteran bands,
 commanded by the duke of Parma, if united to the
 forces of the League, must, in all probability, crush
 the inferior army of a prince, as yet unsettled in the
 throne, and incapable of contending with so vast a
 disparity. The repulse, sustained at Arques, could
 only be esteemed a respite; and Europe, with anxious
 solicitude, anticipated as neither doubtful, nor remote,
 the final destruction of Henry.

Causes and
 principles of
 its decline.

But, the Spanish greatness, which inspired such
 terror, was, in a considerable degree, exaggerated, if
 not ideal. Philip had, himself, sapped its founda-
 tions, and precipitated its decline. The treasures of
 Peru and Mexico, were dissipated in his expensive
 enterprizes, to which the wealth of both the Indies
 was unequal. His subjects perceptibly diminished in
 numbers; and industry sunk in a similar proportion.
 The late unfortunate expedition against England, had
 broken his naval strength: the long wars in the Low
 Countries, though they formed a soldiery of un-
 equalled skill; yet, drained his exchequer. He could
 only attack France, by exposing Flanders; and in
 venturing on the experiment, he gratified his resent-
 ment, at the expence of his interests. He was, be-
 sides, declining in years, and hastening towards the
 termination of his long reign. His only son was a
 minor, inexperienced, and of feeble capacity. The
 veil, which had concealed the weakness and diseases of
 the Spanish monarchy from general inspection, fell
 with Philip the Second. Under his successor, it

State of
 Spain, to-
 wards the
 close of Phi-
 lip the Se-
 cond's reign.

faintly

faintly sustained the attacks made on it, by foreign nations. It was convulsed and shaken during the reign of Philip the Fourth; and the efforts of England, Germany, and Holland, could scarcely preserve it from complete subversion, under the languid administration of the last prince of the Spanish branch of the house of Austria.

C H A P.
I.
1589.

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Battle of Ivry.—Victory of the king.—Consequences of it.—Henry marches to Paris.—Death of the cardinal of Bourbon.—Siege of Paris.—Famine.—Causes which protracted its surrender.—March of the duke of Parma into France.—Henry raises the siege.—Military operations on both sides.—Return of the duke of Parma into Flanders.—Events in Brittany, and in Provence.—Death of Sixtus the Fifth.—Election of Gregory the Fourteenth.—Attack of St. Denis.—Siege of Chartres.—Intrigues of the young cardinal of Bourbon.—Edict of toleration, in favour of the Protestants.—Papal monitories, published against the king.—Situation of the duke of Mayenne.—Hostilities.—Escape of the duke of Guise from Tours.—Death of La Noue.—Enterprizes of the duke of Savoy.—Arrival of the German auxiliaries.—Death of Gregory the Fourteenth.—Transactions at Paris.—Violent proceedings of the council of sixteen.—Their punishment.—Act of oblivion published by the duke of Mayenne.

C H A P.

II.

1590.

Siege of
Meulan by
Mayenne.

WHILE the king, with almost unexampled celerity, and in defiance of the rigours of winter, at the head of a victorious army, subjected nearly the whole tract of country lying between the Seine and the Loire; the duke of Mayenne prepared to take the field. Importuned by the Parisians, he undertook to open the passages, which prevented the entrance of provisions into the capital; and after reducing the castle of Vincennes, and Pontoise, he sat down before Meulan. The town, situated upon the Seine, was rendered more important by a fort, constructed

structed in an island which divides the stream. Berengueville, the governor, far from being intimidated by the superiority of the enemy, repulsed them with loss; and by his desperate valour, added to his military skill, enabled the king to come in person, to his relief. The army of the League was, at length, compelled to desist from the enterprize; while Henry, satisfied with having frustrated their design, drew off his forces towards Dreux, of which he immediately began the siege (1).

Meanwhile, the duke of Mayenne, who, in consequence of his pressing solicitations to the duke of Parma, had been joined by a considerable body of infantry and cavalry, commanded by count Egmont; bent his march towards Dreux. The garrison had defended the city with an intrepidity and obstinacy, not inferior to that displayed at Meulan; and Henry, on receiving intelligence of the approach of the enemy, withdrew his artillery, and decamped from before the place. In a council of war, convoked for the purpose, it was unanimously resolved to give battle to Mayenne. Many reasons prompted the king to embrace so hazardous a measure, notwithstanding the inferiority of his numbers. It was more analogous to the character of Henry, whose courage and ardour always impelled him to the most decisive and generous resolutions. The valour, loyalty, and experience of the nobility and gentry, who constituted a large proportion of his troops, inspired him with confidence; and he was destitute of the pecuniary resources, indispensable for protracting a campaign, in presence of a superior adversary. Animated by these considerations, he did not hesitate to march towards Mayenne; and as it became requisite, in order to occupy an advantageous position, to turn his back for a short time on the army of the League, his mo-

C H A P.
II.
1590.

March.

The king raises the siege of Dreux.

He determines to give battle to the enemy.

(1) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 432, 433. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 86—92. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 227.

C H A P. II. }
 1590. } tions were mistaken for an intention of flying, and augmented their eagerness to bring him to a decisive engagement (2).

State of
 Mayenne's
 army.

This impatience was, notwithstanding, confined to the foldiers, and did not extend to their commander. The duke, aware of the advantages possessed by the royalists, which more than counterbalanced his superiority of troops, desired to avoid an action. But, the disgrace of retiring before a smaller army; the importunity of the officers; and the contemptuous reproaches of count Egmont, who threatened to chastise the temerity of the enemy with the Flemish auxiliaries under his command, overcame his reluctance. In the disposition and order of his forces, the viscount de Tavannes, from the imperfection of his sight, committed an error, which was attended with very fatal consequences. Instead of leaving a sufficient space between the battalions of infantry, for the cavalry to rally and return to the charge, he drew up the foot so close, as to impede their own operations, and eventually to produce general confusion (3).

Dispositions
 made by
 Henry.

On the contrary, never were the eminent military endowments of Henry more conspicuously, or successfully displayed, than at the battle of Ivry. His activity pervaded every part of the camp, and left nothing to the direction of others, which it was possible to inspect in person. His heroic contempt of danger and death was tempered by steady courage, and regulated by sentiments of the most elevated piety and resignation to the dispensations of Providence. Biron ably supported his sovereign, in all the subordinate parts of duty; and the general ardour of the troops gave a happy presage of victory.

14th March.
 Battle of
 Ivry.

At the first onset, the Walloon horse led by Egmont, broke the royal cavalry opposed to them, and

(2) Davila, p. 891—893. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 435, 436.

(3) Davila, p. 897—899. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 119, 120.

produced a temporary disorder; but, being rudely charged in their rear, they were in turn routed, cut in pieces, and their commander killed. In the center, Henry, opposed to the duke of Mayenne, contended for his crown. It is admitted, that the latter was, by no means, wanting to himself on this occasion; and that his defeat was chiefly to be attributed to causes, which he could neither obviate, nor surmount. The German cavalry, unable to rally behind the battalions, was with difficulty prevented from totally disordering the main body; and became, in a great measure, useless. After a short, though obstinate conflict, the army of the League gave way, and fled in every direction. Mayenne, accompanied with scarcely fifty followers, long maintained his ground, and endeavoured to restore the battle. But, finding all attempts of that nature vain, he retreated with precipitation over the river Eure, and caused the bridge to be broken down, in order to impede pursuit. The Switzers, who formed a considerable part of the infantry, and who had not yet engaged; being surrounded by the victorious royalists, laid down their arms, and were allowed quarter. But, the German horse; who had contributed so much to the defeat; and who, after having been raised and levied in the empire, for the king's service, had entered into that of the League; were severely punished for their breach of fidelity. By Henry's order, they were attacked, and put to the sword. The slaughter was very considerable, and accompanied with every mark of signal victory. Mayenne, not regarding himself as secure in the town of Mantes, though at a great distance from the scene of action, withdrew on the following day, to St. Denis (4).

C H A P.
II.
1590.

Defeat of
the army of
the League.

(4) Sully, vol. i. p. 72—74. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 228—233. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 124—129. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 436—439. Davila, p. 896—907. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 327—335.

C H A P.
II.

1590.

Inability of
Henry to
improve the
victory.

Causes of it.

It is probable, that if the king had improved his advantage with celerity, and advanced, without loss of time, to Paris; the impression made by his recent success, added to the unprepared state of the metropolis, might have enabled him to reduce the Parisians to surrender. He was strenuously exhorted to accelerate his march, by some of his most faithful and experienced captains; nor is it to be doubted, that he felt the expediency of the advice. But, like his antagonist, Mayenne, he had many factions in his own camp, and numerous opponents among those who maintained his cause. The Catholic lords and gentlemen were not disposed to elevate a Hugonot to the throne, and to exterminate the League; though their indignation for the assassination of Henry the Third, and their reliance on the promises of his successor to embrace the Romish faith, induced them to support his title. Biron was accused of not desiring to terminate a war, which rendered him necessary; and d'O, superintendent of the finances, purposely refused, or withheld the money indispensable for paying the foreign auxiliaries. Fifteen days elapsed, before the royal army was in a condition to prosecute the late victory; and so critical a delay was improved by the enemy, who had recovered from their first consternation (5). It was probably asserted with more reason, that if the duke of Mayenne had been able to put a strong garrison into the town of Mantes; he might, in a great measure, have deprived Henry of every beneficial consequence from the success of his arms, and incapacitated him from approaching the capital (6).

Dejection of
the duke of
Mayenne.

That commander, overcome with his emotions of shame and concern at his defeat, remained during some days at St. Denis, unwilling to meet the re-

(5) Sully, vol. i. p. 76, 77. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 343. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 440, 441.

(6) Ibid. p. 440.

proaches of the Parisians, or to expose himself to their resentment. But, the exhortations of his sister, the duchess of Montpensier; the consolatory admonition of the Papal legate, who, having arrived in the metropolis, had embraced the interests of the League; and the promises of Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, soon roused him to exertion. As it was evident that Paris would speedily be invested, and that, unless succoured by a foreign power, it could not ultimately be preserved from falling into the hands of the king; it was determined to depute the duke of Mayenne in person to the court of Brussels, to demand assistance. During his absence, his maternal brother, the duke of Nemours, was constituted governor of the metropolis. The inhabitants themselves, far from exhibiting any marks of apprehension at the late adverse occurrences; or displaying a desire to deprecate the approaching disaster of a siege; professed a readiness to undergo every renunciation, and even death itself, rather than submit to a heretic, excommunicated by the holy see. Encouraged by so many proofs of constancy and adherence, Mayenne instantly set out for Flanders; while Nemours, a prince, who, though only in the flower of youth, exhibited the talents and resources of riper age, lost not a moment in constructing, or repairing the fortifications of Paris. The shortness of the time, and the measures of Henry, precluded him, notwithstanding, from taking those steps for the supply of provisions, without which it appeared to be impossible to make a long, or effectual resistance (7).

During these transactions, the royal army advancing along the Seine, made themselves masters of almost all the towns and fortresses, which command the passage of that river, as well as of the Yonne, and the Marne. Henry, desirous rather to reduce Paris by

C H A P.
II.
1590.

Resolution
of the
Parisians.

28th March.
Henry ap-
proaches the
capital.

(7) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 344.

famine,

C H A P. II. famine, than to enter it by storm, began by cutting off the only sources, from which subsistence could be obtained. Anxious to gain a short interval, and, if possible, to obtain a cessation of arms, in order to allow time for the duke of Mayenne's return, Gaëtano, the legate, opened a fallacious negotiation with marshal Biron, for peace. But, the king, aware of the insidious intention of the chiefs of the League, and regarding the reduction of Paris as neither distant nor doubtful, refused to suspend the progress of his arms. From every part of France, intelligence of the most prosperous nature was received. In Auvergne, his adherents gained a signal victory over the enemy, at the town of Issoire, on the same day when he had vanquished the army of Mayenne, at Ivry. Some advantages of inferior consequence were obtained in other provinces; and on all sides, his affairs seemed to be hastening to a speedy and fortunate termination (8).

He refuses to grant a suspension of arms.

Death of the cardinal of Bourbon. 9th May.

Consequences of that event.

The embarrassments of the duke of Mayenne were further augmented by an event which took place at this period. The cardinal of Bourbon, whose name had served hitherto to contain within bounds the various pretenders to the crown, expired at the castle of Fontenay, in Poitou, oppressed with age and infirmities. Philip the Second, who beheld the throne vacant, and the head of the League reduced, as a suppliant, to demand assistance, in order to save himself and his party from total ruin; became the arbiter of both, and might dictate the conditions on which he would consent to march his forces into France. It required the utmost address in Mayenne, to protract the decision on a point of such delicacy and magnitude, as the election of a sovereign. As a convocation of the States General was indispensable, he

(8) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 345, and p. 347—354. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 439, and p. 441. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 134—142, and p. 149—152.

promised

promised to assemble them without delay; and in the intermediate time he retained, in virtue of his office, the prerogatives attached to the monarchical dignity. The college of the Sorbonne, devoted to the League, and whose decrees on matters of conscience, as well as theology, were regarded with profound veneration by all the adherents of that faction; had not even waited for the cardinal's decease, to anticipate its effects. In a meeting held for the purpose, they solemnly determined, that in the event of his death, Henry of Bourbon remained equally incapable of ever succeeding to the throne, on account of his heresy and apostacy. Those who should adhere to, or favour his cause, were stigmatized as deserters of religion, and enemies of God; while the crown of martyrdom was asserted to be reserved for such as opposed his pretensions, and sacrificed their lives for the holy union (9).

C H A P.
II.
1590.

Decree of
the Sor-
bonne.

Meanwhile, Paris was completely invested on every side, and began to experience the calamities inseparable from a siege. It may be considered as one of the most memorable, recorded in history, and vies, in extent of sufferings sustained by the besieged, with any of antiquity. Every circumstance respecting it, strongly characterizes the age, and attracts attention. The inhabitants appear to have exceeded two hundred thousand, independent of the garrison; which in cavalry and infantry, composed of Germans and Switzers, as well as French, fell short of four thousand (10). The subsistence and provisions of every nature, were exceedingly inadequate to the wants of such a multitude; and at the moderate allowance of only a pound of bread to each individual, a day, could not last above a month (11). No timely, or judicious precautions, had been adopted, either for ex-

Siege of
Paris.

State of the
capital.

(9) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 154—159. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 356—359. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 446, 447. (10) Ibid. p. 443. (11) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 162.

CHAP. II. 1590. pelling the useleſs and feeble of both ſexes; or for providing magazines to nourish them during the ſiege. Their hopes of ſuccour from the duke of Mayenne; their enmity to the king; and their enthuſiaſm in ſupport of the Catholic religion, ſupplied the place of all other requiſites. As the ſiege advanced, every ſpecies of ſuſtenance became more ſcarce; and after devouring all the animals found in the place, they recurred to the vileſt, and moſt loathſome aliments. It impreſſes with horror, while it ſtrikingly evinces the inflexible conſtancy of the people; that, at the ſuggeſtion of the Spaniſh ambaffador, recourſe was had to the church-yards, and the aſhes of the dead were diſturbed, to furniſh a noxious ſubſtitute for food. A paſte, compoſed of human bones reduced to powder, and mixed with water, was adminiſtered, to aſſuage the pangs of hunger; but, far from prolonging, it only ſhortened the lives of thoſe who ventured to taſte ſo unnatural and deteſtable a mixture (12). The graſs which grew in the deſerted ſtreets of the ſuburbs, was voraciouſly devoured by the miſerable wretches, who ſtrove by every means to perpetuate their exiſtence. Theſe baneful, or ineffectual experiments, could not prevent the rapid progreſs of diſeaſe; and more than twelve thouſand perſons periſhed, during the ſiege, either of inanition, or of the pernicious nourishment which they were reduced to adopt (13).

Famine.

Expedients
to prevent
its progreſs.June.
Duke of
Mayenne
enters
France.

After ſome weeks of ſolicitation, the duke of Mayenne having, not without difficulty, obtained a body of Spaniſh and Walloon infantry, from the governor of the Low Countries, re-entered France. Henry, apprized of his march, determined to attack him before he approached the capital. Quitting the camp, at the head of more than two thouſand cavalry, he

(12) *Eſprit de la Ligue*, vol. iii. p. 122. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 176, 177. Davila, p. 937, 946. *Satyre Menippee*, vol. i. p. 418, 419. (13) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 176, 177.

advanced

advanced with such rapidity, that the enemy had scarcely time to take refuge under the cannon of the city of Laon in Picardy. The position being, however, too strong to be forced; and the duke declining to hazard an action, though superior in numbers; the king returned with the same dispatch; and resumed his station before Paris. During his absence, a slender supply of provisions had been thrown into it; but, which was inadequate to the pressing and augmenting exigency of the inhabitants. Every circumstance appeared to preclude hope, and to prove the impossibility of protracting the siege, on the part of the Parisians. The troops, conducted by the duke of Mayenne, were unequal to any vigorous effort for their extrication; and the duke of Parma did not seem disposed to quit the Netherlands, where Maurice, prince of Orange, menaced various places, and only waited for his departure, to over-run the provinces along the Maese and the Iffel. On the other hand, the royal army was reinforced from every quarter; the expectation of pillage, and of the certain reduction of the metropolis, alluring adventurers who crowded to the king's standard. St. Denis, and almost all the other fortresses, or posts, in the vicinity of Paris, were successively taken. The suburbs, which being fortified by entrenchments and works, had hitherto resisted, were carried in a single night, with facility, and almost without resistance. Henry had rejected their proposals for a suspension of hostilities, though he offered them an honourable capitulation. Alarming symptoms of internal confusion had appeared, which menaced insurrection, and were not quelled without recourse to the most violent expedients. Only time, vigilance, and perseverance, seemed to be demanded, to compel the Parisians to implore the clemency of their conqueror (14).

C H A P.
II.
1590.

9th June.
Desperate
condition of
Paris.

July.

Capture of
the suburbs.

(14) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 167, 168, and p. 175—178. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 371—376.

C H A P.

II.

1590.

August.
Causes
which pro-
tracted the
siege.

Arts, used
to sustain
the people.

External
assistance
and support.

Many causes contributed, nevertheless, to avert the impending blow, and finally to extricate them from their perilous situation. The duke of Nemours exerted not only an invincible courage, but, a vast variety of resources, scarcely to have been expected from a prince of his youth and inexperience. The fertile invention, and unconquerable spirit of the dukes of Montpensier, fabricated, with unceasing care, fictitious intelligence of the duke of Parma's approach, and arrival. Every renunciation and hardship were shared by the Papal legate, and the ambassador of Philip the Second, Mendoza. While the former dispensed pardon and absolution to the insatuated multitude; and promised the crown of martyrdom to such as fell in defence of the faith; the latter distributed largesses of money, provisions, and assurances of speedy relief (15). All the arts, by which a furious and bigotted people can be stimulated to support famine, were successfully practised. Their zeal was inflamed by declamations from the pulpit; their imaginations were raised by promises of divine, or supernatural assistance; and their senses entertained with processions, in which the religious orders marched through the principal streets, grotesquely habited (16).

Powerful as were these engines in their effect on the mind, they must still have proved unequal to repelling hunger, and retaining the populace in submission; if they had not been aided by external means. Provisions of many kinds were permitted to enter Paris, during the course of the siege. Givry, who commanded at Charenton, an important post, situated at the spot, in which the river Marne falls into the Seine; tempted by an offer of five thousand

(15) Memoires de Villeroi, vol. ii. Discours veritable du Siege de Paris, p. 413—522, passim. (16) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 360, 361. Saryre Menip. vol. i. p. 328—330.

crowns, and influenced by sentiments of gallantry towards his mistress, who was shut up in the capital; allowed a large convoy of corn and wine to be received into the place (17). Sentiments of humanity operated strongly on the besiegers, and induced them to admit, or administer relief to their distressed and expiring countrymen. Towards the termination of the siege, a regular intercourse subsisted between the inhabitants and the royal troops. Every article of luxury or commerce which Paris contained, was bartered for bread, or wine; and the Parisians purchased of their enemies the means of their eventual preservation (18). Even the king himself was highly instrumental to prolonging the duration of their resistance. The benignity of his nature melted at their sufferings, and relaxed the severity of his vigilance. Secure, as he imagined, that the duke of Parma would not abandon the Netherlands, to come to the relief of Paris, he trusted, with too much confidence, to the effect of time and famine. He might have accelerated the reduction, by using force; but, he pertinaciously refused to have recourse to violent methods. If he had entered the city by storm, he dreaded the complete destruction of his own capital; and he apprehended the severe revenge, which the Hugonots in his army would, probably, have taken for the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He had a greater interest than any other individual, in the conservation of the metropolis and the inhabitants; nor did he wish to take possession of it, reduced to a heap of smoking ruins, desolated by a licentious and ungovernable soldiery (19).

C H A P.
II.
1590.

Benignity
of Henrys

a Policy of
that prince.

Duke of
Parma pre-
pares to in-
vade France.

In compliance with the reiterated and peremptory injunctions of the court of Madrid, the duke of

(17) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 442, 443.

(18) Sully, vol. i. p. 78.

D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 234—236.

(19) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 371.

De Thou, vol. xi. p. 175, 183.

Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 462, 463. Memoires

de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 533, 534.

C H A P. II. Parma at length prepared to begin his march towards Paris. That general, who had succeeded to Don John of Austria in the supreme command of the Netherlands, civil and military; had reduced to the obedience of Philip, in the course of twelve years, a great portion of those revolted provinces. His reputation for skill and capacity in war, exceeded that of any captain of the age, and equalled him with the most illustrious persons of antiquity. Covered with glory, and elevated to the summit of renown, he did not desire to commit so well-earned and precarious a possession, to the caprice of fortune. Averse to undertake an expedition, which could only be prosecuted at the expence of the Low Countries; he reluctantly quitted the scene of his exploits, to plunge into another kingdom, with which he was unacquainted, and the manners of whose inhabitants were peculiarly incompatible with those of the Spaniards (20). His march was conducted on principles of tactics, little known or practised in the sixteenth century. He advanced by fixed and regular stages, in close and compact order, always ready for action, and encamping every night, according to the Roman system of war. Conscious that in the person of Henry the Fourth, he had an enemy to oppose, of equal activity, vigilance, and intrepidity; he proceeded with caution, and could not be induced to accelerate his progress, by any entreaties of the duke of Mayenne. Having traversed all Picardy, unopposed, at the head of about twelve thousand infantry, and more than three thousand horse; he arrived on the banks of the Marne, and effected his junction with the army of the League, near the city of Meaux, only twelve leagues from Paris (21).

1590.

6th August.

Precautions
adopted by
that com-
mander.

His junction
with
Mayenne.
26th Au-
gust.

(20) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 376. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 464. Davila, p. 931, 944. (21) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 183, 184. Davila, p. 947—949. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 237.

The amazement, excited in the royal camp by this intelligence, was, if possible, exceeded by the consternation which it occasioned. Henry beheld the object for which he had made such exertions, and at the instant when it seemed ready to fall into his hands, snatched from him by a foreign interposition. It was dangerous, in the face of the ablest commander in Europe, to attempt the prosecution of the siege; and the fatal obstinacy of Francis the First, who persisted in besieging Pavia, under similar circumstances; was not yet obliterated by the lapse of more than sixty years. To renounce, on the other hand, the capture of Paris, whose inhabitants, he was well assured, could not resist above four days longer, was one of the most cruel and mortifying sacrifices, possible to be imagined. After mature deliberation, it became, notwithstanding, indispensable to embrace the latter painful alternative. The king, yielding, therefore, to necessity, broke up his camp, and advanced towards the Spaniards, followed by his forces, which exceeded eighteen thousand foot, and five thousand cavalry. His expectation of deciding the contest by a general engagement, consoled him, in some measure, for his recent disappointment, and excited universal ardour among the royal troops. The two armies came in sight, at the village of Chelles; but, the duke of Parma, far from exhibiting a disposition to try the event of a battle, instantly commanded his soldiers to entrench themselves, and declined the action offered him by Henry. It was in vain that the king attempted to shake his resolution, by sending a herald to defy the Spanish commander. The duke, with phlegmatic composure, replied, that "he was not come so far, in order to take advice of his enemy, at what moment he should give battle; that he had entered France, by command of the Catholic king, his sovereign, in order to extirpate heresy; and that he would fulfil his commission, by

C H A P.
II.

1590.

Consternation in the royal camp.

30th August.

Siege of Paris, raised.

1st September.

Duke of Parma declines an action.

C H A P. II. “ such measures, of whatever nature, as appeared to
 “ him best adapted to the purpose (22).”

1590.

He takes
Lagny.

State of the
royal forces.

His actions corresponded with his assertions, and displayed his unquestionable superiority in the science of war. While, with uncommon dexterity, he contrived to amuse the king by the appearance of an immediate engagement, he turned short towards Lagny, a town situated on the Marne, in which was a royal garrison. Having thrown a bridge across the river, he began to batter the wall without intermission; effected a breach, and entered the place by storm, before any effectual succours could be sent to its assistance. The capture of so important a post, completed the deliverance of Paris, and facilitated the introduction of every species of provisions, of which the inhabitants had been deprived during above four months (23). It was scarcely possible to undergo a more sudden and humiliating reverse, than that occasioned by the successful efforts of the Spanish general. No hope remained, either of reducing the metropolis to surrender, or of forcing the enemy to hazard a battle. The jealousies and animosities among the Catholic and Hugonot officers, which had been suspended, or forgotten, during the siege, revived under circumstances of depression. It became difficult to secure the convoys of provisions, which were continually intercepted by the duke of Nemours, liberated from his late confinement. Scarcity began to be experienced in the royal camp. The troops were diminished by diseases, and broken by fatigue: while the nobility, no longer stimulated by the prospect of honour, or of plunder, could scarcely be retained, and demanded permission to retire from the field, in order to recruit their exhausted strength (24).

(22) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 378, 379. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 186—188. Davila, p. 952. (23) Davila, p. 953—957. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 465, 466. Sully, vol. i. p. 78. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 238—240. (24) Davila, p. 957. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 379. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 466.

Yielding,

Yielding, therefore, with fortitude, to a necessity ^{C H A P. II.} which was unavoidable, the king determined to grant the permission, which it would have been impossible to refuse. ^{1590.} Previous to disbanding his forces, prompted by indignation and despair, he made two attempts to surprize the metropolis; both of which proved unsuccessful (25). No measure remained, except to retreat, and to reserve himself for a more propitious juncture. After having provided the principal places in the vicinity of Paris, with garrisons; and sent detachments into various provinces; accompanied by the remaining troops, he marched to Clermont, which he carried by storm. Scarcely eight hundred cavalry, out of so flourishing and numerous an army, remained for the protection of his own person (26). ^{Henry disbands his army.}

The dukes of Parma, and of Mayenne, no longer fettered in their operations by any enemy in the field, instantly broke up their camp, and meditated further acquisitions. Corbeil, a town, which from its position on the Seine above Paris, contributed eminently to incommode and distress the capital, was invested by their joint forces. Though destitute either of a considerable garrison, or of the means of making a long defence; yet, the valour of Rigaud, the governor, detained the two confederates near a month under its walls. The mutual distrust and jealousy of the French and Spanish commanders began to appear, and impeded, or weakened their progress. Mayenne refused to permit Corbeil to be entrusted to the care of foreign soldiers; and the duke of Parma, satisfied with having fulfilled the principal object of his expedition, by the deliverance of Paris, expressed his impatience to return to Flanders. Diseases, the result of intemperance; added to the autumnal season, and the want of numerous articles requisite for continuing ^{Operations of the combined generals.} ^{Impediments to their progress.}

(25) Memoires de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 483,—490. (26) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 191, 193. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 467. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 380—382. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 240, 241. Davila, p. 957—961.

C H A P. II. the campaign, had already diminished his troops. The court of Madrid intended rather to feed, than to terminate the war; and the League was not yet sufficiently weakened, or humbled, to accept a sovereign from Philip the Second. The duke of Parma's absence from the Low Countries, had already been highly injurious to the interests of Spain. Besides the important city of Breda, which Maurice, prince of Orange, had surpris'd, he captured Zutphen, Deventer, and Nimeguen. The Spaniards scarcely retained any places of consequence to the north of the Rhine and the Maese (27).

Retreat of
Parma into
Flanders.

4th Novem-
ber.

Followed by
the king.

29th No-
vember.

Impelled by these weighty considerations, Farnese, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his ally, prepared to revisit the Netherlands; and having opened a secret negociation with the governor of Chateau Thierry, a place of consequence on the Marne, he bent his course through Champagne. Henry, whose vigilance never slumbered, immediately put himself in motion, at the head of near eight hundred cavalry. After providing against any act of treachery, by sending La Noue, one of his most able and faithful commanders, to take charge of Chateau Thierry; he lost not a moment in endeavouring to harass and impede the duke of Parma's return. Aided by the baron of Biron, son to the marshal of that name, whose crimes rendered him too celebrated at a subsequent period of Henry's reign; he hung on the flanks of the Spanish army, cut to pieces some straggling troops, and repeatedly attempted to surpris'e, or to put to the sword a part of the rear, which was most exposed (28). But, such was the discipline and admirable order, observed by the retiring forces; and so superior was the military science of their general, that no advantage of consequence was gained by the

(27) Davila, p. 962—965. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 241, 242. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 196—198. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 382, 386. (28) Mémoires de Villeroi, vol. ii. p. 528—530.

king. Near eight thousand auxiliaries were left by the duke of Parma, to sustain the party of the League; and funds were provided for preventing the extinction of the cause. Before the Spaniards quitted France, they had the mortification to see Lagny and Corbeil, the only towns which they had reduced, retaken by Givry, almost without resistance. Corbie, a post of importance on the Somme, and not far removed from the frontiers of Artois, was surprised by Humieres, one of the royal commanders; and Henry, returning from his pursuit of the enemy, entered St. Quintin in triumph (29). A short period of repose and inaction, mutually succeeded to the events of so crowded and interesting a campaign.

While Henry thus experienced, in their utmost force, the rapid vicissitudes of fortune, the kingdom was agitated and desolated by the adherents of the two parties. Matignon, who was steadily attached to the interests of the crown, retained in submission the province of Guienne, and Bourdeaux, the capital. Languedoc enjoyed a degree of tranquillity, under Montmorency: but, in Brittany, the turbulent ambition of the duke of Mercœur, a prince of the house of Lorraine, brother to the queen-dowager, Louisa of Vaudemont, plunged that part of France into confusion. Desirous of erecting the duchy of Brittany into an independent sovereignty; and unable by his own force, or that of the League, to achieve so arduous a work, he called in the assistance of foreigners. Philip the Second, always ready to aid the efforts of rebellion, in order ultimately to reduce France to implore his interposition and protection; dispatched John d'Aquila, with four thousand soldiers, who, landing at the port of Blavet, were joined by Mercœur. The junction of so considerable a body, gave him a temporary superiority over the royal

C H A P.
II.
1590.

Surprise of
Corbie.

State of
France.

Spaniards
sent into
Brittany.
October.

(29) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 388, 389. Sully, vol. i. p. 79. Davila, p. 967.
—969 De Thou, vol. xi. p. 204—206.

troops,

C H A P. troops, and enabled him to obtain some important advantages (30).

II.

1590.

Progress of
the duke of
Savoy, in
Provence.

At the other extremity of the kingdom, Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, aided by the same monarch, who furnished him with galleys, and permitted him to levy forces in the Milanese, invaded Provence. La Valette, who commanded the royalists, supported by Lesdiguières at the head of the Protestants from Dauphiné, encountered the Savoyards, and repulsed, or defeated them on various occasions. But, the duke, availing himself of the divisions subsisting in the province, and possessed of the means of corruption, did not less succeed in a material part of his object. A deputation from the parliament and inhabitants of Aix, having invited him to repair to that capital, he obeyed the summons with alacrity. His reception was accompanied with every testimony of general joy; and he was solemnly recognized as protector and governor-general of Provence, under the crown of France (30). His irresolution, added to his want of sufficient force, prevented him, notwithstanding, from profiting of the affection of the inhabitants of Marseilles, and from possessing himself of that flourishing and commercial city.

14th No-
ember.

Death of
Sixtus the
Fifth.
27th Au-
gust.

The death of Sixtus the Fifth, which took place nearly at the period when the king was necessitated to raise the siege of Paris, was an event highly injurious to the royal cause. Neither terrified by the menaces of the Spanish ambassador at the court of Rome, nor mollified by the entreaties of the duke of Mayenne; Sixtus shewed a disposition to favour Henry the Fourth. His discernment and the elevation of his mind enabled him to perceive, and induced him to

(30) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 206—214. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 402. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 469. (30) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 216—223. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 400, 401. Vie de Lesdiguières, folio, a Paris, 1638, p. 97—112.

admire, the great qualities of that monarch. He had conceived an impression equally disadvantageous of the chief of the League; and his avarice rendered him averse to dissipating, or diminishing the treasures, which he had deposited in the castle of St. Angelo. Induced by these motives, he gave the most unequivocal demonstrations of regard to the king; admitted to an audience, the duke of Luxembourg, as deputy from the Catholic nobility; and enjoined the legate to adopt conciliatory measures, for reconciling Henry to the Romish church (31).

His decease was productive of a total change in the conduct of the holy see. After the short-pontificate of Urban the Seventh, which lasted only a few days; Sfondrati, a native of the duchy of Milan, and a subject of the Catholic king, was raised to the pontifical dignity. He assumed the name of Gregory the Fourteenth. Destitute either of the talents, firmness, or independence of Sixtus, the new pope suffered himself to be made the tame and passive instrument of the Spanish ambition. He gave immediate directions for levying a considerable body of troops, to be sent to the assistance of Mayenne; and destined the treasures of his predecessor, for their maintenance and support (32).

It may be confidently asserted, that the transactions which took place in France, between the death of Henry the Third, and the termination of the year 1590, are more striking, crowded, and picturesque, than those contained within any similar period, in the modern history of Europe. The retreat of the new king into Normandy, pursued by the duke of Mayenne: his critical, and almost hopeless condition, before the combat of Arques: the fortunate issue of the contest on that occasion: Henry re-appearance before Paris, at the head of a victorious army: the rapidity,

(31) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 99—103, and p. 262. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 395; 396.

(32) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 274—287.

C H A P. of his motions and conquests: the battle of Ivry:
 11. the siege of the capital; and its unexpected delive-
 1590. rance by a foreign interposition, at the moment when
 its capture appeared to be imminent and inevitable:
 these events are in themselves, of such magnitude,
 and follow in such quick succession, as powerfully to
 arrest and fix attention. The remainder of the civil
 wars under Henry the Fourth, though from a variety
 of causes and accidents, they were protracted to a
 very considerable length; yet, are comparatively tame
 and insipid. Instructed by two defeats, the duke of
 Mayenne never ventured on a third experiment, and
 avoided with care, a decisive engagement. The duke
 of Parma, already elevated to the pinnacle of military
 fame, and only desirous to fulfil the injunctions of
 Philip the Second, by sustaining the League; had no
 temptation to commit to the chance of arms, the repu-
 tation acquired by a life of successful exertion. Henry,
 though he made various attempts to become master
 of Paris by stratagem, or by negotiation, was never
 again able formally to invest and besiege the metro-
 polis. A degree of mutual languor and debility, the
 natural consequence of such violent efforts, began to
 manifest itself. Pecuniary resources were wanting;
 and even men were no longer to be procured without
 difficulty. The armies of the League were princi-
 pally composed of Spaniards, and Italians, main-
 tained from the pontifical treasury, or by the Catholic
 king. Henry the Fourth continued to derive contri-
 butions, and to recruit his forces from England, Hol-
 land, and the Protestant princes of the German em-
 pire: while Switzerland sold her stipendiaries to the
 two parties.

1591. The Parisians were not long tranquil, after the
 Attempt up- retreat of the duke of Parma; and, rendered enter-
 on St. Denis. prizing by their late deliverance, they undertook to
 surprise the town of St. Denis, which from its vici-
 2d January. nity to the metropolis, greatly incommoded the inha-
 bitants.

bitants. A body of infantry, supported by a small number of horse, and favoured by the rigour of the season, which rendered the moat passable, ventured to approach the walls. They were conducted by the chevalier d'Aumale, a prince of the house of Lorraine, whose ardent and fearless character was peculiarly adapted to that species of hostility. The darkness of the night aiding the assailants, they entered the town without resistance; and were already masters of it, when the governor, animated rather by despair, and desirous not to survive the loss of the place, than hopeful to repulse the enemy, sallied out, and attacked them. He had with him only seven gentlemen, mounted, like himself, on horseback; but, the obscurity and confusion magnifying his force, the enemy was disconcerted. While the chevalier d'Aumale endeavoured to rally his troops, he received a mortal wound in the throat; and his followers, no longer knowing whom to obey, fled with precipitation. St. Denis was recovered with the same rapidity that it had been taken, and secured against similar attempts (33).

C H A P.
II.
1591.

Death of the
chevalier
d'Aumale.

The king, on the other hand, was not more successful in an enterprize, the object of which was to surprize Paris. Having afterwards assembled his forces, he joined marshal Biron under the walls of Chartres, of which he commenced the siege. The valour of the garrison; the ardour of the inhabitants, whose bigotry inflamed their animosity; and the strength of the city itself, produced so long and obstinate a resistance, that Henry was repeatedly on the point of desisting from the enterprize. It was, nevertheless, ultimately crowned with success; the duke of Mayenne not judging it safe to hazard a battle for its preservation. In order to retrieve the disgrace, and to recover the lustre of his arms, he sat down

11th February.
Siege of
Chartres.

18th April.
Capture of
that city.

(33) Davila, p. 987, 988. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 405, 406. De Thou, vol. xi, p. 337—339.

before

C H A P. before Chateau Thierry on the Marne; which speedily capitulated, rather by the treachery of the governor, than by the inability of the place. The war, notwithstanding, languished; while each party, in expectation of speedy foreign assistance, suspended any great exertion, and even recommenced an illufory negotiation for peace (34).

Discontent
in the royal
army.

Notwithstanding the felicity which had hitherto almost uniformly accompanied the arms of Henry; and the many great endowments, as well as virtues, displayed in his public conduct; discontent pervaded the royal camp, and menaced the most serious misfortunes. He had not yet accomplished his solemn assurance, given at his elevation to the throne, of causing himself to be instructed in the Catholic doctrines: a promise, which more than any other motive, had induced the nobility to recognize, and to support his title. He had, indeed, scrupulously maintained the ecclesiastical establishment, excluded the Hugonots from employment, and conducted himself with equal moderation and wisdom, in his management of the two parties. But, in an age so bigotted, his unequivocal renunciation of the Protestant, and resumption of the Romish religion, alone could confirm the crown on his head, and allay the scruples of the nation. Ambition, under the mask of zeal, might avail itself of his delay, and produce new convulsions. Henry was even threatened with a competitor, among the individuals of his own family, in the person of the young cardinal of Bourbon. He was the second of the three sons of Louis, prince of Condé: but, as his elder brother, the prince of Conti, laboured under various intellectual and bodily infirmities, which, it was believed, would incapacitate him for perpetuating his line; the cardinal aspired to

Intrigues of
the young
cardinal of
Bourbon.

(34) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 476—478 De Thou, vol. xi. p. 346, 347, and p. 352—355. Davila, p. 997—1003.

occupy the place, left vacant by the death of his uncle, the late cardinal of Bourbon. Animated by so flattering an expectation, he began to form a cabal, composed of the most ardent, or discontented Catholics; and desirous to engage in his interests the Papal court, he secretly dispatched an emissary to Rome, to lay his claims before Gregory the Fourteenth. The intrigue was not, however, long concealed: Henry received intimation of it from several quarters. As it might, nevertheless, be dangerous to punish the offence, in a person so nearly allied to him, he contented himself with summoning the cardinal to attend him at Mantes; to which city he had removed the council of state. The king's presence, and his vigilance suppressed, if they did not extinguish, the project; but, the very existence of such a design sufficiently proved the dangers, annexed to his adherence to the Hugonot religion (35).

CHAP.
II.
1591.
Repressed
by the king's
vigilance.

When we consider the enlargement of Henry's mind, and the perspicuity of his judgment, we cannot reasonably doubt, that he had fully appreciated the delicate situation in which he stood; and that he had long foreseen the necessity of ultimately sacrificing his profession of faith, to the interests of the state. He was destitute of bigotry, though sincere in his adherence to the tenets of the reformers; and he was probably withheld from abjuring them, more by motives of honour, decorum, and prudence, than by scruples of a conscientious nature. Some of the most virtuous, disinterested, and upright of the Hugonots themselves, had not hesitated to admit, and to avow the necessity of his adopting the religion of the people, over whom he was destined to reign (36). But, however clear the propriety of such a step appeared, many and weighty reasons dictated to postpone its ac-

Necessity
of Henry's
abjuration.

Reasons for
its delay.

(35) Davila, p. 1005—1008. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 349—352, and p. 363. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 477, 478.

(36) Davila, p. 1009.

complishment

C H A P. II.
 1591.
 His position, with respect to the Protestant powers.
 accomplishment to a more favourable juncture. He was in want equally of troops, and of resources for their support, at a moment when the League was about to receive ample supplies of both. The viscount of Turenne had, it is true, levied in the dominions of the Protestant princes of the empire, a body of ten thousand infantry, and above five thousand cavalry, which were preparing to advance to his aid (37). But, they had peremptorily refused to begin their march, before they should have received payment of three hundred thousand ducats; and the king relied on Elizabeth, queen of England, to furnish him with so considerable a sum (38). That princess, it was incontestible, would instantly withhold her assistance, and renounce his alliance, if he embraced the Catholic religion. Nor could he hope, by such a measure, to disarm the League, whose leaders, corrupted by the gold of Spain, implacable in their animosity, and regarding even his abjuration of heresy as incomplete, or nugatory, till he should have been absolved by the pope, from his state of excommunication; would never consent to recognize him as their rightful sovereign.

Edict, issued in favour of the Hugonots.

Far from judging the time proper for his assumption of the Romish faith and worship, the king ventured on a measure, calculated to give security and protection to his Hugonot subjects. They had participated in his adverse fortune; but, hitherto, had derived scarcely any advantages from his elevation to the crown. The toleration of their religion, was only a perpetual infraction of the laws; and even their personal safety demanded some interposition, to secure them from violence. Moved by these considerations, Henry, in a convocation of the princes, nobility, and ecclesiastics, held at Mantes, proposed to rescind the severe and persecuting edicts, extorted by

(37) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 438.

(38) Davila, p. 1023, 1024.

the heads of the League from his predecessor; and to renew that of Poitiers, issued by Henry the Third in the year 1577. He expatiated with eloquence and energy, on the beneficial consequences which had resulted from the promulgation of so mild and tolerant an edict, which the late king had not consented to violate, without the utmost repugnance. The cardinal of Bourbon alone, of all the prelates assembled, and present at the king's address, ventured, not without marks of irresolution and hesitation, to oppose the measure. But, his feeble and unsupported voice was ineffectual to suspend a determination, the utility, as well as beneficence of which, were generally recognized. In order to obtain the consent of the parliament of Tours, and to induce that assembly to register the edict, it was declared to be only temporary and provisional, till the religious differences could be finally terminated, in a meeting of the three orders, when the kingdom should be restored to peace and submission (39).

C H A P.
II.
1591.

Ineffectual
opposition of
the cardinal
of Bourbon.

Desirous, while he thus extended protection to the Hugonots, to tranquillize the minds of his Catholic subjects, he issued a second edict, or declaration, by which he not only confirmed the antient religion; but, renewed the promise made on his accession, of causing himself to be instructed, preparatory to his conversion. He was, notwithstanding, more indebted to the injudicious violence of his enemies, than to the attachment or submission of his own followers, for the obedience and affection exhibited towards his person. The new pontiff, Gregory the Fourteenth, adopting with servile deference, the enmities and interests of Philip the Second, had already renewed the ecclesiastical censures and excommunication, issued by Sixtus, against Henry, some years preceding. His

Second edict
of Henry,
for the pro-
tection of
the Catholic
religion.

(39) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 366—369. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 447, 448. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 483.

nuntio,

C H A P.
II.

1591.

Imprudent
conduct of
the Papal
nuntio.

nuntio, Landriano, whom he had dispatched to France; in contradiction to the advice of the duke of Mayenne, and the opinions of the most moderate men of that faction, published on his arrival, two monitories, calculated to excite universal indignation. They were conceived in language the most violent and indecent, as well as arrogant and presumptuous. All the prelates and ecclesiastics who adhered to the royal party, were enjoined, within fifteen days, to quit the country which acknowledged Henry, on pain of immediate privation of their preferments and benefices. The nobility, magistrates, and people, were, in like manner, exhorted to abandon Henry of Bourbon, as excommunicated, relapsed, and incapable of wearing the crown (40).

Its effects.

So injudicious an abuse of the pontifical power, instead of producing the effect intended, proved highly beneficial to the king's affairs. No deference nor obedience were paid to mandates, equally unjust, and disgraceful to the holy see. The liberties of the Gallican church were firmly maintained, and vigorously asserted by the clergy, assembled at Mantes. It was even proposed to elect a patriarch, or to convoke a national council, in order to provide a remedy for the disorders caused by the Papal interdict. The parliaments of Tours, and of Chalons, attached to the crown, and justly incensed at an act subversive of the fundamental rights of the monarchy, expressed their indignation by still more energetic proceedings. They declared the monitories seditious and impious; commanded them to be lacerated and burnt by the common executioner; and ordered the nuntio, Landriano, to be apprehended, and brought to their bar, as a criminal. Gregory the Fourteenth himself was not spared, in the decree published on the occasion.

Spirited conduct of the parliaments.

(40) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 361. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 449, 450. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 479, 480.

He was treated as an enemy of the repose of the church, a partizan of Spain, and an accomplice in the detestable affassination of Henry the Third. It must be owned, that so patriotic and generous a conduct seemed to breathe the spirit of an enlightened, and less superstitious age (41).

C H A P.
II.
1591.

If the court and camp of the king were agitated by factions, and rendered the scene of political intrigue, the duke of Mayenne could neither boast of greater tranquillity, nor security. Elevated rather by a series of accidents, than by pre-eminent merit, to the dangerous post of chief of the League; he beheld himself surrounded by precipices; undermined by secret cabals, and attacked by open enmity. His uterine brother, the duke of Nemours, elated with the success which had attended his defence of the capital, and idolized by the Parisians, demanded the government of Normandy. He met with a refusal; and had retired, in disgust, to Lyons, of which city he was governor, and where he attempted to erect an independent principality (42). The duchess of Guise, widow of Henry, who had been assassinated at Blois, complained that no measures were taken, nor disposition manifested, to procure the deliverance of her son, the young duke, who languished in confinement at Tours (43). In Brittany, the duke of Mercœur seemed to renounce all dependance on the party, and to have no other object in view, except to revive in his own person the sovereignty of the antient dukes of that province. The duke of Lorraine beheld, with jealousy and concern, the elevation of a collateral and remote branch of his house, to so high and enviable a superiority. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, aided by his father-in-law, the Catholic king, was already in possession of a considerable part of Provence.

Embarrassments of
the duke of
Mayenne.

(41) Davila, p. 1013, 1014. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 370—372. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 481, 482, and p. 484.

(42) Davila, p. 983, 984.

(43) Ibid. p. 984, 985.

C H A P. II. and disdained even the forms of deference to the chief of the League (44).

1591.

State of Paris.

Council of sixteen. Their authority and proceedings.

The aspect of Paris was by no means calculated to afford him consolation for these multiplied embarrassments. The inhabitants, impoverished by civil war, and oppressed by severe exactions for its support; complained of such rigorous demands, and accused the executive government of profusion, negligence, and peculation. Above all, the council of sixteen, so denominated from the sixteen wards, or quarters, into which the capital was divided; gave alarming tokens of alienation, and even of a desire to arrogate to themselves the supreme civil and municipal authority. They had been highly instrumental to the revolt of the metropolis in the late reign, and to the grandeur of the duke of Guise. But, conscious of the magnitude of their services, they affected independence on his brother; and, corrupted by Spanish gold, they shewed a desire to confer the crown itself on Philip, their benefactor (45). Mendoza, and Ibarra, the two ambassadors of Spain, fomented the misintelligence, excited continual dissensions or impediments to the duke, and withheld the pecuniary supplies, indispensable for sustaining the public cause. It was in vain, that, with a view to surmount their opposition, he had dispatched the president Jeannin to Madrid, in the expectation of obtaining from Philip himself a modification of the restraints, imposed on the payment of remittances for the support of the troops. That monarch, though he received the duke's agent with politeness, admitted him repeatedly to an audience, and treated him with complacency; yet, remained inflexible as to the points demanded. He even expressed dissatisfaction, at the enormous amount of the sums already advanced to aid the cause of rebellion, for which he had as yet received no

Ineffeſſual efforts of Mayenne, to emancipate himself.

(44) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 356, 357. Davila, p. 983. (45) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 438.

compensation;

compensation; and unveiled his expectation of placing the crown on the head of his daughter, the infanta, Clara Isabella (46). C H A P.
II.

Hostilities, which had been in some measure suspended by mutual weakness, began anew in the northern provinces: Henry's ascendant was manifested in every enterprize; and he maintained his accustomed superiority over his more inactive, or more cautious adversary. The duke of Mayenne was unsuccessful in an attempt to surprize the town of Mantes; which had no other effect, than to induce the king to remove the council of state to Chartres: a city, which, from its magnitude and strength, as well as its remote situation from Paris, was far better adapted for the seat of so dignified an assembly. 1591.
Military
operations.

Henry, on the other hand, after making himself master of Louviers in Normandy, sat down before Noyon; a place of importance, near the frontier of Picardy. Mayenne, though loudly invoked to come to their assistance by the garrison, which made a vigorous defence; and though much superior in strength to the royal army; did not venture on an action, for its relief. He had even the aggravated mortification of being a passive spectator of its surrender, and of being insulted in his camp by the king, who repeatedly offered him battle. Noyon, hopeless of success, and in expectation of being carried by storm, capitulated on honourable conditions (47). Siege of
Noyon.

The embarrassments of the chief of the League were still further augmented at this period, by a new and unexpected event. His nephew, the young duke of Guise, having artfully deceived his guards, effected his escape with equal boldness and success, at noon day, from the castle of Tours, in which, since his father's assassination, he had been detained a prisoner. 19th August.

The embarrassments of the chief of the League were still further augmented at this period, by a new and unexpected event. His nephew, the young duke of Guise, having artfully deceived his guards, effected his escape with equal boldness and success, at noon day, from the castle of Tours, in which, since his father's assassination, he had been detained a prisoner. Escape of
the duke of
Guise from
Tours.
15th August.

(46) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 478, 479. Davila, p. 986. (47) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 460—464. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 246. Davila, p. 1019—1023. Sully, vol. i. p. 81—84.

C H A P. II. It seems difficult to judge, whether the concern, expressed by Henry, at the intelligence, was feigned, or real. If his first emotions of sorrow and apprehension were natural, at the liberation of a prince, whose name alone impressed terror, and round whom all the zealous or disaffected Catholics would probably assemble; those fears were considerably diminished, or dissipated, by his subsequent reflexions. He foresaw, that a dangerous, and troublesome rival to the duke of Mayenne, must necessarily arise in his nephew; and that his deliverance, far from eventually adding strength to the League, already composed of heterogeneous and discordant materials, would tend to accelerate its dissolution. The event fully justified his conjecture; though the duke of Mayenne, with decent dissimulation, dispatched one of his friends to express to the young prince, the satisfaction which he felt, on so happy and fortunate a termination of his captivity. He accompanied the message with a supply of money, and a request that they might speedily meet, in order to confer on their common interests (48).

Consequences of that event.

Operations and ravages in the provinces.

Brittany.

If the provinces in the vicinity of Paris were the principal theatre of the war, scarcely any part of the kingdom was totally free from its destructive ravages. The obscure depredations, and desultory incursions of the two parties, though they involved the inferior orders of the people, and peculiarly the peasants, in ruin; were yet, for the greater part, neither deserving of historical commemoration, nor sufficiently decisive, to operate materially on the final event of the contest. In Brittany, where the Spanish forces under the duke of Mercœur, were counterbalanced by three thousand English auxiliaries, whom Elizabeth had dispatched to reinforce the royal army; no impor-

(48) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 465—467. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 380—383. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 490, 491. Davila, p. 1029, 1030.

tant advantage was obtained on either side. But, the campaign was too fatally distinguished by the death of La Noue. That commander, whom Henry had recently sent to guide the inexperienced, and temper the ardour of the prince of Dombes; was wounded in the head, while reconnoitring the breach of the town of Lamballe. He expired a few days afterwards, at the age of sixty. In military capacity, mature experience, and talents for war, France produced no general of superior reputation, during the civil dissensions by which it was so long agitated. A greater degree of good fortune was alone wanting, to complete his fame. He was covered with wounds, received in a variety of combats; and he languished several years in a severe confinement, by order of Philip the Second, who was not induced to release him, without the utmost difficulty and repugnance. That monarch gave, himself, the most honourable and flattering testimony to the high merit of La Noue, by exacting from him, previous to his liberation, an oath never to bear arms against Spain. The dukes of Lorraine, and of Guise, did not hesitate, though his enemies, to become security for the performance of his engagement (49). But, his military endowments, however eminent, constituted his smallest claim to respect and admiration. The simplicity of his manners, the incorruptibility and integrity of his heart, his loyalty, and contempt, of private interest, when opposed to the public benefit; these qualities, little cultivated in a ferocious and bigotted age, equal him with the illustrious names of antiquity. Zealously attached to the Protestant faith during a long life, he was free from contraction, or illiberality; and he did not hesitate to avow to Henry himself, that his renunciation of the reformed religion was indispensable, if he ever hoped to establish his title to

C H A P.
II.
1591.

4th August.
Death of
La Noue.

His cha-
racter.

(49) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 468.

CHAP. the throne, and to reign in tranquillity over the
 II. French nation (50). The king paid the public tri-
 1591. bute of tears to his memory (51).

Progress of The ambition of the duke of Savoy rendered
 the duke of Provence a scene of more than ordinary confusion ;
 Savoy, in and it was long doubtful, whether the whole of that
 Provence. maritime province would not be subjected by his
 arms, or gained by his intrigues. His activity, valour,
 and munificence, acquired him numerous adherents :
 he was supported by Spanish troops, galleys, and mo-
 ney ; nor was he deficient in all the qualities calcula-
 ted to inspire affection, and to captivate the multitude.
 But, his forces were destitute of military discipline,
 and commanded by leaders unskilful, or incapable.
 The courage and ability of La Valette, and the stea-
 dy valour of Lesdiguières, who conducted the royal
 affairs and armies, rendered all his exertions finally
 ineffectual. The defection, and private ambition of
 a citizen of Marseilles, whom the duke, during a
 voyage which he made to Barcelona, had entrusted
 to distribute money to the inhabitants ; deprived him
 of that commercial and important place. Marseilles,
 governed by two aspiring and turbulent individuals,
 who assumed the name of Duumvirs, refused to ad-
 mit Charles Emanuel, and maintained its indepen-
 dence for several years. The Savoyard generals
 were completely routed by Lesdiguières ; and the
 soldiers who escaped, were either reduced to surren-
 der prisoners of war, or to take refuge among the
 snows and precipices of the Alps. Almost all the
 towns, which had voluntarily submitted on his first
 arrival, deserted him in the decline of his fortune, and
 returned to their allegiance. These adverse events
 were, notwithstanding, insufficient to induce the duke
 to abandon his design ; and he continued to make

18th Sep-
 tember.
 He is de-
 feated by
 Lesdigui-
 ères.

(50) Davila, p. 1009.
 vol. ix, p. 492, 473:

(51) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 398. Mezeray,

new, though ineffectual efforts, for the re-establishment of his affairs (52). C H A P.
II.

1591.

Henry
marches in-
to Lorraine.

20th Sep-
tember.

Offers battle
to the army
of the
League.

Preparations
for the siege
of Rouen.

Meanwhile, the king, after the capture of Noyon, directed his march towards the frontiers of Lorraine, with a view to meet and conduct the German troops, arrived to his assistance. He was accompanied by near a thousand cavalry, and he immediately reviewed the auxiliaries, who amounted to sixteen thousand horse and foot, in the plains of Vandy. The successful exertions of the viscount Turenne, in levying, and bringing to his aid, so important a succour, were repaid by Henry with the hand of Charlotte de la Mark, heiress of the house of Bouillon, and sovereign princess of the city of Sedan and its territory. Having refreshed his forces during a few days, he led them in person to Verdun, under the walls of which place, the dukes of Lorraine and Mayenne were encamped. They had been recently joined by the Italian army, sent from Gregory the Fourteenth, under the command of his nephew, the duke of Monte Marciano. But, the enfeebled state of the Papal infantry, deficient in every requisite, and broken by diseases, neither encouraged, nor justified the general of the League, in hazarding an engagement. Henry, finding it impossible to induce the confederates to quit the protection of the cannon of Verdun, decamped, and took the road towards Normandy; where, by his orders, marshal Biron was already occupied in making preparations for an enterprize of magnitude and difficulty. The siege of Rouen, capital of the province, and one of the most considerable cities in the kingdom, was resolved on, rather in compliance with the solicitation of the queen of England, who sent the earl of Essex, at the head of a body of forces, to co-operate with the royal army; than from any just

(52) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 240—423, and p. 473—477. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 282, 283. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 407—422. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 485—490. Davila, p. 1024—1026. Vic de Lesdiguieres, p. 113—125.

C H A P. conviction of the facility and practicability of the attempt. Some weeks elapsed, notwithstanding, before
II. Biron ventured formally to invest the place, or before
1591. he was joined by the king, at the head of his remaining troops (53).

**15th Octo-
ber.**
**Death of
Gregory the
Fourteenth.**

The death of Gregory the Fourteenth, which took place at this period, after a short pontificate of only ten months, imposed new obstacles to the operations of the Italian auxiliaries. Their commander did not hesitate to signify to the duke of Mayenne, his determination to regulate his motions by the orders of the cabinet of Madrid, and to receive no directions except from the duke of Parma (54). But, a far more serious calamity, and which seemed to threaten the subversion, or dissolution of the political fabric of the League itself, engrossed the attention of its chief. The "council of sixteen," emboldened by his absence from the capital, secretly stimulated by the agents, and corrupted by the bribes of Spain, no longer even affected to pay obedience to his orders. After having sent a deputation, composed of their own members, to wait on him, with various insolent demands; and having written to Philip the Second, to make an offer of the crown of France to that monarch; they determined to confirm their authority, and to extinguish all opposition to their future proceedings, by a stroke of exemplary severity. The greatest obstacle to their unlimited power in the metropolis, arose from the parliament; which assembly, though modelled according to the principles of the Guises, was yet by its formation, functions, and constitution, naturally inclined to support the crown. Brisson, who then occupied the office of first president, was a man of distinguished talents, eloquence, and erudition. Wearied with the scenes of violence

**Intrigues
and designs
of the
"council of
"sixteen."**

(53) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 332, and p. 451—456. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 478—483. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 496, 497.

(54) Davila, p. 1036.

and oppression, to which he was continually witness, C H A P. II. he was suspected of wishing to see monarchy restored, 1591. in the person of the rightful sovereign. Conscious that he was an object of detestation to the partizans of Spain; he is said to have predicted and dreaded his approaching destiny (55).

The acquittal of a person, named Brigard, whom the parliament declared innocent of any criminal correspondence with the royalists, afforded the "sixteen" a plausible pretence and occasion to gratify their vengeance. After many nocturnal meetings, in which the business was agitated, a determination was embraced, of seizing and putting to death the president, together with two other counsellors of the parliament, obnoxious to their resentment. Certain members of their own body were entrusted with the execution of so daring and flagitious a resolution. Having, conformably to it, made themselves masters of Briffon's person, in the midst of Paris, he was conducted to the little "Chatelet;" and after a short recrimination, rather than examination, that magistrate was, by the hands of the public executioner, hanged upon a beam, in an apartment of the prison. He suffered with composure and dignity. Larcher, and Tardif, two of his colleagues, seized and brought to the same place, were dispatched in a similar manner. The three bodies, despoiled of their official robes, in which they had suffered, and only covered with a shirt, were, on the following evening, transported to the "Greve;" a spot reserved for execution, where they were long exposed to the curiosity of the people. Far from exciting those emotions of indignation and abhorrence among the populace, which they were expected to produce; the spectacle appeared to awaken commiseration in the beholders; and by order of the

They resolve to put to death the obnoxious members of the parliament of Paris.

15th November. Deaths of Briffon, Larcher, and Tardif.

(55) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 504, 505, and p. 522, 523. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 438—441.

CHAP. II. "sixteen," they were, therefore, removed, and interred (56).

1591.

Duke of
Mayenne
arrives at
Paris.

No sooner was intelligence of this tragical and violent proceeding, conveyed by repeated couriers, to the duke of Mayenne, than he instantly quitted Soissons; and at the head of about three hundred cavalry, and fifteen hundred foot, he marched to the metropolis. Uncertain of his determination, and apprehensive of his resentment, the "council of sixteen," after much irresolution, sent a deputation to meet him without the city, authorized to palliate, if not exculpate their conduct: but, the duke declined to hear their justification. Entering Paris, he temporized and dissembled, during a few days; till, having lulled them into a false security, and ascertained the facility of punishing them, he resolved, notwithstanding the solicitations of the Spanish ambassador, to execute a signal act of vengeance. A sentence of death, drawn up, and signed by his own hand, was issued against nine of the most culpable. Previous to this deed, Buffy le Clerc, one of the principal accomplices, to whom the fortrefs of the Bastile had been entrusted; being summoned by the duke to surrender, agreed to evacuate the castle, on promise of personal safety. Only four of the late criminals could be found; whose obscure names history has preserved, and who expiated by a prompt and ignominious death, their recent atrocities. They were instantly hanged, in a room of the palace of the Louvre. Their accomplices, concealed by the Spanish and Neapolitan troops in garrison at Paris, or, apprized betimes of their danger, eluded the search made after them, and took refuge at Brussels (57).

He causes
four of the
Leaguers to
be executed.
4th Decem-
ber.

(56) Davila, p. 1040—1042. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 442—445. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 506—515.
(57) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 446—449. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 515—519. Davila, p. 1042—1047.

Satisfied with having restored his authority by so vigorous an exertion, and desirous of not driving to extremity minds already exasperated; the duke of Mayenne soon afterwards caused the parliament to publish letters of abolition and amnesty, for all the others concerned in the recent transactions. But, he not only suppressed the "council of sixteen:" every species of assembly for purposes of cabal or discussion, was prohibited on pain of death; and the houses in which any such meetings should be held, were ordered to be razed to the ground. A new oath, of the most binding nature, confirming and cementing the union, was administered to governors of places, and officers of the holy League. They engaged, specially, to renounce all private and personal intelligence with the Spaniards; and never to permit of the election of any king, without the duke's consent and participation. The parliament underwent a change. Four presidents were created, to supply the vacant seats; and every step was taken which might, at once, restore tranquillity in the metropolis, and fully obliterate the memory of the troubles by which it had been agitated (58). Those who were accustomed to reflect on human events, as objects of philosophical and moral attention, could not help imagining, that they witnessed a just retribution, when they beheld the council, whose factious and turbulent spirit had eminently contributed to elevate the duke of Guise, exterminated by his brother. Men, who only saw in these transactions, the political consequences with which they were pregnant; lamented, or predicted the injurious, and inevitable tendency of a measure, which deprived the duke of May-

CHAP.
II.
1591.
Suppression
of the
"council of
"sixteen."

Subsequent
acts of May-
enne.

Reflections
on these
events.

(58) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 498—505. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 448. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 519—522.

CHAP. II.
1591. enne himself of one of the most powerful engines of his government. The court of Spain, however penetrated with concern at the extinction of one of its principal supports, was silent; and the duke of Parma, whether from conviction, or from policy, applauded the vigour, while he extolled the moderation, of the head of the League (59).

(59) Davila, p. 1047.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Commencement of the siege of Rouen.—Measures of Villars, for its defence.—Preparations for the entrance of the duke of Parma into France.—King is wounded in a skirmish.—Advance of the confederate army to Rouen.—Successful sally of Villars.—Retreat of the confederates.—Their second march to Rouen.—Henry raises the siege.—Caudebec, taken by the allies.—Duke of Parma, wounded.—The king attacks the army of Spain and the League—Their distress.—The allies pass the Seine.—Able conduct of the duke of Parma—Negociation between Henry and the duke of Mayenne.—Embassy sent to pope Clement the Eighth.—Siege of Epernay.—Death of marshal Biron.—State of Paris.—Hostilities in the provinces.—Death of the duke of Parma.—Convocation of the States General.—Conferences of Surenne.—Siege of Noyon.—Henry determines to abjure the reformed religion.—Propositions of the Spanish ambassadors, for the election of a king.—Intrigues and delays in the assembly of the States.—Nomination of the duke of Guise.—His rejection.—Preparations for Henry's abjuration.—Ceremony of it, at St. Denis.—Truce, proclaimed.—Dismission of the States General.

WHILE the duke of Mayenne, by these acts of wholesome energy and severity, sustained his declining authority, and restored a temporary calm to the capital; Henry had already engaged in the siege of Rouen: an undertaking, not only arduous and difficult in itself; but, which, from the circumstances that followed it, had nearly involved him in complete

C H A P.
III.1591.
Causes,
which led
to the siege
of Rouen.

C H A P. complete destruction. Elizabeth, queen of England, whose magnanimity never suffered her, at any period of her reign, to lose sight of her interest; and whose policy was always directed to the aggrandizement of her crown, or the advantage of her people, had eminently contributed to the adoption of that hazardous measure. In recompence for the liberal supplies of men and money with which she had assisted the royal cause, she demanded the cession of a port upon the British channel. Her ministers named Dieppe, or Calais, and repeated the requisition with unceasing importunity. Henry opposed various difficulties and delays to a compliance with so harsh a request; and he justly dreaded the odium, as well as the hazard, annexed to the introduction of the English, who had been expelled with such difficulty from France, under Charles the Seventh. He was unwilling to cede Dieppe, which had manifested its unshaken loyalty and adherence, in the critical extremity of his fortune, at his accession; and under the walls of which he had repulsed the army of the League. His reluctance to restore Calais, was still greater; nor could he avoid recollecting, that the English, after more than two centuries, had only been recently deprived of that place, by the fortunate audacity, and superior skill of Francis, duke of Guise. Anxious, at the same time, to satisfy an ally, from whom he had received so many essential services, and whose support was so requisite, he engaged to besiege Rouen; in which place, when captured, he promised to grant Elizabeth's subjects, various privileges and exemptions, highly beneficial to their commerce (1).

State and
 condition of
 that city.

Rouen, capital of Upper Normandy, was in the sixteenth, as it still continues to be, in the eighteenth century, one of the most considerable cities of the kingdom. Its position on the Seine, and its vicinity

(1) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 452. Davila, p. 1052.

to Paris, rendered it still more important. At the commencement of the civil wars under Charles the Ninth, it had been captured by the royal forces, who entered it by storm: but, as if a sort of fatality attended the enterprize, Anthony, king of Navarre, and father of Henry, had perished in the trenches, by a wound in the shoulder. Villars, who commanded in the place, joined to a thirst for glory, and an inflexible adherence to his party, all the qualifications of a general and a soldier. Aware of Henry's design, or suspecting his intention, he had made with equal activity and prudence, every preparation to sustain a siege. He expelled all such as were incapable of assisting in its defence; and secured the persons of the wavering, or the disaffected. The garrison was augmented; magazines were provided; the fortifications, repaired; and no exertion omitted, to render abortive the attempt of the king. Correspondent effects resulted from these judicious and salutary precautions. Although after the beginning of the siege, the emulation, excited among the various nations composing Henry's army, and the presence of that prince, who never declined to partake of the common danger, produced unusual efforts of valour; yet, little progress was effected by the assailants. Villars continually made sallies, planned with admirable skill, and conducted with equal success. The regular troops shut up in the place, were aided on all occasions by the citizens; who, despising the passive constancy exhibited by the Parisians under the pressure of famine, aspired to the praise of active courage. All the attempts to gain admittance by corruption, or to effect its capture by surprise, were rendered ineffectual; and the final event might still be considered as uncertain and problematical (2).

C H A P.
III.
1591.

December,
Commence-
ment of the
siege.

(2) D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 257—260. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 451—459, and p. 464, 465. Sully, vol. i. p. 85—88. Davila, p. 1052—1066.

C H A P.

III.

1591.

Meyenne
demands aid
of the duke
of Parma.

Prelimina-
ries de-
manded,
before the
entrance of
the Spanish
troops.

The duke of Mayenne, on the other hand, beheld with the liveliest apprehension, and anticipated with anxiety, the consequences of the siege. If Rouen should fall into the king's possession, he justly foresaw, that its fate would draw after it the metropolis, and be infallibly followed by the extinction or suppression of the League. He was unable to levy such a body of forces, as might either enable him to raise the siege, or to offer battle to the enemy. All his hopes were, therefore, centered in the interposition of Spain; and he earnestly implored the duke of Parma, whose presence in the preceding year had been so useful to the Parisians, to march a second time to his support. The young duke of Guise, whom his uncle had received with external demonstrations of affection and regard, advanced to Landrecy in Flanders, to accelerate the arrival of the Spanish army; and the duke of Parma, who had received peremptory directions to comply with Mayenne's solicitations, exhibited the utmost promptitude in his preparations to enter France. Previous to so important a measure, he made two demands in the name of the Catholic king his master, which he declared to be of a nature not to admit of a refusal. The first, was the cession of La Fere, a frontier city of Picardy, as a place of security for his artillery. By the second, he exacted a promise from the duke of Mayenne, to assemble the States General, and to recognize the infanta Clara Isabella for queen of France. Philip, in return, offered to give his daughter's hand in marriage to the prince, whom the representatives of the nation should elect for their sovereign. He further engaged, as soon as the infanta's title was publicly owned, to send such powerful forces into the kingdom, as might speedily and effectually crush the king of Navarre. Every concession, or stipulation, which could reconcile the chief of the League to these propositions, and which could gratify his vanity, or advance

vance his interests, were liberally granted by the ministers of the Spanish monarch (3). C H A P.
III.

However great were the embarrassments, and however pressing the necessity of the duke of Mayenne, he hesitated on complying with such severe conditions. Reluctant to yield to the Catholic king, a place of such strength as La Fere, which gave an easy entrance into Picardy; he was, nevertheless, reduced to comply, not only by the exigency of his affairs; but, perhaps, still more, from the apprehension, that his refusal would not preserve the city. Colas, the governor, had already treated with the duke of Parma, for its surrender (4). To the second proposition, which was negotiated between Jeannin, as agent for Mayenne, and Ibarra, the minister of Philip; though it included the transfer of the crown and monarchy of France to the house of Austria; he manifested less repugnance. The convocation of the States was distant, and uncertain: it might be retarded by the events of war, averted by address, or finally rendered subservient, under favourable circumstances, to his own elevation. The danger of Rouen was present and imminent. He, therefore, after some delay, complied with the requisition, and promised to assemble the States, as soon as the necessary steps could with safety be taken for that purpose (5). These important preliminaries being adjusted, the confederate army entered Picardy, and directed their march towards Rouen. 1591.
Repugnance
of the duke
of Mayenne.

No sooner had Henry received intelligence, that the dukes of Parma and Mayenne prepared to attack him, than he took the most effectual measures for retarding, and defeating their intention. Instructed by the experience of the preceding year, he deter- 1592.
January.
Henry ad-
vances to
meet the
allies.

(3) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 459—463. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 506, 507. Davila, p. 1067—1069. (4) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 460. (5) Ibid. p. 461—463. Davila, p. 1066, 1069. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 506, 507.

C H A P. III. }
 1592. } mined not to allow the object of his present exertions to escape, with the same facility as Paris had done, at the approach of the Spanish army. Leaving, therefore, marshal Biron, with the infantry, to continue the siege, he quitted the camp, at the head of above three thousand French and German cavalry, with which he advanced to the gates of Abbeville.

Skirmish at
 Aumale.

Falling, unexpectedly, on the quarters of the duke of Guise, Henry cut to pieces a considerable number of his soldiers; but, all his efforts to induce the enemy's horse to leave the protection of the foot, and to engage him in the field, were ineffectual. The Spanish general, intent only on one great object; unacquainted with the country through which lay his march; and conscious that he had to contend with an adversary equally intrepid and indefatigable; was not shaken in his determination. Present in the center of his army, although the feeble state of his health incapacitated him for much active exertion; he superintended every part of it, and studiously repressed the indiscreet valour of his troops. The temerity of the king had, on the contrary, nearly proved fatal to himself, and at once decided the contest. Desirous to inspect personally the appearance of the confederate forces, he imprudently engaged a superior body of their cavalry, near the town of Aumale, and was reduced to retreat with precipitation. As his

5th February.

voice, armour, and figure rendered him conspicuous, the enemy pursued him with redoubled ardour, and had nearly made themselves masters of his person. Almost all his followers, composed of the bravest and most distinguished officers or nobility, were unhorsed and wounded. Henry himself was struck by a ball, which entered his back; but, having fortunately passed through the saddle, it only inflicted a slight wound. The duke of Mayenne warmly pressed his colleague to give orders for the infantry to advance without a moment's delay; assuring him, that
 the

The king is
 wounded.

the king could not escape falling into his hands. But, ^{C H A P. III.} the duke of Parma, accustomed to act on principles, ^{1592.} not on probabilities; and apprehensive that the flight of the enemy was only intended to draw him into an ambuscade, refused. His caution, however just and commendable, extricated the king; and the approach of night enabled him to rejoin his troops (6).

Far from being elated by such an advantage, or ^{Reasons for the conduct of the duke of Parma.} pressing his march, while Henry's wound incapacitated him for active service; the Spanish commander continued to advance by slow and regular stages. He beautifully justified his conduct, in not causing his troops to pursue their late success, by observing that "he had believed himself contending with a general, and not against a carabineer." Unwilling to plunge into a country already consumed, and attentive to supply his soldiers with provisions; he regulated all his motions by the maxims of consummate military skill, and trusted no event to fortune. Meanwhile, the king, who had retired to Dieppe, recovering from the effect of his accident, exerted every effort to impede the confederate army in its progress, by occupying the strongest positions, and attacking their quarters. Givry, one of his bravest captains, having ^{Givry defends Neufchâtel.} thrown himself into the little town of Neufchâtel; though the place was almost defenceless, and he himself severely indisposed by a wound in the foot; yet, by his desperate resistance, interposed a delay of some days, and gave the royal party a short respite, in which to embrace measures of safety. The allies having at length surmounted every obstacle, and being arrived within a few leagues of the besieged city, the relief of which was the principal object of the ^{Determination of the confederates, to attack the royal army.} duke of Parma's entrance into France; it was determined in a council of war, to attack the head quarters

(6) Davila, p. 1073—1077. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 466, 467. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 262, 263. Sully, vol. i. p. 89—93. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 18, 19.

C H A P. of marshal Biron, without delay. They were separated by a considerable distance, from those of the king; who having taken his station in the rear of the confederates, in order to intercept their convoys, could not, without time and difficulty, come to the relief of his infantry before Rouen. Every disposition was accordingly made, for carrying the design into immediate and vigorous execution; when a new and unexpected event arrested the motions of the combined generals, and materially affected the progress of the campaign (7).

Successful
III.
1592.
Succesful
falley, made
by Villars.
26th Febru-
ary.

Villars, whose genius, active and enterprizing, never intermitted its vigilance; and who apprehended, that if the Spanish commander effected the deliverance of Rouen, a garrison, composed of foreign troops, might be left in the place; had already, in a great measure, anticipated the plan, concerted by the dukes of Parma and Mayenne. Profiting of the division of the royal forces, and the absence of the king, he sallied out, at the head of near two thousand horse and foot; having been previously informed by a deserter, at what part of the camp to direct his attack. No effectual opposition was made; and the trenches were carried with irresistible impetuosity. Consternation and terror prevailed universally: the works were demolished; the mines blown up; the cannon spiked, or carried off; and all the advances made by the besiegers, completely ruined. Biron arriving with the French and German infantry, at length repulsed the enemy, and compelled them to retire into the city: but, the loss sustained, was hardly less than five hundred killed, and nearly double the number wounded (8). Intelligence of this important transaction was immediately transmitted to the confede-

(7) Davila, p. 1080—1082. Sully, vol. i. p. 93. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 20, 21. (8) Sully, vol. i. p. 93. Davila, p. 1082—1084. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 471, 472. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 21—25.

rates, by Villars; who added, that he considered himself as perfectly secure from any new molestation on the part of the besiegers, at least, for some days.

C H A P.
III.
1592.

Parma urges
to fall on
Biron.

The information excited very different sentiments in the two commanders, and gave rise to opposite opinions on their future plan of operation. Conscious that an army, which had just received so severe a check, was already more than half defeated; and that it was only necessary to follow up the blow, without giving them time to recover; the duke of Parma, contrary to the temperate caution of his usual counsels, advised instantly to attack Biron's quarters, at Darnetal. He shewed the facility, and almost certainty of success, against an enemy dispirited, reduced in numbers, and unprotected by cavalry. But, the chief of the League, satisfied with seeing Rouen relieved, and apprehensive that a victory would transform the Spaniards from allies, into masters; peremptorily refused to co-operate, or, to advance with the troops under his command. The disunion of the generals, extricated the royal forces from the dangerous situation in which they stood; and, as the object of the expedition seemed to be in some measure accomplished, the allies, instead of advancing, returned into Picardy without delay. Having repassed the river Somme, they sat down before Rue, a small fortress of the county of Ponthieu, situated near the coast (9).

Mayenne
refuses.

Retreat of
the allies.

Henry, meanwhile, disconcerted, but not dejected, by the unfortunate events which had taken place before Rouen, repaired to the camp; and endeavoured by augmented exertion, to retrieve his affairs. Unable to ascertain the motives that had induced the combined generals to retreat, at a moment when they might have prosecuted their advantages with success;

March.
Siege of
Rouen, re-
newed.

(9) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 473, 474. Davila, p. 1085, 1086. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 25—27.

C H A P. III.
 1592.
 Siege of Caudebec.

without manifest hazard. The confederates having, therefore, thrown supplies into Rouen, drew off towards Caudebec; a small town situated on the Seine, several leagues lower down, and in which magazines of provisions had been laid up by the king. In compliance with the entreaties of his colleague, the Spanish general laid siege to the place, which capitulated in a few days: while he was occupied in examining the works, and erecting batteries, he received a wound from a musket ball, under the elbow, which penetrating between the bones of the arm, stuck in the flesh, near the wrist. He was carried to his tent; but, the severity of the surgical operations necessary for extracting the ball, added to his preceding weakness, produced a fever, and incapacitated him for acting with energy, or effect. During this interval, the duke of Mayenne exercised the supreme military authority (12).

Duke of Parma is wounded.

May.

Henry prepares to attack the allies.

The tide of fortune, which had so long persecuted the king, and even reduced him more than once to the verge of ruin, returned at length in a contrary direction. While the allies, engaged in besieging Caudebec, or in securing their acquisition, neglected to provide for their retreat; Henry, reinforced from every quarter, prepared to attack them. The indisposition of the duke of Parma, which menaced his life; and the imprudence, or obstinacy of the French commander, had involved the army in almost insurmountable difficulties. They had entangled themselves in a peninsula, formed by the river Seine, which near its mouth becomes an estuary, and by the British channel; open only on one side, where it communicated with Upper Normandy. The royal forces, advancing, enclosed them, straitened their quarters, intercepted their convoys, and speedily re-

(12) Sully, vol. i. p. 94. Davila, p. 1094—1097. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 489—491.

duced

duced them to the greatest distress. Henry, conscious that they could neither fight, nor escape, except under multiplied embarrassments, adopted on this occasion, a mode of conduct totally dissimilar from his character. Expecting from time and the progress of famine, the reward of his labours, he no longer desired to provoke the enemy to an action; but, occupying all the passes, falling on their outposts, and harassing them by perpetual skirmishes, he compelled them to recede on every side (13).

C H A P.
III.
1592.

His operations.

Already a variety of calamities began to be experienced in the camp of the allies. Provisions became scarce: the cavalry was in want of provender: even water was an object of purchase; that of the Seine, by its vicinity to the sea, being brackish and unwholesome. Diseases prevailed in the army; and money was wanting to pay the troops. The duke of Mayenne, severely indisposed, was no longer able to perform the functions of a commander. Yet, under this state of depression, such was the deference, or the affection bore towards the duke of Parma, and so implicit was the confidence reposed in his capacity, that hardly a murmur of discontent was heard. The confederates, receding before the royal forces, and unable to force a passage through them, retired towards the Seine, and took post again near the town of Caudebec.

Famine in the allied camp.

18th May.

From a situation so hopeless and almost desperate, they were extricated by the sublime talents of the Spanish general. Weakened by disease, and enfeebled by the effect of his wound; his mind, nevertheless, conceived and matured a plan, at once daring and unprecedented. After having long revolved it in his thoughts, he determined to pass his whole army over the Seine, as the only remaining mode of safety. The attempt to cross a river of prodigious breadth,

Perilous situation of Mayenne and Parma.

(13) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 482, 483. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 30, 31.

agitated,

C H A P. agitated, and frequently tempestuous; covered by
III. the vessels of the Dutch and other auxiliaries; and to
 1592- conduct in safety to the opposite bank, a body of
 forces, encumbered with baggage and artillery, in
 presence of an enemy vigilant to improve every ad-
 vantage, and eager to assail them in their retreat;
 seemed to partake rather of temerity, than of wis-
 dom. In order to effect it, the duke began by con-
 structing two forts, or redoubts, mounted with can-
 non, one on each side of the Seine, and in which he
 stationed a select number of Walloons. Having
 caused as many boats, as could with expedition be
 collected, to approach the shore; and Villars aiding
 him with rafts and beams, which were floated down
 the stream from Rouen, during the night; a bridge
 was instantly constructed. Without a moment's de-
 lay, the French infantry and cavalry began to pass
 over; followed by the baggage, and cannon. The
 Spanish soldiers closed the line of march, while the
 Italians, to the number of about a thousand foot, and
 four hundred horse, completely covered and concealed
 the operation. Such was the admirable order and
 silence, exhibited during the passage, that soon after
 break of day, nearly the whole army had reached the
 opposite shore (14).

They pass
the Seine.

22d May.

Order, ob-
served in the
execution
of it.

Its success.

The first intelligence of so extraordinary an event
 was brought to Henry, by the baron of Biron; who
 having been sent out to reconnoitre the camp, re-
 turned, and related, that it was already evacuated by
 the enemy, who were still occupied in crossing the
 river. It excited not less amazement, than despair,
 in the king, who beheld the prey rescued from his
 hands, at the precise time when he regarded it as cap-
 tured. All his efforts to impede the completion of
 the enemy's passage, were ineffectual. The redoubts,

(14) Davila, p. 1105—1107. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 265, 266. Sully,
 vol. i. p. 94, 95.

constructed

constructed on the eastern bank, rendered it impracticable for the infantry to approach: while Rainuce, prince of Parma, emulating the glory of his father, protected the retreat; caused the cannon to be drawn out, and embarked; and finally passed over himself, without sustaining any loss. A battery, hastily constructed by Henry's order; added to the exertions of the royal vessels and galleys, which came to his assistance; endangered, and delayed, but, could not finally prevent the accomplishment of the duke of Parma's project. Rainuce, after acquiring the highest honour by his intrepidity and coolness, secured the cannon, set fire to the bridge, and immediately rejoined the confederate army; which as it landed, began to march off towards Rouen. Such was the precipitation with which the Spanish commander urged his retreat; and so much did he dread being overtaken, or compelled to hazard an action; that, in four days from his passing the Seine, he reached the bridge of St. Cloud, within two leagues of Paris. Having received the compliments and congratulations of the Parisians, he continued his progress to Chateau Thierry on the Marne, where he thought proper to give some respite to his troops, and to himself. Only about five hundred infantry, whom fatigue and lassitude had incapacitated for keeping pace with the body of the army, being surrounded by Souvré, whom Henry had sent at the head of two thousand horse, to pursue the Spanish general, were reduced to surrender prisoners of war. The duke of Mayenne, not less severely indisposed than his colleague, and unable to accompany him, was left behind at Rouen, where his recovery was long regarded as doubtful, and almost hopeless (15).

C H A P.
III.
1592.

Ineffectual
efforts of the
king, to im-
pede them.

March of
Parma.

(15) Davila, p. 1107—1109. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 485—488. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 512—514. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 32, 33.

C H A P. Frustrated in his expectations of terminating the
 III. war, and obliged to dismiss the nobility after so severe
 1592. a campaign; the king saw himself, by this sudden
 Henry reverse, at once precipitated from all his hopes. The
 marches in- superior talents of his enemy, and the confidence
 to Picardy. which he had too implicitly placed in the impediments
 opposed to the escape of the confederate army, com-
 pelled him again to renew the contest for his crown.
 He yielded, therefore, to necessity; disbanded a con-
 siderable part of his forces; and retaining only about
 five thousand foot, and three hundred horse, he bent
 his course towards Picardy, in order to prevent the
 duke of Parma from attacking and capturing any
 place of consequence, on his return to the Ne-
 therlands.

Disunion
 between
 Parma, and
 Mayenne.

That illustrious commander, enfeebled by his
 wound, and sinking under bodily infirmities, was
 rapidly approaching the final limit of his life and ex-
 ploits. The seeds of disunion, sown during the pro-
 gress of the late campaign, between him and the chief
 of the League, had produced nearly an open rup-
 ture; and the preference shewn by the Spanish gene-
 ral, on every occasion, to the young duke of Guise,
 was not calculated to allay the quarrel. The duke of
 Mayenne remained almost forgotten, at Rouen; and
 as his disease was believed to be incurable, the minis-
 ters of the court of Madrid no longer observed to-
 wards him even the forms of deference and respect.
 They refused him supplies of money; augmented the
 foreign garrison in the metropolis; and affected to
 regard his authority as extinct. Irritated at such pro-
 ceedings, he opened a negotiation with the king, not-
 withstanding the concessions and advances made him
 by Philip's ambassadors, on the recovery of his health.
 But, the unreasonable demands of the duke for him-
 self, which did not fall short of erecting an hereditary
 principality, independent of the crown, within the
 monarchy;

Ineffectual
 negotiation
 between
 Henry and
 Mayenne.

monarchy; finally suspended the treaty (16). The articles were speedily divulged; and as the renunciation of the Protestant religion by Henry, and his reconciliation to the Romish church within a stipulated period, formed the basis and principle of it, the Hugonots were universally alarmed. On the other hand, the party, formed by the cardinal of Bourbon, was not extinct; and the zealous Catholics, weary with expecting the accomplishment of the king's promises, or despairing of his conversion, manifested signs of impatience and alienation. His situation became daily more critical, and demanded resolutions of vigour. It is probable, that a prince endowed with so much penetration, had long foreseen the necessity of ultimately adopting the national religion; and that he only desired to delay the act, till it could be done without injuring his dignity, or degrading his character in the public estimation.

C. H. A. P.
III.
1592.

Critical
situation of
the king.

Aldobrandini, a Florentine, then occupied the chair of St. Peter. Elevated to that eminence by the Spanish faction, which was irresistible in the conclave, he embraced, like his predecessors, the interests of the League, and even promised some pecuniary assistance to its chief. But, of a temper more moderate, and of a mind more enlarged and pacific, than Gregory the Fourteenth, he disdained servilely to become the instrument of Philip the Second's vengeance, or ambition. Importuned by the Catholics, and impelled by the hope of finding in the new pontiff, Clement the Eighth, a treatment more generous and paternal, than he had experienced since the decease of Sixtus the Fifth; Henry resolved to open an indirect intercourse with the holy see. The cardinal of Gondy, bishop of Paris, and the marquis of Pisani, who had been ambassador at Rome from Henry the Third, were named to wait on Clement, in the names, and

Election of
Clement the
Eighth.

Henry
names two
commis-
sioners, to
wait on the
pope.

(16) Davila, p. 1112—1117. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 516—518.

CHAP. on the part of the Catholic nobility, attached to the crown. Their secret instructions were calculated to prepare the way for the reconciliation of the king. Henry even opposed the attempt made nearly at the same time, by the archbishop of Bourges, to name a patriarch for the government of the Gallican church; and exhibited by his conduct, a determination not to separate the kingdom from its obedience to the apostolic see (17). Measures so politic and conciliating, which promised a speedy termination of the breach with the court of Rome, tended to restrain the machinations, and to allay the discontent of the zealous adherents of the antient religion. The embassy was, notwithstanding, far from producing immediately the beneficial effects naturally to have been expected. Clement, irritated against Henry, and uncertain of the event of the war; interdicted the cardinal, or Pisani, from presuming to enter on the ecclesiastical territories; and expressed his indignation at any attempt to embrace the cause of an apostate heretic. It required time and address, to mollify the pontiff, and to dispose him towards forgiveness and reconciliation (18).

III.
1592.

They are prohibited from entering Rome.

July. The events of the war, which had been, in some measure, suspended by these negotiations, were again renewed; but, the theatre of hostilities was transferred from Normandy, to Champagne; from the banks of the Seine, to those of the Marne. On his return into Flanders, the duke of Parma had left a body of auxiliary troops, to act under the orders of the duke of Mayenne; whom the Spanish court was again desirous to attach. In conjunction with the forces of the League, they attacked, and carried the town of Epernay. Henry, urged to retake a place, which, from its position on the Marne, greatly in-

Hostilities in Champagne.

(17) Davila, p. 1123, 1124. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 494—499. (18) Ibid. p. 505—511. Davila, p. 1132—1137.

commended his adherents, sent marshal Biron without delay, to form the siege; while he himself, at the head of the cavalry, overran the country, to the gates of Châlons. Biron lost his life before Epernay, by a cannon ball, at an advanced age. His abilities, which were not confined to the camp; his inflexible and loyal adherence to Henry; and the versatile activity of his talents, which embraced the operations of the cabinet, as well as of the field; had raised him to an extraordinary and envied height of power. Indifferent in concerns of religion, and even suspected of leaning towards the doctrines of the Reformation; he manifested little impatience, or anxiety, at the delay of the king's conversion. Accused not only by his enemies, but, equally by his friends, of wishing to prolong a war, in which he occupied so distinguished a place; his ambition was not exempt from censure. His own son is said to have reproached him with so culpable a sacrifice of public duty, to private interest, and personal aggrandizement. The king wept for his loss; and notwithstanding his defects, he must be owned to have rendered eminent services to that monarch, and to the crown of France (19).

Epernay, after a short, but, vigorous resistance, was reduced to capitulate; nor were the efforts of the garrison, composed in part of Spaniards, aided by every exertion of the duke of Guise to throw succours into the place, able long to protract its surrender. In order to bridle the Parisians, and to deprive the capital of the supplies of provisions constantly drawn from the province of Champagne; the king caused a fort to be constructed at Gournay, on the Marne, only four leagues distant from Paris. It was raised with such dispatch, and defended with such

C H A P.

III.

1592.

26th July.

Death of
marshal
Biron.His charac-
ter.

8th August.

Capture of
Epernay.

(19) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 490, 491. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 512, 520. Sully, vol. i. p. 86. 93. Davila, p. 1127, 1128. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 41. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 267.

courage,

C H A P. courage, that the duke of Mayenne, after vainly attacking it, was necessitated to decamp. He had been
 III. previously repulsed from before Quillebœuf, a little
 1592. town near the mouth of the Seine, which he besieged
 in conjunction with Villars. The forces of the
 Decline of League, when no longer sustained by the ability or
 the affairs of interference of the duke of Parma, were unequal to
 Mayenne. contending with the king. Philip the Second alone
 supported, and prolonged the existence of the union,
 which began to relax in its violence. The people
 were exhausted; and loudly demanded a termination
 of their calamities. Henry's character, as it became
 more known to his subjects, excited general affec-
 tion; and only his reconciliation with the see of
 Rome was wanting, to turn in his favour, the tide of
 public opinion. Even in Paris, which had been so
 devoted to the Guises, and where rebellion retired as
 to a center; a slow, and silent fermentation, was al-
 ready begun. That metropolis, deprived of the
 lustre of a court, unacquainted with its sovereign,
 tyrannized by faction, unpeopled by civil war, and
 destitute of activity, industry, or commerce; pre-
 sented only the emaciated figure of its preceding
 greatness, opulence, and prosperity. Garrisoned by
 Spaniards and Neapolitans, it seemed to have anti-
 cipated its reduction to the Spanish yoke. Surrounded
 on all sides by the royal forces, though not formally
 invested, the inhabitants suffered many of the incon-
 veniencies and privations, annexed to a siege. But,
 the destruction of the "council of sixteen," and the
 extinction of that venal and furious faction, had
 emancipated the loyal, and moderate part of the citi-
 zens. Symptoms of returning allegiance manifested
 themselves; and it required the personal interposition
 of the duke of Mayenne, to prevent a deputation
 being sent to the king, to demand of him the free-
 dom of communication between Paris and the other
 cities of the kingdom. The municipal offices and
 authority,

Deplorable
 state of
 Paris.

Indications
 of returning
 loyalty, in
 the people.

26th Octo-
 ber.

authority, of which the "sixteen" had been de-
 prived, and rendered incapable; were exercised by
 men, the majority of whom secretly wished for the
 restoration of tranquillity, the expulsion of the Spa-
 niards, and the downfall of the League. Only the
 convocation of the States General, which was con-
 sidered as imminent, and from which a remedy to
 the national misfortunes was expected, repressed the
 spirit of reviving loyalty, and suspended the general
 disposition towards peace (20).

CHAP.
 III.
 1592.

The calamities of war were not less sensibly felt,
 at a distance from the capital; and scarcely any part
 of the kingdom was exempt from its ravages. In
 Brittany, the princes of Conti, and of Dombes, who
 commanded the royal forces, were attacked and de-
 feated near Craön, by the duke of Mercœur, aided
 by the Spaniards. But, this misfortune was amply
 compensated, by the advantages which Henry's gen-
 erals obtained in other quarters. The marshal duke
 of Bouillon captured various places in Lorraine, and
 repressed the troops of the League. In Languedoc,
 the young duke of Joyeuse, brother to the celebrated
 favourite of Henry the Third, who was killed at the
 battle of Coutras; perished by a death not less tra-
 gical and premature. Having laid siege to Villemur,
 a town in the vicinity of Toulouse, at the head of a
 considerable army of the Leaguers; he was com-
 pletely routed, compelled to fly, and drowned in the
 river Tarn. Provence and Dauphiné were eminently
 the theatre of hostilities, rarely intermitted, and
 marked by various reverses of fortune. La Valette,
 governor of Provence, whose activity and talents had
 hitherto rendered all the exertions of the duke of
 Savoy ineffectual, having been killed by a ball, at
 the siege of a little fortress, near the shore of the Me-
 diterranean; his death was productive of a temporary

Operations
 of war, in
 the pro-
 vinces.

25th May.

Defeat, and
 death of the
 duke of
 Joyeuse.

19th Octo-
 ber.

Military
 operations
 in Provence.

(20) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 73—85. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 512.

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Decline of
 the affairs of
 Mayenne.

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 state of
 Paris.

Indications
 of returning
 loyalty, in
 the people.

26th Octo-
 ber.

authority, of which the "sixteen" had been deprived, and rendered incapable; were exercised by men, the majority of whom secretly wished for the restoration of tranquillity, the expulsion of the Spaniards, and the downfall of the League. Only the convocation of the States General, which was considered as imminent, and from which a remedy to the national misfortunes was expected, repressed the spirit of reviving loyalty, and suspended the general disposition towards peace (20).

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C H A P.
III.
1592.

Operations
of war, in
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vinces.
25th May.

Defeat, and
death of the
duke of
Joyeuse.
19th Octo-
ber.

Military
operations
in Provence.

(20) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 73—85. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 512.

C H A P.
III.
1592.

7th August. confusion in the affairs of the province (21). Charles Emanuel vainly endeavoured, notwithstanding, to profit of the circumstance; and his partizans having been assassinated, or expelled from the city of Arles, he evacuated Aix, and withdrew to Nice.

November. The absence of the duke of Epernon, brother and successor of La Valette, emboldened him to undertake the siege of Antibes, which surrendered, after a long and generous resistance; but, on the arrival of the new governor, it was again recovered (22).

Lefdiguieres carries the war into Savoy. Lefdiguieres, who commanded in Dauphiné, and whose military exploits conducted him under Louis the Thirteenth, to the dignity of constable of France; not content with repelling the inroads of the duke of Savoy, projected to transfer the war into the heart of his own dominions. Zealously attached to the reformed religion, he was not less devoted to the crown; and his troops, long accustomed to victory under his auspices, thought no attempt too arduous for their courage. Assembling them, he penetrated through the defiles of the Alps; made himself master of Perouse, and advanced to Susa, at the distance of only a few leagues from Turin. All the efforts of Charles Emanuel in person, at the head of his bravest forces, could only impede; but, did not finally prevent, the progress of Lefdiguieres. In defiance of every obstacle, he constructed, and maintained a fortress at Briqueras, only sixteen miles from the capital of Piemont; repulsed an attempt, made by the enemy, to scale the works; and after a campaign, equally glorious to himself, and ruinous to the duke of Savoy, he returned into Dauphiné (23). The French name and arms, which, during a period of three and thirty years, since the peace of Cateau in 1559, had not been known beyond the Alps; re-appeared again

His exploits, and success.

(21) Vie de Lefdiguieres, p. 125—127. Vie d'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 1—8.

(22) Vie d'Epernon, p. 8—35. (23) Vie de Lefdiguieres, p. 129—138.

in Italy, with augmented lustre, under the conduct of a Hugonot (24). C H A P.
III.

The assembly of the States General, long delayed by the duke of Mayenne, under a variety of pretences, prepared at length to meet. It is difficult to ascertain with certainty, whether their convocation on his part, was reluctant, or voluntary. Under the name of lieutenant-general of the crown, he already exercised all the great functions of the monarchical power; and therefore might naturally deprecate any experiment, by which his authority could be shaken, or subverted. But, it is not improbable, that he flattered himself with directing and conducting the machine to which he was about to give birth, and that he nourished expectations of ascending the throne. The time during which he had already occupied his high station, had enabled him to secure numerous adherents, disposed to conduce to his further aggrandizement. Paris, the place of holding the assembly, was under his influence; and if the election of a king should fall upon a native of France, he beheld no competitor who could justly dispute with him that dignity. The impediments to a foreign prince, of whatever nation, were many, great, and perhaps insurmountable. On the other hand, the Spanish ministers anxiously anticipated, and ardently pressed for the convocation of the States. They regarded it as the term of their labours, and the consummation of their political views. Disappointed by the firmness of the duke of Mayenne, in their intention of holding them at Soissons, to which city the forces under the duke of Parma were intended to advance, in order to overawe the deliberations; they still promised themselves equal success.

1592.
Causes of
the convo-
cation of the
States Ge-
neral.
Motives of
Mayenne,

and of the
Spanish mi-
nisters.

(24) Vie de Lesdiguières, p. 129—138. D'Aubigné, vol. iii. p. 267—274, and p. 277—284. Davila, p. 1142—1151. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 521—533. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 517—555. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 49—72.

C H A P. III. Philip, sinking under infirmities, and approaching the end of his life, fondly hoped to place on the vacant throne of France, his daughter, the infanta; and to gratify, before he sunk into the grave, his insatiable thirst of dominion, by transferring the French sceptre to the house of Austria. He projected to maintain the election, by a vast army, and by the expenditure of proportionate treasures. Already the duke of Parma had advanced to Arras, with intent to enter a third time into Picardy, and to march towards Paris; while Henry, vigilant to prevent him, repaired to Corbie, on the river Somme, prepared to dispute his passage. But, death terminated all the schemes of the Spanish general, and clouded the prospects of the court of Madrid. Farnese expired at Arras, exhausted by illness, against which he had vainly struggled; and having only attained his forty-seventh year. The splendour of Philip's conquests in the Netherlands, and the expectation of reducing the revolted princes, if so chimerical a hope still survived, became extinct with the duke of Parma. Even before his death, Maurice, prince of Orange, availing himself of the two invasions of France, expelled the Spaniards from the greater part of their possessions beyond the Rhine; and he soon afterwards made himself master of Gertruydenberg, on the frontiers of Brabant. As the duke of Parma's decease had been long foreseen, Philip had provided for the government of the Low Countries. Ernest, count Mansfeldt, was named provisionally to that employment, till the arrival of the archduke, Ernest, brother to the emperor, Rodolph the Second. But, the great endowments, civil and military, which had rendered the duke of Parma justly respected and beloved, even when executing the tyrannical mandates of an implacable prince, could not be easily replaced. To his death, at so critical a juncture, may be in part attributed the consequent subversion of Philip's attempts

1592.

November.

2d Decem-
ber.

Death of the
duke of
Parma.

Injurious
effects of
that event,
to Philip
the Second.

tempts

tempts to procure the election of the infanta, and the final dissolution of his ambitious projects (25).

In the manifesto, issued by the duke of Mayenne, as lieutenant-general of the crown, for the convocation of the States, the great purposes of their meeting were indefinitely and ambiguously described, under the general term of "providing a remedy for the preservation of religion, and the state." But, in a letter published a few days afterwards by the cardinal of Placentia, the Papal legate, addressed to the Catholics of the opposite party; those objects were unequivocally stated to be, for the election of a "most christian, and truly Catholic king." It was impossible not to recognize under that designation, Philip the Second, the head and protector of the League. Neither the number and quality of the deputies, nor the importance of the matters agitated in the assembly, at its commencement, corresponded to the ideas entertained by the nation. The delegates, sent by the nobility, were few; and those of the third estate, mostly obscure and unknown, or avowedly corrupted by the largesses of Spain (26). Of the ecclesiastical order, the representatives were more numerous and eminent. Instead of proceeding to fill the vacant throne, scarcely had the deliberations commenced in the palace of the Louvre, with the forms customary on so solemn an occasion, when they were suddenly suspended. Matters were not yet ripe, for the great and delicate measure of conferring the crown; nor had the numerous competitors adjusted and settled their respective and clashing pretensions. The duke of Feria, sent by Philip, at the head of an embassy, to propose the infanta, waited at Soissons, in order previously to confer with the duke of Mayenne. Even the princes of the house of Lorrain

C H A P.
III.

1593.

5th January.

Object of
the convo-
cation.

Opening of
the assem-
bly.

26th Janu-
ary.

Their pro-
ceedings are
suspended.

(25) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 569—572. Davila, p. 1141—1142. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 89—91. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 533—535: (26) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 700, 701. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 538.

were

C H A P. were disunited, and bent on the prosecution of opposite schemes, for their personal aggrandizement. It was indispensable to adjust their jarring interests, and to unite their efforts for the attainment of a common object. Induced by these motives, the duke of Mayenne quitted Paris, and repaired to Soissons; after having taken all the precautions requisite to prevent the States from embracing in his absence, any resolutions of importance (27).

The Catholics in the royal army, propose a conference.

The declaration, convening that assembly in his name, and by his authority, was, however, productive of a consequence, not foreseen by the zealous partizans of Spain. Instead of excluding from the national deliberations, the adherents of Henry; the duke had expressly invited and exhorted the Catholic prelates, nobility, and officers of the crown, to unite themselves to the party of which he was the chief, in order by their joint efforts to adduce a remedy to the misfortunes of the state. The proposition, when it reached the persons to whom it was addressed, appeared to be capable of producing effects so beneficial, if improved, that they almost immediately determined to avail themselves of the occasion. Having obtained the approbation and sanction of the king; whose opposition would even have been ineffectual to prevent a measure, which opened a prospect, however distant or improbable, of terminating the war; they drew up an answer to the invitation. It expressed, in the names of all the nobility attached to the royal cause, their readiness and disposition to send a delegation of their body, to any convenient place between Paris and St. Denis, there to confer with deputies from the adherents of the League. A trumpet, charged to deliver the letter, was dispatched to

37th January.

(27) Davila, p. 1177, 1178, and p. 1192. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 701. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 537, 538.

the duke of Mayenne, who had not yet quitted the capital (28). C H A P.
III.

So unexpected an overture, the result of which might be eventually subversive of all the projects of the court of Madrid, was violently opposed by the Spanish and Papal advocates. The cardinal legate stigmatized it as impious; and the college of the Sorbonne condemned it as heretical. But, the States General, to whom it was addressed, and before whom it was laid, passed a very opposite judgment on its contents. After a debate of considerable length and violence, it was decided, that a reply should be sent to the royalist nobles; in which, though they protested their resolution not to acknowledge, or to hold any communication with a heretic prince, they readily consented to the proposed conference (29). Delays of various kinds, resulting from the unsettled nature of the kingdom, and from the difficulty of fixing on a commodious place of meeting, protracted its completion. But, Surenne, a village in the vicinity of Paris, having been at length selected for the purpose, every obstacle disappeared; and precautions were taken for the reciprocal accommodation and mutual security of the members of the two parties, appointed to conduct the conference (30).

1593.

23d February.

It is accepted by the States General.

While these interesting propositions were agitated, the duke of Mayenne arrived at Soissons, accompanied only by four hundred cavalry, where his presence was impatiently expected by Philip's ambassadors. Disputes, heightened by acrimonious expressions, and personal recrimination, took place at their first interview. The duke of Feria, unacquainted with the genius of the French nation; imbued with ideas of the facility and certainty of the election of

9th February.

Conference between Mayenne and the Spanish ministers, at Soissons.

(28) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 676—678, and p. 684, 685. Davila, p. 1179—1182. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 52—58.

(29) Ibid. p. 59

(30) Davila, p. 1202—1208. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 536—539. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 664—669. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 72—81.

C H A P. III. the infanta; and little disposed to consider the co-
 operation of the chief of the League, as indispensable
 to the success of his master's views on the French
 crown; injudiciously alienated him by marks of re-
 sentment and asperity. The measures taken by the
 Catholic king, for ensuring so vast an object, were,
 notwithstanding, greatly inadequate to its value and
 importance. Neither military forces, capable of
 crushing the royal party; nor pecuniary funds, com-
 petent to corrupt and purchase the suffrages of the
 States; had been provided by the court of Madrid.

Disputes: The duke of Mayenne, justly irritated at the defect
 of ability, or of exertion in the Spaniards, reproached
 them with such culpable and pernicious neglect, at a
 moment when they expected the consummation of
 their hopes. But, Philip was no longer in a situation
 to gratify the avidity, or to dazzle and subject the
 people, over whom he aspired to reign. His trea-
 sures were exhausted; his finances disordered; and
 his revenues anticipated, or mortgaged. The vete-
 ran bands, accustomed to victory under the duke of
 Parma, quitted their standards after his decease, and
 desolated the provinces which they were intended to
 protect. Except the city of Groningen, scarcely any
 place of consequence in the northern part of the Low
 Countries, was unsubdued by the Dutch. Even in
 Spain, the most alarming sedition had manifested itself
 among the Arragonese, where alone, some sparks of
 their antient freedom yet survived. Vargas, who
 commanded a body of troops, destined to enter
 France, was sent to Sarragossa, to quell the insur-
 rection, which was not effected without blood. In
 so embarrassed and critical a posture of his affairs,
 Philip could ill spare the troops and money, indis-
 pensable to place his daughter on the throne of
 France (31).

Inability of
 the king of
 Spain, to aid
 the League.

(31) Davila, p. 1192—1197. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 533—536.

These circumstances, which were well known to the ambassadors of Spain, and which were even urged or enumerated by the duke of Feria, as an excuse and extenuation of the feeble succours sent to the League, by his sovereign; were, notwithstanding, insufficient to moderate his conduct towards Mayenne. Mutual necessity alone prevented them from coming to a decided rupture on both sides, and produced a dissembled reconciliation. On his departure from Soissons, the duke of Mayenne immediately joined the forces, conducted by Charles, count Mansfeldt, sent by the governor of the Low Countries to his aid. They amounted only to about four thousand infantry, and a thousand horse. The Papal troops were diminished to twelve hundred men; and such was the depressed condition of the League, that their army was inferior to that of Spain. Unable to penetrate into the interior provinces of the kingdom, or to attempt the relief of the capital, by laying siege to the royal garrisons which straitened it on every side; they undertook to invest Noyon, in Picardy. It capitulated, after three weeks: but, exhausted by a single effort, however successful, the allies soon separated. Mansfeldt, recalled by his father, led his forces back into Flanders; while the duke of Mayenne repaired to Rheims, in order to concert with the princes of the house of Lorraine, the measures requisite to be pursued in so momentous a crisis. Their interview was not less stormy, nor their consultation less discordant, than that of Soissons. At its conclusion, the chief of the League returned to Paris, where his presence was become indispensable, and where the aspect of affairs seemed to portend some great and imminent convulsion (32).

C H A P.
III.

1593.

Imprudence
and violence
of Feria.March.
Siege, and
capture of
Noyon.Mayenne
returns to
Paris.

Henry, during these interesting events, had been compelled by the dangerous machinations and in-

(32) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 646—649. Davila, p. 1197—1200. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 540.

C H A P. III. *trigues of his relation, the count of Soissons, to visit the provinces on the Loire. His absence had emboldened the confederate army to besiege Noyon, and he was not able to return with sufficient celerity, to preserve the place. If the situation of the duke of Mayenne was beset with difficulties, his own did not demand less vigour, dexterity, and decision. Near four years had already elapsed since the death of his predecessor, without any accomplishment on his part of the assurances given by him to the Catholics, at his accession, that he would cause himself to be instructed in the doctrines of the Romish faith and church. Wearied with fruitless expectation, impoverished by war, and incensed at the infraction of so solemn an engagement; the Catholics manifested a general discontent. Reproaches and complaints were mixed with menaces, and might be followed by universal defection. Even the princes of the blood, disgusted at his adherence to the reformed religion, or, allured by hopes of ascending the throne, did not conceal their resolution, no longer to draw their swords, or shed their blood, in the quarrel of an incorrigible heretic. His victories might inspire terror; but, could never conciliate affection; and the mutability of fortune might deprive him in an hour, of the fruit of so many battles. He beheld the States General of the kingdom met at Paris, to elect a sovereign; and whether their choice fell on the infanta, on the duke of Mayenne, or, on any other prince; the necessary consequence must be an interminable civil war. The Hugonots were not sufficiently numerous, to counterbalance the vast weight in the opposite scale; nor could he flatter himself with ever attaining to a peaceable enjoyment of the crown, except by a compliance with the wishes of the majority of his subjects. Considerations at once so obvious and so weighty, were enforced by the animated remonstrances of his most confidential servants; nor did those of the Hugonots*

Delicate,
and danger-
ous situa-
tion of
Henry.

Motives
for his
abjuration.

Hugonots themselves, who surveyed the king's situation without bigotry or prejudice, conceal from him the unavoidable necessity of a prompt and public conversion (33). C H A P.
III.
1593-

The accomplishment of that great and beneficial measure, was not a little accelerated by the result of the conference at Surenne, between the Catholic nobles and prelates, of the two parties. All the exhortations of the archbishop of Bourges, who endeavoured to awaken sentiments of loyalty and obedience to their legitimate prince, in the bosoms of the opposite faction, were ineffectual; and they unanimously declared their inflexible resolution, never to acknowledge or submit to a king, who, whatever was his right of descent, remained in open hostility with the Catholic church. So bold and unambiguous a declaration, when notified to Henry, produced its full effect. Shaken on every side, and pressed by accumulating dangers, he no longer resisted; and, after a short hesitation, he gave a solemn assurance to convoke an assembly of the most pious and learned ecclesiastics, for the purpose of receiving instruction. Such a promise, however equivocal, was regarded by his adherents, as amounting to the fullest evidence of his intention to renounce the Protestant faith; and with that conviction, it was communicated to the delegates of the League, at the ensuing interview, by the archbishop of Bourges. He accompanied the intelligence, with a proposal on the part of the king, for a suspension of arms during three months, in which period, measures might be embraced for effecting a general peace (34). 29th April.
Conference
of Surenne.

16th May.
Henry pro-
mises to
receive in-
struction.

17th May.

The assertions of zeal for religion, which had so long served to delude the credulous multitude, and which only concealed the private interest, ambition, Conduct of
the deputies
of the
League, on
the notifica-
tion.

(33) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 678—683. Sully, vol. i. p. 106, 107.

(34) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 750, 751. Davila, p. 1219, 1220. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 158—258.

C H A P. III. or revenge, by which the chiefs were actuated, ap-
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 appeared on this occasion in their utmost turpitude and
 deformity. Far from expressing any joy, or pleasure,
 at such a notification, the archbishop of Lyons, who
 conducted the conference on the part of the deputies
 of the League, received it with a mixture of surprise,
 concern, and incredulity. He even refused to accept
 from the royalist nobility and prelates, a written copy
 of the king's declaration; and demanded permission
 to report the matter to the States General, who were
 alone competent to take cognizance of, and to decide
 relative to so momentous an affair (35). In a private
 council, convened for the purpose, where the duke of
 Mayenne and the cardinal legate were present, it was
 fully agitated and discussed. The inevitable conse-
 quences of Henry's conversion, were easily foreseen;
 but, they could not be counteracted with equal fa-
 cility; and its effect on the people excited the liveliest
 apprehension. Every exertion, which malignity, in-
 genuity, and the spirit of rebellion could inspire, were
 made to diminish its operation. Writings, calculated
 to call in question the sincerity of the king, and to
 inflame the nation, were artfully published, and dis-
 seminated. At the renewal of the conferences, which
 were transferred to the suburbs of Paris, the deputies
 of the League returned an answer to those of the op-
 posite party. After expressing their satisfaction at
 Henry's promised submission to the Catholic church,
 and their wish that his conversion might be sincere and
 permanent; they, notwithstanding, refused either to
 acknowledge, or to treat with him, till he was ab-
 solved by the sovereign pontiff, and liberated from
 the ecclesiastical censures, incurred by his apostacy.
 Nor would they even promise to aid the applications
 which might be made to the holy see, or to co-ope-
 rate in such measures as might be adopted, for pro-

Apprehen-
 sions, ex-
 cited by it.

5th June.
 Answer,
 made by the
 deputies of
 the League.

(35) Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 258—264.

curing

curing the speedy reconciliation of the king with the reigning pope. The proposed truce, though far more advantageous and necessary to the League, than to the crown, was finally rejected; and only a suspension of arms, continued for a few days in the vicinity of Paris, in order to facilitate the conferences (36). The royalists vainly demonstrated, that, thus to submit the rights of Henry to the arbitrament of a foreign prince, raised to the pontificate by the intrigues of Spain, and devoted to the interests of Philip the Second; was, at once to sacrifice the independence of the monarchy, and to render France, virtually and essentially, a dependant fief of the see of Rome. Not only the franchises of the Gallic church, but, the kingdom itself were evidently abandoned, to perpetuate a civil war, the original and only pretext for which was taken away by the king's conversion. Their remonstrances were ineffectual; and the conferences, though subsequently renewed, were unproductive of any change in the determination, or conduct of the chiefs of the League (37).

C H A P.
III.
1593.
They reject
the truce.

Conferences
ineffectual.

But, whatever animosity might be manifested among the devoted adherents of the duke of Mayenne, or the corrupted partizans of the court of Madrid; a sensible and salutary alteration had already taken place, and universally pervaded the inferior classes of society, throughout the nation. The Parisians, extenuated by famine, and groaning under the accumulated sufferings of internal oppression, and external hostility, ardently anticipated the return of peace. They had tasted, however imperfectly, its blessings, during the short suspension of arms, granted to facilitate the late conferences; and that precarious truce, limited to the immediate vicinity of the capital, only augmented their impatience for a lasting conclusion of the misfor-

Alteration in
the senti-
ments of the
people.

(36) Mémoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 264—273. (37) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 751—755, and p. 761—772. Davila, p. 1220—1222. Mémoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 273—317.

tunes,

C H A P. III. tunes, to which the kingdom was subjected. The loyal and moderate part of the citizens began to raise their heads, and to elevate their tone. All the arts and machinations by which rebellion had been inculcated, and the criminal enterprizes of ambition concealed under the mask of piety, were either exhausted, or no longer inflamed the populace. It was in vain, that the Papal legate endeavoured to sustain the declining spirit of sedition, and to stigmatize the king's conversion as hypocritical and impious. The people, despising, or resenting such attempts, rose in a tumultuary manner, surrounded the cardinal's palace, and loudly demanded the acceptance of the truce offered by Henry. Scarcely could the interposition of the duke of Mayenne himself allay the commotion, and restore a degree of tranquillity. It was already apparent, that the foundations of the League were shaken, and that the completion of Henry's promised return to the Catholic faith, would eventually subvert a fabric, whose only solid basis was superstition (38).

Efforts of the legate, to maintain the party of the League.

20th May. Feria proposes the election of the infanta.

29th May. Harangue of Mendoza, and of Taxis.

Previous to these transactions, the duke of Feria had already opened the objects of his mission. In a select council, composed of deputies from the three orders of the States, held in presence of the legate, and at which the princes of the house of Lorraine assisted, the Spanish ambassador unfolded the intentions of his master. After a solemn harangue, calculated to place in the most conspicuous point of view, the eminent services rendered by Philip to the cause of religion, and the treasures lavished by him to support the party of the League; he proposed the election of the infanta, Clara Isabella. Mendoza, an advocate, versed in the Castilian jurisprudence, was admitted in the assembly of the States General, to expatiate at greater length, on the virtues of the

princess; and he did not omit to insist on her hereditary claim to the crown, as descended from Henry the Second, by Elizabeth, eldest of the daughters of that monarch. Finding that the proposition excited only a negative degree of applause, and apprehensive that the French might be reluctant to submit to a female; Taxis, another member of the embassy, ventured to disclose the ulterior design of Philip, which was to bestow the hand of the infanta upon Ernest, arch-duke of Austria, her cousin. But, such an alliance, far from producing approbation, or conciliating the suffrages of the assembly, tended to awaken opposite sensations; and they signified, without circumlocution or delay, their repugnance to the government of a foreign prince. Yet, desirous to evince their gratitude to Philip as their benefactor and protector, the States, through the channel of their head, the duke of Mayenne, declared their readiness to place the infanta on the throne, provided that the Catholic king, her father, would consent to match her with a prince of France. The offer was accepted, after a short hesitation, by the duke of Feria, who stipulated in the name of his sovereign, to maintain the infanta in the possession of the crown, with all the forces of the Spanish monarchy. He promised the assembly, that Philip would make choice of a French prince; and included by name under that denomination, those of the family of Lorrain (39).

C H A P.
III.
1593.

22d June.
Conduct of
the States.

It excites surprise, that after so pointed a declaration, the ambassadors should not have divulged the name of the fortunate object of their master's selection, without loss of time; and it is difficult to explain their delay, on any principles of policy, or maxims of sound discretion. The crisis unquestionably demanded counsels of celerity and decision.

Imprudent
delay of the
Spaniards.

(39) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 206, 207, and p. 213. Davila, p. 1213—1218. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 755—759, and p. 777. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 548, 549. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 162—165, and p. 171.

C H A P.
III.

1593.

8th June.
Siege, and
capture of
Dreux.

8th July.

Effects pro-
duced by it.Conduct of
the parlia-
ment of
Paris.

28th June.

Henry, not accustomed to remain inactive, and availing himself of the weakness of the League, had already assembled his forces in the vicinity of Paris. Incensed at the rejection of the truce which he had offered; and desirous of rendering the general wish for peace more ardent, by a comparison of its enjoyments with the horrors of war; he laid siege to Dreux. The city was only sixteen leagues distant from the capital, which was dependant on it for a great part of the provisions, indispensable towards the support of its numerous inhabitants. Though the garrison made a brave defence, and held out the citadel for more than a month, they were at length reduced to capitulate (40). Nothing could more forcibly display the inability of the duke of Mayenne to take the field, and the want of power or inclination in the Spanish court, to give him assistance; than their passive acquiescence in the capture of a place, so near to the metropolis. It excited in the nation, a degree of ridicule, to see the States convened for the purpose of electing a king, while they were destitute of troops, or funds, for their necessary protection against a royal army, which might approach the gates, unopposed. Indignation and contempt were felt by the wise, the loyal, and the moderate, at the contemplation of the scene exhibited before their eyes; while Spain and the League, unable to prolong the war, and rapidly declining in strength, contended for the possession of an ideal and imaginary crown.

In the midst of these transactions, the parliament of Paris, which, since the execution of Brisson and his colleagues, had given scarcely any indication of its existence, suddenly assembled, to deliberate on the state of public affairs. Animated by sentiments of independence, and of attachment to their country,

(40) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 176. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 1—7. Davila, p. 1223—1225.

the members unanimously determined and enjoined, that an immediate remonstrance should be presented in their name, and by their authority, to the duke of Mayenne. It breathed the spirit of wisdom and of patriotism, untainted by superstition, and undebased by faction. The president delivered it, in a manner becoming the dignity of the assembly whom he represented. They besought the duke, not to consent to any treaty subversive of the fundamental laws of the kingdom, or calculated to transfer the sceptre to a foreign prince, or princess: they reminded him of the sanctity and majesty of the office, delegated to him as lieutenant-general of the crown; and they annulled all agreements tending to abolish, or invalidate the Salic law, by which no woman could be placed on the throne of France. Notwithstanding the real, or affected resentment expressed by the chief of the League, at so manly and unexpected an interference; the parliament sustained with firmness its right of remonstrating, and was neither terrified by the menaces, nor depressed by the opposition, of the devoted adherents of Spain (41).

C H A P.
III.
1593.
Their re-
monstrance
to Mayenne.

His reply;

During the interval of more than three weeks, which elapsed between the declaration of Philip's ambassadors, that the Catholic king would make choice of a French prince for the husband of the infanta, and the disclosure of the person selected; Paris was a theatre of intrigue, expectation, and cabal. The numerous candidates of the family of Lorraine, who devoured in hope the future diadem, counteracted each other's pretensions, and anxiously strove for preference, in the cabinet of Madrid. The duke of Nemours, relying on his birth, and still more on his merits during the memorable siege of the capital, thought the crown due to his services. He was op-

Intrigues for
the crown.

Competi-
tors.

(41) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 780—787. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 173—175. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 550—551. Davila, p. 1231—1233.

CHAP. III. posed by the duke of Mayenne, who wished to obtain the hand of Clara Isabella for his son, the young duke of Aiguillon. A third competitor presented himself in the person of the cardinal of Lorraine, second son to Charles, the regning duke; and all their claims were lost in the superior merits of the duke of Guise, who pleaded his father's sufferings, and who inherited his courage and ambition, together with the adherence of the most zealous partizans of the League (42).

14th July.

Feria names the duke of Guise.

Conduct, and delays of Mayenne.

Philip's emissaries at length broke the silence, in which they had so injudiciously persisted. At a council, held for the purpose, the duke of Feria produced the powers entrusted to him, and declared that his sovereign's choice had fallen on the duke of Guise. He proposed, that the crown should be jointly conferred on him and the Spanish princess: he accompanied the demand with every stipulation, which could secure the liberties of the nation; and he added assurances of such effectual pecuniary and military support on the part of the Catholic king, as must speedily extinguish all opposition. Mortified at the preference given to his nephew, indignant at the conduct of Philip, and determined not to lay down the power of which he was in possession; the duke of Mayenne, nevertheless, dissembled his chagrin. He even returned his acknowledgments to the Spanish monarch, for the honour done to the house of Lorraine, in the person of the duke of Guise; and promised to give the proposition his warmest support in the assembly of the States. Bassompierre, the minister of the duke of Lorraine to the League, dextrously obtained a delay of a few days, under the pretence of informing his master of a piece of intelligence so important; and the interval was not lost by the duke of Mayenne. Already, in the anticipation

(42) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 778, 779. Davila, p. 1218.

of his certain and approaching elevation, the young duke of Guise beheld himself surrounded with a numerous court: while the lieutenant-general of the crown, whose authority was considered as nearly extinct, attracted no longer any followers, and was almost universally abandoned. The Spaniards were even accused of inspiring the future king elect, with sentiments of revenge against his uncle, as the only obstacle to his greatness; and of proposing to Guise his assassination (43).

C H A P.
III.
1593.

Their imaginary triumph was of short duration; and the influence of the duke of Mayenne in the assembly of the States, speedily subverted the fine-spun machinations of the cabinet of Madrid. After having vainly endeavoured to induce the ambassadors, to postpone to a more favourable juncture, their intention of filling the throne; he attempted to work upon the duke of Guise himself. He demonstrated to that young and ambitious prince, the futility and inanity of those expectations, which he had so eagerly imbibed; and he earnestly besought of his nephew, not to advance further in the prosecution of a plan, which must be equally ruinous to himself, to his family, and to the League. But, the vision of a crown had rendered him insensible, or deaf to every admonition, though he listened with decent respect to his uncle's remonstrances; and Mayenne, repulsed in both his applications, determined finally to appeal to the States. His personal authority and weight in the assembly, enabled him to counteract all opposition, and to procure the indirect rejection of the late proposal. By a considerable majority, it was decided, 20th July, humbly to return their acknowledgments to the Catholic king, for his gracious declaration; to assure the States postpone the election of a king. him of their readiness to accept it, and to raise to the

(43) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 551, 552. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 177, 178. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 7—11: Davila; p. 1226.

C H A P. throne the duke of Guise and the infanta, at a more propitious period: but, that, from the recent success of the enemy before Dreux, and the defenceless state of the League, the accomplishment of it must be deferred. They concluded, by entreating that the forces of Philip might speedily advance, in order to facilitate and accelerate the election. Disappointed as were the Spanish ambassadors at so humiliating a reply; sensible of the quarter from whence the blow was dealt; and conscious that all their hopes were destroyed in the moment of their expected completion; they yet preserved a steady gravity. In temperate and moderate language, they lamented that the States had not embraced the only expedient, calculated to terminate the calamities of France; but, they still promised the protection and aid of their master, provided that no truce was made with the king of Navarre (44).

Behaviour of the ambassadors of Philip.

Reflexions on the election of a king by the States.

It seems to admit of scarcely any doubt, that the habitual and insurmountable slowness of the Spanish ministers, was fatal to the object of the negotiation. If, instead of protracting and concealing the duke of Guise's election, they had named him at an earlier period, they must have succeeded in raising him to the throne. The duke of Mayenne, detained before Noyon, and at Rheims, was not master of the deliberations and suffrages of the States, on his first arrival in the metropolis (45). On the other hand, Henry, whatever promises he had made to abjure the reformed religion, remained still unreconciled to the Romish church; and such was the indignation, or weariness of the Catholic nobility in his service, that if the duke of Guise had been then declared king, it was not questioned, that he would have been joined and supported by all the royalists attached to

(44) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 22—25. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 178, 179. Davila, p. 1227—1231. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 552, 553. (45) Ibid. p. 546, 547.

the antient faith (46). Under these circumstances, C H A P: Philip might have placed the crown on the head of his daughter; and a new dynasty of princes might have arisen on the extinction of the Capetian line. The Hugonots alone, could neither have raised, nor have maintained the king of Navarre on the French throne; and his abjuration would have been made too late, to produce a beneficial effect. The house of Austria would have reigned over Europe, from the Atlantic ocean, almost uninterruptedly to the confines of Turkey; and from the coast of Morocco, to the Elbe, the Rhine, and the British channel. Philip, after recently subjecting Portugal and all its colonies in the two hemispheres; would have beheld France voluntarily submit to his empire, and in violation of the Salic law, consent to substitute a woman in place of their native princes. The fairest portion of Europe might have groaned under Castilian tyranny; and the chimæra of a universal monarchy, been, in some measure, realized.

Happily for mankind, these pernicious schemes of ambition were overturned; and the attention of the French, which had so long been directed to the cabals of a popular assembly, or the machinations of faction, was more pleasingly attracted by a spectacle of a different nature. The king prepared at length to consummate the promised change of his religion, and thereby to extinguish the great source of rebellion and insurrection. Every preparatory circumstance, which could add decency and dignity to the act, or tend to impress the nation with a sense of his sincerity and conviction, was carefully observed. Theologians, and divines of all descriptions, even from among the most furious, or zealous adherents of the League, were exhorted and summoned to attend. Several of the latter assisted, in defiance of the anathemas of the

Henry prepares to abjure the reformed religion.

(46) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 541, 542, and p. 549, 550.

legate,

C H A P. legate, and the prohibitions of the duke of Mayenne.

III.

1593.

Conferences
on matters
of faith.

23d July.

Henry listened with patient and docile submission; to their instructions and admonitions, during many hours, in repeated conferences. He had expressed the greatest doubts upon three essential articles of faith; auricular confession; the invocation of saints; and the spiritual authority of the Papal see. Having heard the arguments adduced in their defence or justification, he rose up, and thanked the ecclesiastics for their pious exertions, as well as for the lights which they had given him: he added, that after having invoked the divine assistance, he would determine seriously on taking a final resolution, salutary to himself, and to the state (47). Some objections, made by the cardinal of Bourbon, to the competency of any power except the pope, to absolve the king, and to receive him into the bosom of the Romish church, were over-ruled. Ambition, and not piety, had dictated the scruples of that factious prelate; who still retained hopes of ascending the throne, either by the assistance of the duke of Mayenne, disgusted with Spain; or, by the efforts of the bigotted Catholics. But, his faint opposition, and impotent malignity, excited only contempt: while the nation at large anticipated Henry's return to the Papal obedience, as the signal and seal of future felicity (48).

Opposition
of the cardi-
nal of Bour-
bon.

25th July.

Abjuration
of the king,
at St. Denis.

The necessary preparations having been made for celebrating with dignity and solemnity, so august a ceremony, Henry, unable to make his abjuration at Paris, chose for the scene of it, the abbey of St. Denis. On the day appointed, he presented himself, habited in white, before the portal of the church, accompanied by the princes of the blood, nobility, and gentry, followed by the guards superbly accoutred. The archbishop of Bourges, seated, and surrounded

(47) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 180, 181. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 30, 31. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 221, 222.

(48) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 25,

26, and p. 30.

by a number of prelates, met him at his entrance. Holding in his hands a book of the gospels open, he demanded of Henry who he was, and the nature of his errand. "I am the king," replied he, "who desire to be received into the bosom of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Romish church." Throwing himself on his knees, he then protested to live and die in its defence, and to renounce all heresies contrary to its doctrines. Having signed his profession of faith, and made confession, the archbishop administered to him absolution. Mass was solemnized, at which the king assisted, under a canopy of state; and after its conclusion, he returned, amidst the joyful acclamations of an immense multitude, to the monastery of St. Denis, where he dined in public. Money was scattered among the populace; and, notwithstanding the manifest danger of assassination, Henry admitted indiscriminately every one to approach his person. It was in vain, that the duke of Mayenne issued the most rigorous orders, to prevent the inhabitants of Paris from being present at the ceremony, and caused the gates of the capital to be kept shut. Nor were even the declamations of the preachers, whose influence over the people had been so unlimited, able to restrain their curiosity and loyalty. They attended in such numbers, as to exceed those of the royal party, and joined in the universal testimonies of joy and exultation. It was evident, that from the moment of Henry's abjuration, the foundation of the League was sapped; and that only time and exertion were necessary, to reclaim the deluded followers of superstition and faction (49).

If we examine the act itself, by the rules or maxims of policy, we must pronounce it to have been dictated by necessity, and replete with wisdom. In

C H A P.
III.
1593.

Ceremony,
and solemn-
nities.

Its beneficial
consequen-
ces.

Examina-
tion of, and
reflexions
on the act.

(49) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 222—224. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 181
—184. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 553—555. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 32—35.
Davila, p. 1236, 1237.

CHAP. III. 1593. a moral view, it was productive of happiness to a great portion of mankind, and tended more than any other circumstance, to shorten, and finally to extinguish the calamities of civil war. As a private case of conscience, it does not belong to history, and can only be amenable to a higher jurisdiction. The zealous adherents of the reformed religion, his contemporaries, naturally considered it as a measure of state, in which truth, sincerity, and principle, had been sacrificed to views of convenience, or motives of ambition (50). But, posterity, more just, more enlightened, and more impartial, has weighed the action in other scales; and acquitted, if not applauded, Henry. Even many of the Hugonots themselves, negatively admitted its propriety, and desired, or advanced its accomplishment (51). At the king's express request, the profession of faith, tendered to him at St. Denis, was conceived in general and indefinite terms; omitting all those dogmas, and points of polemical theology, calculated rather to embarrass and obscure, than to illuminate his mind (52). It is matter of curious remark, that the scruples or doubts of Henry, were more directed to the minor articles of the Romish creed, than to the great and most essential ones. He hesitated on three points of inferior consequence; but, when the sacrament of the altar, or transubstantiation, was agitated, which includes the doctrine of the real presence in the elements of bread and wine; he said to the prelates, "I have no doubt upon this head; for I have always so believed (53)."

31st July.

Truce made between Henry, and the League.

The king's abjuration was followed in a few days, by a truce for three months, agreed on between the deputies of the royal party, and those of the League. All the clamours of the legate, and the opposition of

(50) *Memoires d'Aubigné*, p. 136, 138. *Vie de du Plessis Mornay*, p. 195
 — 198. (51) *Davila*, p. 1184. (52) *Vie de du Plessis*, p. 198.
 — *Mezeray*, vol. ix. p. 554. (53) *Chron. Nov.* vol. ii. p. 222.

the Spanish ambassadors, could neither prevent, nor retard its completion. Necessity and inability pleaded in favour of the duke of Mayenne; who was destitute of every means to continue the war, and beheld the only solid pretext for its prosecution, withdrawn by Henry's return into the Catholic church (54). In this situation, he again renewed his alliance with the court of Madrid, and promised never to acknowledge the king's title, under any circumstances. Philip stipulated on his part, to march, without delay, a considerable army to his aid. Mutual distress cemented the confederation, and animated them to new efforts for sustaining the League (55).

C H A P.
III.

1593-

Mayenne
renews his
alliance with
Spain.

As the States General were no longer necessary, and as the project of electing a king was postponed to an uncertain period, it was judged proper to dismiss the assembly. Though nominally prorogued only to the ensuing month of October, they were virtually dissolved. Previous to their dismissal, an oath was tendered, and taken by the deputies, binding themselves to obey implicitly the decrees and decisions of the holy see, in all matters relating to heresy. It was vainly hoped, by so frail an engagement, to prop the declining cause of rebellion; and as the convocation of the States might again become requisite, the Spanish monarch retained, at his own expence, a considerable number of the members, who continued at Paris till its final submission to their legitimate sovereign (56).

Prorogation
of the States
General.

8th August.

(54) Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 320—351. (55) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 185, 186. Davila, p. 1237. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 226—229. (56) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 35—38. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 229—233. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 185—188. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 352—368.

C H A P. IV.

State of France, after the king's abjuration.—Embassy to Rome.—Seizure of Barriere.—Effects of the truce.—Situation of Mayenne.—Ill success of Nevers, at Rome.—Decline of the League.—Submission of various cities, to Henry.—His coronation.—Brissac, made governor of Paris.—He treats with the king.—Reduction of Paris.—Measures, embraced by Henry, for the restoration of order, in the metropolis.—Rouen returns to its allegiance.—Mayenne repairs to Brussels.—System of Philip the Second.—Siege, and capture of Laon.—State of affairs in Burgundy.—Hostilities in Brittany.—Transactions in Provence, and in Savoy.—Submission of the duke of Guise.—Attempt of Châtel, to assassinate the king.—Banishment of the Jesuits.—Henry declares war on Spain.—Death of the duke of Nemours.—Revolt of Burgundy from Mayenne.—Henry repairs to Dijon.—Combat of Fontaine Francoise.—Mayenne quits the Spaniards.—Return of the king to Lyons.—Truce with Mayenne.

C H A P.
IV.

1593.

August.

Effects of
the truce,

THE effect, produced on the minds of the French nation, by the late events, which had succeeded each other with such rapidity, was necessarily proportioned to their magnitude and importance. Nothing could more clearly and forcibly demonstrate the misunderstanding, or, rather alienation, subsisting between the head of the League, and the court of Spain, than the transactions of the States General. That assembly, convoked for the express purpose of filling the vacant throne; had not only expressed

expressed their unanimous indignation, at the proposal of chusing the arch-duke Ernest: they had postponed to a distant and uncertain period, the less odious proposition, of conferring the crown on the infanta, jointly with a prince of the house of Lorrain. The truce, recently concluded between the king and the duke of Mayenne, could not fail to be productive of a great and general change, in the dispositions of every order of men. Paris, long subjected to all the calamities of famine, beheld itself in a state of temporary freedom, and emancipation. The inhabitants, immured within the walls of a deserted and depopulated capital, eagerly embraced the occasion of breathing a purer air, and of revisiting their desolated estates, or possessions. Henry's character, as it became more fully known, inspired equal attachment and veneration. The courtesy of his manners; the facility with which he admitted the meanest individuals to approach, and accost him; the liberality which he displayed in relieving their wants; and the compassionate sympathy that he shewed for their sufferings, of which he was the involuntary cause: these unequivocal testimonies of beneficence, made a deep, and universal impression. His recent abjuration, which had been conducted with every circumstance, calculated to give solemnity to the act, and to imprint on the minds of the Catholics an opinion of the king's sincerity; in a great degree, disarmed the League, and deprived its adherents of their last support (1).

Sensible, nevertheless, that while he was still unabsolved from the Papal censures, the bigotted, and the disaffected part of the nation, could never want a pretext for rebellion; Henry determined not to lose a moment, in attempting to effect his reconciliation with the Apostolic see. Louis de Gonzaga, duke of Nevers, was selected to carry the assurances of his

and of the
king's con-
duct.

He sends the
duke of
Nevers, to
Rome.

(1) Davila, p. 1241, 1242.

C H A P. filial obedience, and contrition, to the feet of the so-
 IV. vereign pontiff. His near alliance with, and descent
 1593. from the reigning house of Mantua; his Italian ori-
 gin; together with his age, character, and ability,
 rendered him peculiarly adapted for negotiating in the
 court of Rome. Several prelates, eminent for vir-
 tue and loyalty, or distinguished by talents and elo-
 quence, were associated with him in so delicate and
 arduous a commission. They began their journey
 without delay; while the king, improving the favour-
 able occasion of tranquillity, advanced his cause not
 less by the silent exertions of his partizans, than he
 had done during the continuance of open hostilities,
 by activity and valour. Remaining personally in the
 vicinity of the metropolis, attentive to every move-
 ment in the interior of Paris, and ready to avail him-
 self of any event, which might facilitate, or acce-
 lerate its surrender; he waited with patience and
 confidence, for the effect of that fermentation, with
 which the capital and the kingdom were equally
 agitated (2).

Design of
 Barriere.

These flattering appearances were, nevertheless, on
 the point of being clouded by one of those atrocious
 attempts, which peculiarly characterize the period of
 the civil wars of France; and to which Henry be-
 came ultimately a victim. A man, of the lowest
 description, named Barriere, impelled by a spirit of
 gloomy and sanguinary fanaticism, conceived the de-
 sign of assassinating the king. In order to execute it,
 he set out from Lyons, crossed all the intermediate
 provinces between that city and Paris, arrived at St.
 Denis, and followed the court to Melun, with intent
 to strike the blow. Fortunately, the scruples which
 arose in his mind, relative to the moral rectitude of
 the act, had induced him to communicate his resolu-

(2) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 38, 39. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 556. Chron. Nov.
 vol. ii. p. 233, 234.

tion to various ecclesiastics. One of them, after having expressed his disapprobation of so flagitious a purpose, finding that Barriere remained inflexible; contrived to anticipate its execution, by sending intelligence of it to the king. He was seized, interrogated, and put to death: but, his punishment did not deter others from similar enterprizes, which were encouraged by the genius of the century, and fomented by the zealous adherents of the League (3).

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Suspension
of hostilities;
in the pro-
vinces.

Throughout all the provinces of France, a temporary cessation of hostilities had taken place, in consequence of the truce between Henry and Mayenne. The duke of Mercœur, who was occupied in the siege of Moncontour, desisted from its further prosecution; as did the royalists, from the attack of Poitiers. Even in the centre of the Alps, the operations of war were suspended. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, voluntarily accepted the armistice; of which, from the declining state of his affairs, he stood in the greatest need. He had already renounced his expectations of subjecting Provence, where the inconstancy of the people, and the progress of the duke of Epernon, scarcely left him any acquisition. In Dauphiné, Lesdiguières not only repelled his invasion; but, that active commander, transferring the seat of war into his own dominions, defeated a considerable body of Spaniards, and at length reduced the duke to abandon all his views of conquest (4).

While, in every quarter, the aspect of Henry's affairs promised a speedy and fortunate conclusion of the war, the duke of Mayenne was beset with augmenting difficulties, from which it appeared almost impossible to extricate himself with honour. On all

Embarrassment of
Mayenne.

(3) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 190, 191. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 49—52. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 238—241. Davila, p. 1262—1264. (4) Vie de Lesdiguières, p. 139—145. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 557—560. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 56—72. Guichenon. Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 741—746.

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1593.

fides, he beheld either secret defection, or open revolt. The ministers of Philip the Second loaded him with reproaches; and that prince himself regarded him with distrust. The pontifical treasury was shut; and, far from imitating the example of Gregory the Fourteenth, his predecessor, Clement began to betray a secret inclination to withdraw from the League, even his spiritual support. Paris manifested alarming symptoms of a disposition to change its master, and could with difficulty be retained in subjection by Mayenne. Even the princes of his own family were disunited, and divided in opinion. The duke of Lorraine, weary of the war, and anxious to prevent the passage of new armies through his territories, inclined to embrace pacific measures. The duke of Mercœur scarcely owned any subjection, or acted in any concert with the party. Henry, duke of Guise, conscious that his uncle had imposed insuperable obstacles to the proposed marriage of the infanta, and to his elevation to the throne; only observed the external forms of respect towards a relation, whom he considered as a rival and an enemy. In Lyons, the duke of Nemours threw off all restraint, and displayed his intention of erecting an independent principality on the banks of the Rhone. Seduced by the maxims of Machiavel, and intoxicated with prospects of ambition; he endeavoured to render himself master of the provinces, which extend from the borders of Dauphiné to those of Auvergne, in the richest part of France. Lyons was destined to be the capital of this new sovereignty, and he had already surrounded the city with forts and garrisons, in order to awe the inhabitants. His ill-digested and chimerical plans were speedily subverted by the revolt of the people; who, secretly stimulated by the duke of Mayenne, seized on Nemours, confined, and detained him in the castle of Pierre Encise. Little benefit accrued, nevertheless, to the head of the League,

21st September.

Imprisonment of the duke of Nemours.

League, from his brother's imprisonment; as the inhabitants, liberated from the tyranny of their governor, maintained themselves in a state of independence, till their final submission to the king (5).

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Pressed by so many misfortunes, the duke of Mayenne solicited, and obtained, not without difficulty and repugnance on the part of Henry, a prolongation of the truce for two months. The attention of both parties was turned to the event of the duke of Nevers's embassy, on which alone depended the duration of the League. That prince, previous to his arrival in the Papal territories, received the most specific notification of the ill success, with which his exertions would be accompanied. His reception at Rome was cold, and unbecoming the majesty of the sovereign whom he represented. All his arguments, entreaties, and expostulations, made no impression on the mind of the pontiff, and were ineffectual to induce him to revoke the excommunication of the king of France. After many weeks of fruitless and reiterated application, Nevers, indignant at a treatment so unbecoming the character of the head and pastor of the Christian world, quitted Rome, and set out on his return. It cannot, nevertheless, admit of a doubt, that the reluctance of Clement to receive Henry into the communion of the Catholic church, was involuntary and assumed. He was surrounded by the cardinals of the Spanish faction, and he dreaded the resentment of so powerful a prince as Philip the Second. The cause of the League was so artfully implicated with the interests of religion, as to appear almost inseparable. Henry's conversion might be feigned, or temporary; and it became the dignity, as well as the decorum of the Apostolic see, to proceed with caution and circumspection, in so mo-

October.
Truce prolonged.

November.

Ill success of
Nevers, at
Rome.

(5) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 53—56. Davila, p. 1253—1255. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 242—249. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 562, 563.

CHAP. IV. mentous a concern. Clement demonstrated by his subsequent conduct, that, when fully justified in his proceeding, he was neither politically, nor personally inimical to the king of France (6).

December.

Causes of the declension of the League.

But, however unsuccessful Henry's ambassador had been in his negotiation at Rome, no efforts of the duke of Mayenne, nor of Philip the Second, could prolong the existence, or prop the declining cause of faction and rebellion. The nation, exhausted by many years of civil war, impatiently desired the return of peace; and the vast fabric of the League, formed by the indolent pusillanimity of Henry the Third, cemented by the blood of the princes of Guise, and perpetuated by ambition, under the mask of religion; began to dissolve under its own weight. The discordant, and heterogeneous materials of which it was composed, were no longer held together by any common principle of union. The assistance of Spain was precarious, uncertain, and distant; while the danger was imminent and immediate. Henry, conscious of his own strength, and aware of the weakness of his enemies, refused to listen to the overtures for a further prolongation of the truce. Already, various of the places, which had manifested the greatest devotion to the duke of Mayenne, abandoned him in the decline of his fortune, and made terms of composition with the king. Fescamp, on the coast of Normandy, led the way; and its voluntary surrender was followed by the more important submission of Cambray. Balagny, who commanded in the city with absolute authority, after the death of the duke of Alençon, by whom it was originally captured from the Spaniards; had maintained himself since that time, in a species of independence, and projected to transmit the Cambresis to his posterity,

Submission of Balagny.

(6) Memoires de Nevers, vol. ii. p. 405—433. Davila, p. 1243—1253. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 74—98. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 251—267; and vol. iii. p. 310—316.

as a fief, or principality, relieving only of the crown of France. Henry, desirous to secure, on any terms, so valuable a place, which might afford him an easy entrance into Flanders; granted Balagny the most favourable and ample conditions (7).

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The spirit of loyalty and obedience, which had been so long extinct, seemed to awake in every part of the kingdom; and it was strengthened by the facility of obtaining from the crown, in its present state of weakness, any demand, however extravagant. Vitry, who had given the first, and almost the only example of defection in the royal army, after the assassination of Henry the Third; exhibited one of the earliest proofs of allegiance. Irritated by the detention of the sums due to him, and no longer apprehensive for the safety of the Catholic religion, since the king's abjuration; he openly quitted the party of the League, and induced the inhabitants of Meaux to expel the troops of Mayenne. That city, from its position on the river Marne, and its vicinity to Paris, increased the distress of the metropolis, and accelerated its eventual surrender. Scarcely could the presence and exertions of the chief of the League, prevent the effects of so contagious a spirit, or quell the discontents of the parliament, which body manifested, in unambiguous terms, a disposition to receive the king. Apprehensive that the count de Belin, governor of Paris, was secretly inclined towards the same measure, Mayenne, regardless of the remonstrances, or entreaties of the Parisians, deprived him of his post. At the recommendation of the Spanish ministers, he confided that important charge to Brissac, on whose fidelity they thought they might rely with implicit confidence. The event proved, that they were deceived in their selection (8).

Vitry re-
turns to his
allegiance.

24th De-
cember.

(7) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 563. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 268, 269. (8) Ibid. vol. iii. p. 295, 296.

C H A P. IV. From the shore of the Mediterranean, to the bank of the Loire, Henry received the most flattering testimonies of submission. Aix, capital of Provence, invested by the forces of Epernon, declared itself in the obedience of the crown; and the inhabitants of Lyons having called to their assistance Ornano, proclaimed the king with acclamations, La Chatre, who commanded in Orleans, assembled the inhabitants, and soon disposed them to return to their allegiance. The voluntary surrender of a place, which, by its example, had greatly influenced the conduct of the Parisians, in their original revolt from Henry the Third; and which was the only passage across the Loire left to the League, produced the most beneficial consequences to the royal affairs. Animated with the same spirit, the province of Berry, and Bourges, the capital, abandoned the duke of Mayenne (9).

Coronation of the king.

Anxious to avail himself of the favourable change in the dispositions of the people, and desirous to augment their veneration for his person and dignity, Henry determined to cause his coronation to be performed without delay. Prescription, so forcible in its empire over the minds of men, had confined exclusively to Rheims, for several centuries, the ceremony of consecrating the French kings; and the vial, which contained the sacred oil, used in anointing them, was preserved in that city. But, as Rheims still continued to adhere to the League, it became indispensable to select another place for the solemnity. After mature deliberation, Chartres was preferred; and a vial, whose origin was no less supernatural, and the virtues, attributed to which, were equally miraculous, was obtained from the abbey of Marmoutier, near Tours. The ceremony was conducted

27th February.

(9) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 107—123. Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 272—276; and vol. iii. p. 295—310. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 1—5. Davila, p. 1264—1268. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 199—200, and p. 212—219.

with

with all the magnificence, becoming the occasion (10). C H A P.
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Undermined by internal disaffection, and attacked by external violence, the duke of Mayenne began to experience in its utmost extent, the instability of fortune. All his exertions, aided by the largesses of Spain, and supported by a foreign garrison of Walloons, Neapolitans, and Germans, whom he introduced into Paris; could not sustain his declining cause, nor protract the submission of the capital to its lawful sovereign. Repeatedly warned, that Brissac, the new governor, was already negotiating to deliver up the place to Henry, he despised, or neglected the admonition. His presence continued to impose some new restraint, and to awe the loyal part of the inhabitants. But, no sooner had the necessity of concerting the operations of the approaching campaign, compelled him to quit the capital, than his absence facilitated its surrender. The enterprize was, nevertheless, arduous, dangerous, and uncertain. Brissac was surrounded with spies, who watched all his motions with jealous suspicion, and whose vigilance no dissimulation could circumvent. The duke of Feria, and his colleagues, retained by continual distributions of money, a great number of adherents among the inferior classes of the people, who were devoted to Philip the Second. That monarch was aided by the cardinal legate, by the declamations of the ecclesiastics, and by the remains of the powerful faction of the "sixteen," which had been humbled, but, not extinguished, by the duke of Mayenne (11). 1594.
State of
Paris.

6th March.
Mayenne
quits the
capital.

In defiance of these impediments, Brissac, having previously stipulated, for the preservation of all the privileges of the capital, for the pardon and oblivion of every offence committed against the late, or pre- Brissac treats
with the
king.

(10) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 317—332. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 123—129. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 220—222. (11) Davila, p. 1280. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 7, 8. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 297.

C H A P. IV. 1594. sent government, and for the unmolested retreat of the foreign troops stationed in Paris; agreed to admit the royal forces into the place. Henry, induced not more by the clemency of his character, than by policy and wisdom, to prevent the effusion of blood, and the pillage of the metropolis; readily consented to every demand. It only remained, to conceal the design till the moment of its execution, and to lull the apprehensions of those, who were interested to betray, or to oppose the measure. Having communicated his intention to such members of the parliament of Paris, as he knew to be devoted to the crown, and on whose co-operation he could confide; a day was fixed for opening the gates, by Brissac. Henry, favoured by the night, advanced at the head of his army, and appeared in the suburbs. The wise precautions, embraced by the governor, for securing the completion of his project, were aided by the interposition of fortune. Before any measures for opposing by force, the entry of the king, could be concerted; or executed on the part of the Spaniards; the troops had silently entered Paris, seized on the principal avenues, and rendered themselves masters of the arsenal, the Louvre, and the bridges. Scarcely any attempt at resistance was made, except by a body of German Landsquenets, whom marshal Matignon caused to be attacked, and put to the sword. The Neapolitans and Walloons remained motionless in their quarters, and were passive spectators of so vast, and important a transaction.

Royal troops admitted.

22d March.

Entrance of Henry into Paris.

In the midst of this extraordinary scene, which resembled rather the peaceful spectacle of a triumphal entry, than the reduction of a rebellious capital, Henry advanced, and was met by Brissac, who presented him the keys of Paris. He was rewarded with almost every mark of favour, or gratitude, which so distinguished a service merited. The king, continuing his progress, through an immense multitude of

of astonished and loyal inhabitants, who rent the air with acclamations; proceeded straight to the cathedral of "Notre Dame," in order to return his acknowledgments to Heaven, for the signal protection extended towards him on that memorable occasion. So admirable were the regulations laid down for the preservation of public tranquillity, and such was the exactitude with which they were pursued, that no popular commotion, nor act of violence, took place. Henry, attentive not only to the obligations of honour and treaty, but to the attentions of courtesy and gallantry; sent to assure the Papal legate, as well as the duchesses of Nemours and Montpensier, that their persons and property were under his immediate safeguard. The citizens, recovering from their apprehensions, and no longer actuated by the dread of being exposed to the fury of a licentious soldiery, resumed their ordinary employments; and Paris exhibited, in the course of the same day, the singular and opposite appearance, of a city entered by hostile forces, and of a peaceful and well-ordered metropolis. It was only necessary to dismiss the Spanish ministers and troops, in order to complete the splendour of the acquisition. Immediate intimation was conveyed, on the part of the king, to the duke of Feria, that no obstacle should be opposed to his evacuation of the city, with the forces under his command; and that their march to the frontiers should be unmolested. The intelligence was gladly received by Philip's general, and he began his retreat on the afternoon of the same day. Henry was present in person, when the Spaniards, to the number of three thousand, passed out of the gate of St. Denis. He saluted them with his accustomed courtesy, and charged the duke of Feria to carry his recommendations to the Catholic king; but, he accompanied it with his injunctions, to return no more to Paris. It was hardly possible to imagine a circumstance

C H A P.
IV.
1594.

Dismission
of the Spa-
nish troops.

C H A P. IV. stance more flattering to the French, or more humiliating to the Spanish monarch (12).

1594. Du Bourg, who commanded in the Bastille, exhibited a rare example of fidelity and adherence to the duke of Mayenne, by refusing either to surrender, or to sell, the fortress entrusted to his care. He even made some preparations for resistance: but, conscious that he could neither long defend himself, nor expect to be succoured, he capitulated after a few days, on honourable terms. The castle of Vincennes, in the immediate vicinity of Paris, followed the example (13). Henry, by so rapid and fortunate a series of events, became master of the capital, lost not an instant in endeavouring to restore tranquillity, to revive the obedience due to the laws, and to obliterate the memory of the past transactions. The parliament, which had given many proofs of loyalty to the crown, even under the most adverse circumstances, and which had suffered severely from the tyranny of the "council of sixteen;" was re-established in its authority, privileges, and jurisdiction. In consequence of the king's facility, or clemency, the edict was verified and carried into execution, without waiting for the return of the fugitive members, who had followed his fortune, and held their sittings at Tours, since the insurrection of the Parisians, under the preceding reign. Grateful for so distinguished a mark of favour and protection, the parliament repaid it by coming to the strongest resolutions, declaring of their abhorrence and detestation of the proceedings of the League. They expressly revoked and annulled the powers delegated to the duke of Mayenne, as lieutenant-general of the crown; enjoined him, on

Restoration
of the par-
liament.

30th March.

(12) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 223—227; and tom. ii. p. 1—5. Sully, vol. i. p. 138—140. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 138—142. Davila, p. 1280—1284. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 334—343. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 8—12. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 334—337. (13) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 342, and p. 343, 344.

pain of treason, to acknowledge Henry the Fourth; and abolished every act of the pretended assembly of the States General, as the criminal machinations of rebels, devoted to the court of Madrid (14).

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1594

These resolutions had been preceded by an edict of amnesty and indemnity to the Parisians, couched in the most comprehensive terms, and including the pardon or remission of every fault committed by them, since the commencement of the troubles. Henry's magnanimity disdained to punish even the ecclesiastics, accused of exciting Barriere to assassinate him; and he permitted them to withdraw, unmolested, under the protection of the cardinal legate (15). Such was the impotent, and inextinguishable enmity of many of the zealous preachers of the League, that even the ruin of their party, and the terror of punishment, could not impose a restraint on their conduct. They continued to declaim against the king, to refuse absolution to such as acknowledged his title, and to excite the people anew to sedition. It became necessary to embrace some measure for the suppression of an evil, which might, in a capital recently subjected, and among minds susceptible of the most violent impressions, be productive of fresh commotions. Orders were, therefore, issued, and billets delivered, to about fifty of the most intractable partizans of Spain and the League, enjoining them to quit the city without delay. But, in this single violation, if such it can with propriety be termed, of the articles stipulated on the part of Brissac, the utmost attention to the safety and protection of every individual was observed. They were furnished with passports, preserved from violence, and admitted either to take the oaths of allegiance and submission to the government, or, in case of refusal, to retire to

Measures for
preserving
tranquillity.

(14) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 145—148. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 345—347.
(15) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 141. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tom. ii. p. 14.

their

CHAP. IV. their own houses. Excited by the example of the parliament, the university of Paris convoked its members, and adopted resolutions, calculated to allay the scruples of the timid and the bigotted; many of which description of men hesitated to acknowledge the legitimacy of the king's title, while he remained unabsolved from the Papal censures (16).

26th April.

Treaty with Villars, for Rouen.

The tide which had ran for several years, with irresistible impetuosity, in favour of the League, now flowed with equal violence, in an opposite direction. Rouen, and several other considerable places in Normandy, returned to the obedience of the crown. Villars, who had signalized himself by his long and successful defence of that city, having treated for its submission, obtained from Henry almost every concession, or donation, which his avidity and ambition could dictate. To a prodigious sum of ready money, pensions, and employments, was added the important and honourable charge of admiral of France (17). It became necessary for the king, however reluctantly, to deprive Biron of the office, on whom it had been previously conferred. He endeavoured to soften so harsh and unpalatable a measure, by raising Biron to the rank of marshal, and by the most liberal testimonies of his affection and gratitude. But, the wound was incurable; and the resentment to which it unhappily gave birth, in a high-spirited and indignant mind, was eventually productive of the most fatal consequences. Biron, conceiving his services repaid with neglect, listened to the suggestions of the emissaries of Spain; excited convulsions in the state, and became finally the victim of his own treasonable practices. Even in those provinces, where the authority and influence of the princes of Lorraine had been most

(16) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 226—230. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 15. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 144, 145, and p. 151, 152. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 347—349. Davila, p. 1285. (17) Sully, vol. i. p. 129—138, and p. 140—144. Davila, p. 1286. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 356—358.

acknowledged,

acknowledged, a spirit of reviving loyalty disclosed itself. Abbeville, a principal city of Picardy, in defiance of the duke of Aumale, sent a deputation to the king, to implore pardon for their rebellion. In Champagne, the immediate government of the duke of Guise; Troyes expelled the prince of Joinville, his brother, and invited the royal troops to repair to their assistance. The duke of Elbœuf, first of all the family of Lorraine, made his private submissions to Henry, and was rewarded with the government of Poitiers. Many inferior cities in every part of France, threw off their subjection to the League, and eagerly sought to merit forgiveness, by a prompt return to their duty (18).

C H A P.
IV.
1594.
Submission
of Abbeville,

and of other
cities.

The duke of Mayenne, when he quitted Paris, had repaired to Bar le Duc, in the dominions of the duke of Lorraine, there to confer with that prince, on the measures requisite to be embraced in the declining state of their affairs. In a tumultuous and discordant consultation, at which the duke of Aumale was present, no resolution of energy was taken, for their common defence and safety. The natural irresolution of Mayenne was strengthened by the disagreement of his allies; while, on one hand, the duke of Lorraine inclined to negotiate a peace with the king of France; and, on the other, the duke of Aumale, implacable and desperate, proposed to admit the Spaniards into Amiens, and to renounce his native country, by submitting unconditionally to Philip the Second (19). In this embarrassing situation, Mayenne, after a short conference with count Mansfeldt, commander of the Spanish forces, determined to repair to Brussels. The government of the Low Countries had been recently entrusted by the Catholic king, to the archduke Ernest, whose election to the French throne he

Measures of
Mayenne.

(18) Davila, p. 1290—1291. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 358, 359. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 152—154.

(19) Davila, p. 1291, 1292.

C H A P. had vainly attempted to procure. Desirous of justifying himself from the imputations laid to his charge by the ambassadors of Spain, and of concerting in person the operations of the approaching campaign; the duke of Mayenne ventured to entrust himself to the good faith of the new governor of the Netherlands. Ernest received him with every external demonstration of respect and confidence. But, the duke of Feria and his colleagues, irritated at the impediments, which, in his public capacity, as head of the League, he had opposed to the choice of the infanta, strenuously urged the expediency and propriety of seizing his person, and even of punishing him as a traitor. The counsel, was, nevertheless, rejected by the arch-duke, without hesitation. So notorious a breach of public faith, committed against a prince who had voluntarily confided himself to the national honour, he was sensible, must have been attended with the most injurious consequences to the crown of Spain. It could only have incensed the other branches of the family of Lorraine, alienated the adherents of Mayenne from Philip, and precipitated the destruction of the League (20).

Position of
Philip the
Second.

The reduction, or rather, submission of the metropolis to Henry the Fourth, followed by the return of Lyons, Orleans, Rouen, and so many other cities, to his obedience; rendered it expedient to adopt a new system for the prosecution of the war. No hopes remained of elevating Clara Isabella to the throne of France; nor could it any longer be expected, that the sceptre would pass into a branch of the house of Austria. But, the kingdom, which Philip had vainly laboured to acquire, or to destroy; he might be able to diminish, and to weaken. The party, with which he acted, though enfeebled, was

(20) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 280, 281. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 28. Davila, p. 1301, 1302. Memoires de Nevers, vol. ii. p. 710—715.

not extinct. Henry continued still unabsolved from the sentence of excommunication; and the court of Rome, attentive to the events of the war, would, unquestionably, regulate its conduct by good, or ill success. Burgundy remained firm to the duke of Mayenne; and Brittany adhered, in a great measure, to the duke of Mercœur. Philip had even obtained possession of the two most valuable and commercial ports of that maritime province. Blavet, better known in the present century, by the name of Port l'Orient, was garrisoned by Don John d'Aquila, who had under his command, four thousand veteran Spaniards. Crodon, in the immediate vicinity of Brest, the harbour of which place it completely blocked, was a fort, already far advanced in its construction, situated upon a craggy and almost insulated rock, overhanging the sea. It was obvious, what advantages Spain must derive from two such fortresses, and how deeply England, as well as France, was interested, in his ejection from Brittany. If to these advantages and acquisitions, could be added the provinces of Picardy and Champagne, he might still be regarded as the arbiter of the French monarchy, and he could, at pleasure, invade the kingdom in its most vulnerable quarter (21).

Determined by these judicious and obvious reflexions, orders were sent from the cabinet of Madrid, to the arch-duke, to march a body of forces into Picardy, and endeavour to gain possession of the most important places on the frontier. Mansfeldt, at the head of ten thousand infantry, and a thousand cavalry, accompanied by the duke of Aumale, instantly entered France, and sat down before La Capelle. Henry no sooner received intelligence of the irruption of the Spaniards, than he quitted

CHAP.
IV.
1594.
Plan for continuing the war, embraced by Spain.

9th Mays

(21) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 310, 311. Mezeray, vol. xii. p. 22, 23. Davila, p. 1293—1296, and p. 1322, 1323.

Paris,

C H A P. Paris, and hastened to its relief: but, before he could
IV. arrive in its vicinity, the town had already surren-
 1594. ed. Anxious to repair the loss, and unable to bring
 25th May, Mansfeldt to a general engagement, he formed the
 Henry be- siege of Laön. The city, built on the summit of a
 sieges Laön. mountain, was considered as one of the strongest in
 the kingdom. The duke of Mayenne had left in it
 his second son, the count de Sommerive, and had
 removed thither, as to a place of security, his most
 valuable effects. The enterprize partook, in some
 measure, of temerity, when it was considered that
 Henry might be assailed in his camp, by the united
 forces of Spain and of the League. It required all
 the vigilance of the king, aided by the talents of
 Biron, and the efforts of the French nobility, who
 crowded to the royal standard; to overcome the
 resistance of the besieged. The allied army, led by
 Mansfeldt and Mayenne, advanced to succour Laön,
 and made the most desperate exertions, in order to
 throw provisions into the city. But, the loss of one
 of their principal convoys, where a considerable body
 of Spaniards was put to the sword, necessitated the
 confederates to retire. In effecting their retreat
 before a victorious enemy which was not unaccom-
 panied with danger; the eminent military abilities of
 the duke of Mayenne, over which the defeats sustained
 at Ivry, and at Arques, had thrown a cloud; were
 conspicuously and beneficially displayed. He covered
 the rear from insult; exposed his person, while he
 performed the office of an experienced commander;
 and extorted applauses from Henry himself. Laön,
 abandoned to its fate, continued, nevertheless, to
 make a long and desperate resistance; nor did it sur-
 render, till no hopes remained of relief from any
 quarter. The king granted to the garrison, the most
 honourable conditions (22).

Efforts of
the Spani-
ards, to re-
lieve the
city.

16th June.

If surren-
ders.

22d July.

(22) Sully, vol. i. p. 148, and p. 155—160. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 342—345. Davila, p. 1303—1311. De Thou. vol. xii. p. 281—289. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 360—364.

Terrified

Terrified by the success of the royal arms, and anxious to avert a similar fate from themselves, the inhabitants of the principal cities of Picardy, sent to offer their submissions. Even the presence and remonstrances of the dukes of Mayenne and Aumale, could not prevent the revolt of Amiens from the League. Noyon was taken by the king, after a short siege. Beauvais voluntarily returned to its allegiance; and after a victorious campaign, Henry repairing to Paris, was received with testimonies of joy and affection. His presence was requisite in the capital, where the remaining adherents of Spain and of Mayenne, secretly aided by the discontented among his own courtiers, and openly encouraged by Biron, who had never forgiven the injury done him by Henry's resumption of the dignity of admiral; seemed to menace a dangerous fermentation (23). The death of the cardinal of Bourbon, whose name still served to perpetuate a faction in the state, and whose ambition, if aided by circumstances, might have led him to enterprizes of a criminal nature; was favourable to the continuance of tranquillity. He was little regretted by the king; and his numerous ecclesiastical preferments, which remained at the disposal of the crown, enabled Henry to reward the services, or to purchase the submission of those with whom he treated (24).

During these events, the duke of Mayenne, repairing again to Brussels, endeavoured to prop his declining fortune, by new conventions with the ministers of Philip. Deserted by his own party, accused by the ambassadors of Spain with betraying the common cause, and feebly supported by the arch-duke;

(23) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 19, 20. (24) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 277, 278. Jour. d'Hen. IV. vol. i. tom. ii. p. 37, 38. Sully, vol. i. p. 150—152, and p. 171, 172. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 407.

C H A P. he was reduced to the humiliating necessity of justifying his conduct, to the court of Madrid. Encouraged to treat with Henry, whose magnanimity and clemency he well knew; his characteristic indecision, added to some faint and fallacious hopes of retrieving his affairs, prevented him from embracing so salutary a measure. It was at length determined in the archduke's council, to make Burgundy the theatre of war; a province, where the duke's influence was great, and all the principal cities of which were at his devotion. The vicinity of the county of Burgundy, which constituted a part of the Spanish dominions, might greatly facilitate the entry of a foreign army, on that side of France; and Henry, if vigorously attacked at the same time, in two quarters, so widely separated, would, it was imagined, be unable to make effectual resistance. But, such was the general consternation, or defection of the League, that it could no longer be perpetuated, except by violence and terror. Macon, Auxerre, and other cities of Burgundy, expelled the garrisons of the duke of Mayenne. Dijon, capital of the province, prepared to follow their example; and only the personal appearance of the duke, at the head of a body of cavalry, prevented the submission of the inhabitants to the crown. He was even compelled to have recourse to acts of severity and punishment, in order to deter them from new attempts of a similar nature.

Defection of
Burgundy,
from the
League.

November.

Some of the magistrates, were put to death by his express command, and the most jealous precautions were used to retain the citizens in subjection. It was evident that a cause, which stood in need of such support, was not far from its dissolution (25).

Hostilities in
Brittany.

While, on the northern and eastern frontier, so many great events were transacted, the more remote

(25) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 415—429. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 27, 28. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 353—356. Davila, p. 1318—1320.

provinces

provinces were not exempt from the calamities of civil war. In Brittany, d'Aumont was opposed to the duke of Mercœur, and Don John d'Aquila. If the troops of the League had acted in concert with those of Spain, their superiority to the royal forces, must have been indisputable. But, their mutual distrust, which approached to enmity, enabled d'Aumont, after taking the town of Morlaix, to push his advantages. Reinforced by a body of English, whom Elizabeth, the steady ally of Henry, and the unalterable enemy of Philip; had sent to Brittany, under the command of sir John Norris; he determined to form the siege of Crodon. This fortress, intended to bridle the refractory spirit of the Bretons, and, which, from its position, commanded the entrance of the harbour of Brest; though not completed, was capable of a long defence. Praxede, a Spanish officer, of approved capacity, with three hundred of his countrymen, furnished with every requisite for sustaining an attack, had been placed in the fort. He proved himself deserving of the confidence reposed in his valour and skill. The autumnal season was unfavourable to the besiegers, who laboured under numerous impediments; and only the junction of the duke of Mercœur with Aquila was wanting, to have compelled them to raise the siege. Even, when hopeless of relief, and sustained by his own courage alone, Praxede exerted the most heroic efforts, to preserve so valuable an acquisition to the crown of Spain. His troops, animated with the same spirit, refused to capitulate, or even to demand quarter. They perished, almost to a man, when the victorious soldiers of d'Aumont entered the place. Nor was the capture effected without a prodigious effusion of blood, on the part of the royalists. Frobisher, so celebrated in the naval annals of England, was killed in the breach; and Elizabeth, menaced with new invasions in her own dominions by Philip, shortly afterwards

C H A P.
IV.
1594.

D'Aumont
lays siege to
Crodon.

17th No-
vember.
It is taken
by storm.

C H A P. afterwards recalled her forces from France. The
 IV. fort of Crodon was instantly demolished by the
 1594. Bretons: but, that important, and commercial province did not effect its entire emancipation from the Spanish power, for several years subsequent to these events; and Spain retained the port of Blavet, till the final accommodation between the two crowns, at the treaty of Vervins (26).

Affairs of
 Provence.

At the other extremity of the kingdom, Marseilles continued to maintain itself in a state of avowed revolt, and seemed to meditate the design of erecting itself into a species of republic, governed by Duumvirs, under the protection of Spain. Epernon, whose insolence and despotism had rendered him odious to the inhabitants of Provence, scarcely deigned to observe the forms of submission towards the crown. The ambiguity of his conduct, and the tyranny of his administration, equally impelled Henry to desire his removal. But, such was the distance of the province from the seat of government, and so unconfirmed was his authority over the great nobility, in a period of civil commotion; that the king did not venture to adopt a measure, the execution of which was at once difficult and uncertain. The marshal Montmorency, recently raised to the dignity of constable of France, was, therefore, commissioned to hear the complaints of the parliament and people of Aix, and finally to arbitrate between them and Epernon. Various causes of delay, nevertheless, interposing, secret orders were issued to Lesdiguières, who commanded the royal forces in Dauphinè, to expel Epernon by violence. That commander passed the river Durance, at the head of a body of troops; entered Provence; and after an

Lesdiguières
 opposes
 Epernon.

(26) Davila. p. 1322—1327. Hume, Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 374. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 305—317. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 414. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 22, 23.

action,

action, the issue of which was not decisive on either side, reduced his adversary to submit to the sequestration of the fort, which he had recently constructed for the purpose of holding in subjection the city of Aix. It was soon afterwards demolished by the inhabitants themselves, indignant at the treatment which they had received from their governor, and indirectly encouraged by Lefdiguieres (27). Having restored a degree of temporary calm to Provence, he returned into Dauphinè. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, active and vigilant, had availed himself of the absence of so formidable a general. Reinforced by a number of German and Milaneze troops, he laid siege to Briqueras, the vicinity of which to Turin rendered it peculiarly capable of annoying his subjects, and even of endangering his capital. The fort surrendered, after a vigorous resistance; and the approach of winter incapacitated Lefdiguieres from making any effectual exertions, for retrieving so important a loss (28).

C H A P.
IV.
1594.

War with
Savoy.

23d Octo-
ber.

Wearied with a war, which exhausted his dominions and resources, the duke of Lorrain negotiated a separate peace with the king of France, and even entered into an offensive treaty of alliance with him; or, at least, permitted his troops to fight under the French banners, against Spain (29). The duke of Guise himself, renouncing the expectation of a chimerical crown, and ill supported by the Spaniards, sought an occasion of submitting to his legitimate sovereign. He was stimulated to it, by the exhortations of the duchesses of Nemours and Montpensier; by the alienation which subsisted between him and

Peace with
the duke of
Lorrain.
16th No-
vember.

(27) Vie de'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 61—99. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 317—323. Vie de Lefdiguieres, p. 145—152. Davila, p. 1327—1330. (28) Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 747—749. Vie de Lefdig. p. 152—154. Davila, p. 1330, 1331. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 324—327. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 441, 442. (29) Chron. vol. iii. p. 407.—410. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 344, 345. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 25, 26. and p. 30, 31.

CHAP. his uncle, the duke of Mayenne; and by the embarrased state of his affairs, political, and personal. The cities of Champagne, that still adhered to him, were held by a precarious tenure; and he had only obtained possession of Rheims, by the recent commission of a crime. St. Paul, who, during the troubles of the League, and originally aided by the protection of the late duke of Guise, assassinated at Blois, had risen to a high degree of civil and military consideration; profiting of the imprisonment of the young duke, rendered himself almost absolute and independent in the province of Champagne. He even retained possession of Rheims by a numerous garrison, which was entirely at his devotion; and it became necessary to put him to death, or, to renounce the expectation of recovering the place. The duke did not hesitate to commit the act with his own hand, and to become the executioner of St. Paul, whom he ran through the body with his sword. He obtained from the clemency of Henry, the most favourable terms; an oblivion of every offence; a vast sum for the liquidation of his own, and his father's debts, contracted in the cause of rebellion; and ultimately, the government of Provence, in exchange, or in compensation for that of Champagne. It seems hardly possible to have dictated better conditions, if he had been victorious; and Henry was too well justified in the complaint, which he sometimes allowed to escape him, that "he had been compelled to purchase of rebels, his own dominions (30)."

Submission
of the duke
of Guise.
29th No-
vember.

December.

The king, after having renewed the edict of Poitiers, in favour of his Protestant subjects, repaired anew to the frontiers, where the advanced sea-

(30) Journ. d'Hen. IV. vol. i. tom. ii. p. 5. Davila, 1321, 1322. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 26, 27. Chron. Nov. iii. p. 411—413, De Thou, vol. xii. p. 300—302. Sully, vol. i. p. 176—180, and p. 185.

son of the year, and the rigours of winter, could not suspend the operations of war. Conscious that he must henceforth meet the whole shock of the Spanish monarchy; and that Philip, who had hitherto acted only as an auxiliary of the League, and as the champion of the Catholic religion, would assail him with all his forces; Henry prepared to support the impending blow. Yet, anxious, if possible, to avert so dangerous a conflict, he addressed letters to the states and cities of Haynault and Artois, exhorting them to induce the king of Spain to withdraw his forces from the French territories; and menacing them with rendering their country the theatre of hostilities, if the court of Madrid persisted in its measures (31). No reply whatever was made to these denunciations, either on the part of the arch-duke, or of the states; and Henry returning to Paris, narrowly escaped a danger more formidable than any external attack of Spain, or of the League. A youth, named, John Chatel, who had not completed his nineteenth year, of a melancholy turn, and addicted to many of the most depraved, or abandoned propensities of human nature; determined, from a desire of expiating his offences, to merit the favour of Heaven, by stabbing the king. Having mixed in the croud, who assembled to congratulate Henry on his safe return to the capital; he aimed a blow, which was so well directed, that if the king, in stooping forward to embrace Montigny, one of his courtiers, had not given the knife another direction, it must, probably, have been mortal. Instead of entering his throat, the instrument struck his mouth, and broke one of his teeth. The assassin was instantly seized, and conducted to prison. He supported all the variety of torture previous to, and at his execution, with unconquerable firmness; sustained by the

C H A P.
IV.

1594.

17th December.
Henry addresses letters to the Flemings.27th December.
Chatel stabs the king.

29th December.

(31) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 327—330. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 430—432.

C H A P. same mistaken fanaticism, which had originally im-
IV. pelled him to so criminal an act (32).

1594.

Exile of the
Jesuits.

The society of Jesuits, some individuals of whom appeared to have been privy to the design, if not to have encouraged him to its commission, were involved in the penalties of Chatel's sentence. Their devoted adherence to Spain, and to the League, added to the genius and spirit of their principles and doctrines, which seemed to inculcate regicide in many cases, rendered them justly obnoxious to general indignation. The parliament of Paris, by a severe decree, pronounced them seducers of youth, banished them the kingdom within fifteen days, on pain of treason, and confiscated their property to pious uses. Guignard, one of their body, convicted of having in his possession, if not of composing, libellous papers, tending to subvert all government, and to excite to the assassination of princes; was executed at Paris. A pyramid, commemorative of the crime perpetuated by Chatel, and containing on its different sides, a number of inscriptions, defamatory of the Jesuits; was erected in the middle of the metropolis, on the spot where had stood the assassin's house. Yet, such was the ascendancy and influence of that celebrated order of ecclesiastics; so insinuating was their address, and so powerful were their protectors; that the parliaments of Toulouse and of Bourdeaux refused to concur in the sentence issued at Paris. Under their protection, the Jesuits continued to exercise their functions; till the active interference of the see of Rome in their behalf, aided by other favourable circumstances, procured at the end of ten years, the obliteration of all past transactions or offences, and the re-establishment of the order in every part of France (33).

(32) D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 339, 340. Davila, p. 1332, 1333. Chron. Nov. vo iii. p. 432—435. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tom. ii. p. 64—68. Sully, vol. i. p. 191. (33) D'Aubigné, Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 340—342. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 335—338. Davila, p. 1334. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 32—34. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 435—440.

On his recovery from the effects of the wound, which he had received from Chatel, Henry, without further delay, declared war on Spain, with every circumstance usual in that age. He accompanied it with a manifesto, calculated to render Philip odious to all Europe, as the common enemy of the tranquillity of nations, and peculiarly, of the repose of France. The court of Madrid, in a counter declaration, justified its proceedings; and the Catholic king continued to veil his enmity, or ambition, under the specious pretence of zeal for the purity of the Catholic faith, and the extirpation of heresy (34). It may, perhaps, admit of some doubt, whether in thus provoking an open contest with so powerful a monarchy as Spain, Henry did not exhibit more resentment, or display more magnanimity, than sound policy. France, exhausted by a long series of civil war, was unequal to sustain the pressure of the Spanish arms, and at various times, nearly sunk under their weight. The finances were in the last stage of disorder, anticipation, and confusion. The king found it equally difficult to content his Catholic, and to repress his Hugonot subjects. In various provinces, the League was still powerful; while the nobility who adhered to the crown, impoverished in their fortunes, and diminished in their numbers, loudly demanded a respite from the toils of repeated campaigns. Henry himself, scarcely become master of his capital, in danger of perpetual assassination, unabsolved by the Papal see, destitute of issue, and hourly exposed to the accidents of war; held his crown and life by the most precarious tenure. His death must have been followed by a disputed succession, and by every misfortune incident to external hostility, and to internal weakness or division. In perusing history, we are

C H A P.
IV.

1595.

17th January.

Henry proclaims war with Spain.

Reflexions on that measure.

(34) De. Thou, vol. xii. p. 342—344: Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 481—483.

C. H. A. P.
IV.1595.
Affairs of
Burgundy.5th Febru-
ary.Escape, and
projects of
the duke of
Nemours.

March.

24th April.

perpetually compelled to admit, that fortune, still more than wisdom, is the arbiters of mankind.

The rapid progress of the royal affairs in Burgundy, seemed, nevertheless, to form the best justification of the rupture with Spain, and to menace the complete extinction of the remaining power or influence of Mayenne. Neither his exhortations, nor his menaces, could controul the spirit of disaffection in the inhabitants of the principal cities. In defiance of a numerous garrison, the citizens of Beaune rose tumultuously, admitted marshal Biron into the town, and, after a desperate conflict, compelled the governor, placed over them by the head of the League, to retire into the citadel. Invested by superior forces, and hopeless of relief, he was ultimately necessitated to surrender, after a defence of near five weeks (35). Nor did the affairs of the duke of Nemours, in the adjoining province of the Lyonnais, wear a more favourable appearance. That prince having, by a bold, and ingenious stratagem, effected his escape from the castle of Pierre Encise, where he had been detained; resumed his plans for rendering himself master of Lyons, either by famine, or by force. Assisted by his ally and relation, the duke of Savoy, he collected forces, reinforced the garrisons which belonged to him on the Rhone, and flattered himself with the speedy completion of his ambitious projects. But, the venality, or perfidy of one of his captains, who commanded in the city of Vienne; and who, corrupted by the offers of the constable Montmorency, betrayed to him the place; at once rendered abortive all the hopes of the duke of Nemours. With the loss of Vienne, his principal fortress and post upon the Rhone, he renounced the prosecution of hostilities. Retiring to Annecy in Savoy, the

(35) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 487—491. Davila, p. 1341, 1342. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 353—358.

emotions of indignation, grief, and disappointment, in a high-spirited mind, produced a distemper, of which, after languishing a considerable time, he expired, at the age of twenty-eight years. Dreaded by his enemies, admired by his friends, and possessing qualities, rather brilliant and dangerous, than solid or conciliating, he was little regretted by any party; and his death was quickly obliterated amidst the important transactions of so busy a period (36).

Excited by the example and success of the inhabitants of Beaune, the magistrates and people of Dijon had recourse to arms; attacked the troops of Mayenne, and compelled the viscount de Tavannes, his lieutenant, to take refuge in the citadel. Biron, invited by them to repair to their assistance, lost no time in entering the city, and made every preparation for besieging the enemy. Meanwhile, Ferdinand de Velasco, constable of Castile, and governor of the Milanese, having received from the court of Madrid; peremptory orders to invade France; assembled a considerable army. Descending the Alps, through Savoy, he entered the county of Burgundy, and soon expelled the troops of Lorraine in the service of Henry; who, profiting of the unprepared and defenceless state of that remote province of the Spanish monarchy, had already captured several places. Velasco was speedily joined by the duke of Mayenne, at the head of a select body of brave and veteran adherents, who still accompanied his declining fortune. The confederates, unopposed, approached the banks of the Saone, over which river they made dispositions for throwing bridges, in order to advance to the relief of the citadel of Dijon. Alarmed at the prospect of being attacked and surrounded by so superior a force, Biron, unable either to reduce Tavannes to capti-

C H A P.
IV.1595.
His death.Biron is received into
Dijon.

April.

Velasco, and
Mayenne,
march to relieve the
citadel.

May.

(36) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 492—495, and p. 518—522. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 348—350. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 35—37. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 323, 324, and p. 455—458, and p. 462, 463.

C H A P. late, or to meet the enemy in the field; urged the
 IV. king, by repeated messengers, to march to his relief.
 1595. To his entreaties, were added the expostulations of
 the constable Montmorency, who commanded at Lyons, and who equally dreaded, that the weight of the Spanish arms might be directed towards himself. A more powerful and eloquent advocate than either, induced Henry to yield to their request. The celebrated Gabrielle d'Étrees, his mistress, flattered with the expectation that he might effect the speedy conquest of the county of Burgundy, and that he would confer it on the son whom she had borne him; joined her solicitations to those of Biron and Montmorency. These united efforts were irresistible, and determined the king to repair in person to Dijon, without delay (37).

Henry determines to repair to Burgundy.

Motives, and effects of that measure.

It is hard to condemn, and it is, perhaps, more difficult to justify, Henry's conduct in complying with their wishes. However critical, or important, were the affairs of Burgundy, the state of the northern provinces, was still more exposed, and more alarming. Picardy and Champagne, open to invasion, offered an easy entrance to the Spanish forces; who were led and conducted by the duke of Aumale, Rosne, and many other illustrious, or intrepid partizans of the League, whom despair animated with double ardour, against their native prince and country. Death had terminated the short administration of the archduke Ernest, in the Netherlands; and he had been succeeded provisionally, by the count de Fuentes, who, to an implacable enmity towards France, added military talents, activity, and enterprize. In such a situation, it was highly dangerous for Henry to abandon the capital, and to expose his person on a distant frontier, in the acquisition of glory, or of territory.

(37) Sully, vol. i. p. 192, 193. Davila, p. 1346. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 37, 38. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 495-496.

Even,

Even, the progress of Velasco and Mayenne, how-
 ever rapid in Burgundy, could not be productive of
 evils so great, as the success of Fuentes in Picardy;
 the vicinity of which province to the metropolis,
 rendered its defence and preservation peculiarly ne-
 cessary. These obvious considerations were, never-
 theless, unable to retard, or to affect the king's reso-
 lution. Previous to his departure, he placed the
 prince of Conti at the head of a council of state in
 Paris. The protection of the northern frontiers, he
 entrusted to marshal Bouillon, the count de St. Pol,
 and Villars, who conducted a body of Norman troops
 from Rouen, to the assistance of his two colleagues.
 They were enjoined to act in concert, and to obey
 the duke of Nevers, as commander in chief. Expe-
 rience demonstrated, that neither the civil, nor mili-
 tary system, embraced by Henry, were maturely
 considered, or judiciously chosen. The council, sta-
 tioned in the capital, was feeble, divided, and desti-
 tute of energy. In the camp, the incompatible and
 fiery temper of Villars, was ill calculated to act in
 combination, or to submit to a superior. Bouillon,
 though possessed of capacity and experience, was a
 Hugonot; and the count de St. Pol, young, and of
 limited talents, had little weight, or influence, in the
 deliberations. All the misfortunes, which distin-
 guished the campaign, were justly to be attributed
 to so vicious and defective a plan, aggravated by the
 distance and absence of the sovereign (38).

On his arrival at Dijon, Henry, leaving a body of
 troops, under the count de Torigny, to continue the
 blockade of the citadel; advanced, at the head of
 about fifteen hundred cavalry, in order to retard the
 march of the Spanish army. Velasco had already
 passed the Saone; and the advanced parties of his
 horse, meeting with those of the royal forces, a skir-

C H A P.
 IV.
 1595.

Precauti-
 ons, for the
 security of
 Picardy.

(38) Sully, vol. i. p. 193, 194. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 38, 39.

CHAPTER IV. mish ensued. Biron, by the king's command, having endeavoured to reconnoitre their strength and position; was attacked by a superior number of the enemy; and reduced, after a vigorous resistance, to retreat in confusion; pursued by the French in the service of Spain, whom Mayenne had conducted to Velasco. In this dangerous, and critical predicament, Henry, though almost unarmed; and accompanied only by about two hundred and sixty horse, principally composed of the nobility, who attended his person; disdained to fly. Notwithstanding the inequality of the contest, and in presence of the whole cavalry of the confederates, sustained at no considerable distance, by their infantry; he ventured to face them, and to rescue Biron. His little troop, conscious of the magnitude of the peril, and sensible that the preservation of the king lay only in their courage; made the most desperate exertions, repulsed the enemy, and even pursued them a short distance. It is, nevertheless, incontestable, that Henry displayed more temerity, than conduct, on the occasion; and, that he owed his escape from so great and imminent a danger, solely to the incapacity and slowness of Velasco. His predecessor, Francis the First, with equal intrepidity, and far more numerous forces, but, with inferior fortune, had been made prisoner at Pavia, and carried to Madrid. Henry narrowly escaped a similar fate, or a premature death; and severe as were the terms imposed on Francis, by Charles the Fifth, while in captivity; Henry might have expected a more cruel, or ignominious treatment from Philip, who detested his person, and denied his title. The duke of Mayenne, sensible that the king had engaged too far, that his infantry could not arrive in time to his assistance, and that he might be easily routed, or taken; urged the constable of Castile to improve the moment, and to march to a certain victory. But, the Spaniard, cautious, distrustful

1595.
30th June.
Combat of
Fontaine
Françoise.

Reflexions
on the king's
conduct.

trustful of his ally, and fearful to commit to hazard the dominions of his master; peremptorily refused to follow the advice. On the contrary, intimidated by his knowledge that Henry was personally present in the combat, and aware of the activity and enterprize of so experienced a commander; he relinquished his views of conquest. Limiting his ambition to the preservation of the county of Burgundy, he instantly began his retreat across the Soane, broke down the bridges, and taking a strong position under the walls of the town of Gray, prepared for defensive operations. Henry, after pursuing him a few miles, and attempting to harass, or to cut off his rear, desisted, and returned to Dijon, in order to accelerate the reduction of the castle (39).

C H A P.
IV.
1595.

Velasco re-
treats.

No situation could be more hopeless, nor desperate, than that of Mayenne. Indignant at the conduct of Velasco; frustrated in his expectation of retrieving by one fortunate blow, his ruined affairs; exhausted in his means of continuing the war; and not daring to expose himself to the hazard of being invested by the royal forces in Chalons, the only city of importance in Burgundy which still adhered to

Desperate
situation of
Mayenne.

(39) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 360—365. Davila, p. 1346—1351. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 495—500. Sully, vol. i. p. 298—300. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 41, 42. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 352—355.

All the contemporary historians have minutely related the particulars of this celebrated combat; but, it is in Davila, who was, himself, a soldier, that we find the most accurate, animated, and picturesque narration of the skirmish. Neither Biron, nor the king, had intended to do more, than to reconnoitre the position and strength of the Spanish army. They were, in fact, surprised and attacked by a body of cavalry, chiefly composed of the troops of Mayenne. Only the most desperate efforts of courage, aided by good fortune, extricated Henry from the danger. Biron, being without his helmet, was wounded on the head; nor was the king better prepared for action in that respect. Davila scarcely blames Velasco for not exerting more decision or dispatch, as he well knew, that the loss of the whole county of Burgundy must have been the consequence of a defeat. Like the duke of Parma, at the skirmish of Aumale, he gave the king of France credit for less temerity, and more prudence; and like that illustrious commander, Velasco, if reproached with his error, might have replied, that he "believed himself contending with a general, and not a carabineer." Though Velasco's refusal to allow the duke of Mayenne to charge at the head of the allied cavalry, proved the king's preservation; yet, it seems difficult to impute to him any very great degree of blame.

him :

CHAF. him: he presented a striking example of the vicissitude of fortune. The inhumanity of his Spanish ally towards the sick and wounded soldiers of the League, who were refused entrance into the town of Gray, augmented the bitterness of his reflexions; and the generous behaviour of Henry, who caused the French prisoners to be treated with tenderness and care, was calculated to make a deep and opposite impression. Surrounded with difficulties, the duke, as his last resource, determined to retire into Savoy; to demand a safe-conduct from Philip, for his passage through Spain; and to repair in person to Madrid, there, at the feet of the Catholic king, to justify his own measures, and to point out the errors which had involved the League in ruin (40). From so decisive and irretrievable a step, he was saved by the interposition of Henry, who caused him to be indirectly apprized, that advantageous, and honourable terms would yet be granted him; and that, in the mean time, he might find an asylum in Chalons, where he should neither be molested, nor besieged. Even, in this last extremity of his affairs, the duke did not accept the king's proposal, till he had made a final effort to induce the constable of Castile to succour the castle of Dijon. Having received a refusal, he quitted the Spanish camp, with the small remainder of his followers, retired to Chalons, and commanded the citadel of Dijon, as well as the fortress of Taland, in its vicinity, to be surrendered to the royal forces (41).

He retires to Chalons.

Wisdom, and magnanimity of Henry's conduct.

In contemplating this act of Henry, which, by its inevitable consequences, virtually extinguished the League, as a party acting under the duke of Mayenne; we are not more charmed with the magnanimity and clemency, than penetrated with the wisdom of the measure. Past experience had proved,

(40) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 365. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 42. vila, p. 1351, 1352. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 365, 366.

(41) Da-

in the person of the constable of Bourbon, under Francis the First, how deep were the wounds, which one illustrious and persecuted individual could inflict on his native country, when driven to seek refuge in the arms of a foreign prince. Henry, in the course of the present year, had ample occasion to lament, that similar lenity had not been extended to, or embraced by, the remaining chiefs of the same powerful faction. Spain owed its success on the northern frontier, to their intimate knowledge of the weakness of France, and of the vulnerable parts of the monarchy. The duke of Mayenne, though placed by a combination of circumstances, at the head of a party in opposition to the crown, had never betrayed any personal animosity towards Henry. Still less, had he sacrificed the kingdom to Philip, the elevation of whose daughter to the throne, he had opposed, and finally prevented. His friends and adherents were numerous; and some fortunate accident, yet possible in the reverses of war, might renew and awaken the dying spirit of the League. It behoved a wise and able prince, to extinguish even its name; and while struggling with external and powerful enemies, to seize with eagerness every means for suppressing the continuance of civil war.

H A P.
IV.
1595.

Seduced by the prosperous condition of his affairs, the king, after restoring order in Burgundy, marched into the county of that name, passed the Soane, and endeavoured to provoke Velasco to an action. But, the Spaniard, strongly entrenched, and protected by the cannon of Gray, declined a battle, and allowed the French to ravage the province; to the gates of Befançon; secure, that though Henry might desolate, he could not make any permanent conquests. After some weeks of hostilities, he began, in fact, to perceive that the reduction of that country was not to be effected without greater preparations, and longer time. Maladies spread among his troops; and the

July.

Henry enters the county of Burgundy.

August:

Swiss

C H A P. IV. Swiss confederacy, alarmed at the approaches of so formidable a neighbour, and roused by the cries of the inhabitants of the country, who claimed their protection, interposed their mediation, to induce the king to leave them in repose. These motives were sufficiently powerful, to procure the evacuation of the province; which continued to form a portion of the Spanish monarchy, till it was conquered in the ensuing century, by Louis the Fourteenth, under the feeble successors of Philip the Second (42).

He retires.

4th September.

Henry, repairing with his court, to Lyons, made a triumphal entry into the city; received the testimonies of loyalty offered him by the inhabitants; and passed a short time amidst the festivities, acclamations, and marks of public joy, which his presence occasioned. Soon after his arrival, he granted a truce to the duke of Mercœur, for four months, which comprehended the two provinces of Poitou, and Brittany. With the duke of Mayenne, he established a similar suspension of arms, extending throughout the remainder of the kingdom, during three months; and preparatory to a general pacification. The dukes of Joyeuse and of Nemours were included in it, as members of the League, and adherents of Mayenne. An armistice was agreed on between the king, and Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy: but, new difficulties which arose, delayed, and finally prevented the conclusion of a peace. On every side, Henry beheld only submission or victory. The League might be regarded as vanquished; and its chief had already taken shelter under his clemency. He received from his agents at the court of Rome, the most flattering assurances of speedy absolution. He had subjected Burgundy, and carried devastation into the territories of Philip. Intoxicated

7th September.

Truce, made with Mayenne.

23d September.

Prosperous state of the king's affairs.

(42) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 369—371. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 500, 501. Davila, p. 1552—1555.

by so many prosperous circumstances; desirous of tasting repose, after his recent exertions and dangers; retained by the charms of his mistress, Gabrielle d'Etrees, to whom universal homage was paid, as to the arbitress of favours and honours; the king appears to have been, in some measure, enervated, and to have forgotten, for a short time, his more essential duties. His stay at Lyons was injurious to his own glory, and detrimental to the kingdom. He was speedily roused from his inactivity, when too late, by intelligence of events of the most adverse nature, which had already taken place at another extremity of his dominions (43).

C H A P.
IV.
1595.

(2) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 424, 428. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 45—47. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 513—518, and p. 523—526.

C H A P. V.

Military operations in Picardy.—Défeat of the French.—Capture of Dôurlens.—Enterprize of Cambay.—State of that place.—Siege of it; by Fuentes.—Its surrender.—Absolution of Henry, by Clement the Eighth.—Affairs of Provence.—Treaty with Mayenne.—Recovery of Marseilles.—Capture of Calais, by the arch-duke Albert.—Termination of the campaign.—League between France and England.—Convocation of an assembly, at Rouen.—Surprise of Amiens.—Consequences of that event.—Critical condition of France.—Siege of Amiens.—Attempt of Albert to bring relief.—Surrender of Amiens.—Conferences for peace.—Causes, which produced it.—Submission of Mercœur.—Edict of Nantes.—Obstacles to the treaty of Vervins.—Conclusion of it.—Reflexions.

C H A P.
V.

1595.

Fuentes enters
Picardy.
20th June.

WHILE Henry, in the pursuit of glory, or in the enjoyment of repose, was inattentive to the more important interests of his people; the count de Fuentes, at the head of an army, formidable rather from its veteran skill, than from numbers, entered Picardy, and sat down before Le Catelet, a little place on the frontiers. During the prosecution of the siege, Humieres, lieutenant-governor of the province, commenced a secret negotiation with d'Orvilliers, whom the duke of Aumale had placed in the castle of Ham, and who was irritated against the Spaniards for a breach of faith. Its object, was the admission of the royal troops into the fortress. The treaty was concluded, and carried into execution;

20th June.
Capture of
Ham.

tion; but, as the town of Ham was already occupied ^{C H A P.} by the enemy, a long and desperate action ensued between the forces of the two nations. It terminated, ^{V.} after a great effusion of blood, in favour of the French; who, incensed at the obstinate resistance made, and deeply sensible to the loss of Humieres, killed in the attack; refused quarter to the surviving Spaniards. Near six hundred were put to the sword, in defiance of marshal Bouillon's utmost exertions to preserve them; and the town itself was pillaged by the soldiery (1). The count de Fuentes, who had not been able to arrive in time to the assistance of his countrymen, endeavoured to obtain some compensation for the recent loss, by continuing, or resuming ^{1595.} the siege of Le Catelet, which soon afterwards capitulated. Encouraged by the facility of the capture, he ventured to invest Dourlens, a town of considerable size, and not far removed from Amiens, the capital of the province. Bouillon, having first thrown ^{25th June:} into it a supply of troops, consisting principally of gentry, or nobility, who served in the royal army; approached with an intention of relieving it, or, of giving battle to the besiegers. Fuentes, apprized of the design, left a body of troops to guard the trenches, and marched to meet the French. The disunion of Villars, and of Bouillon; their misintelligence, or jealousy; and the injudicious precipitation, with which, instead of waiting for the arrival and junction of the duke of Nevers, who was only a few leagues distant, they hazarded an action: these united ^{15th July:} causes gave the Spaniards a decisive victory. Villars, ^{Siege of Dourlens} carried away by the impetuosity of his courage, and regardless of the prudent remonstrances of Bouillon; was surrounded, made prisoner, and put to death, under circumstances exceedingly similar to those which ^{24th July:} ^{Defeat of the French army.}

(1) Davila, p. 1366—1372. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 501, 502. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 382—391. Hist. de Bonillon, vol. ii. p. 81—92. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 47—49. Sully, vol. i. p. 296.

C H A P. distinguished the fate of the duke of Joyeuse, at
 V. Coutras, and of Louis, prince of Condé, on the
 1595. field of Jarnac (2).

The conquerors, elated by success, immediately resumed the siege of Dourlens, and pressed it with ardour. Though abandoned to its own resources, and no longer supported by any expectation of relief, the garrison, which was numerous and brave, might have repulsed the assailants, or obtained an honourable capitulation in the last extremity. But, the same want of subordination, which prevailed in the French camp, pervaded the town; and the governor, unskilled in the art of defending cities, neglected the measures necessary for its preservation. Availing himself of these circumstances, and of the emulation among the Spaniards, Neapolitans, and Walloons, who composed his army; Fuentes gave orders for an assault on one of the bastions of the castle. It was carried, together with the fortress itself; and the troops pushing on, entered the town with the fugitives. Liberated from restraint, the victorious soldiery, incensed at the recent slaughter of their countrymen at Ham, and eager for an occasion to retaliate; not only put to the sword all the persons bearing arms; but; massacred indiscriminately, the inhabitants, of both sexes, and all conditions. It was not till night and fatigue interposed to moderate their fury, that they began to grant quarter to such as had taken refuge in the churches. Above two thousand men, women, and children, perished in the carnage, which equalled, in savage ferocity, the excesses committed by the barbarians who overturned the Roman empire. The terror which it diffused over the whole frontier, was such, that Amiens, and all

31st July.
 Storm, and
 massacre of
 Dourlens.

(2) Davila. p. 1373—1379. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 502—505. Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 92—97. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 400—406. Mezeray, vol. xi. p. 50—52. Sully, vol. i. p. 297. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 356—358.

the towns upon the Somme, scarcely regarded themselves as secure under the protection of the duke of Nevers. That general, having, not without reluctance, assumed the command of the broken and dispirited army, recently defeated; was necessitated to divide it into separate bodies, stationed along the borders, in the uncertainty where the Spanish commander might direct his next attack (3).

But, all the enterprizes of Fuentes, however successful or brilliant, were only meant as preparations for a more important undertaking, the siege of Cambrai; before which, after various marches, designed to keep the enemy in ignorance of his intention, he suddenly sat down. That city, whose magnitude, population, and manufactures, rendered it one of the most considerable in the Low Countries, had been delivered up to Francis, duke of Alençon, when he was called to the assistance of the Flemings. He had bequeathed it by his last will, to Catherine of Medicis, his mother; as the only trophy, or fruit, of his unsuccessful, and inglorious expeditions to the Netherlands. The queen had placed in it John de Balagny, natural son to the celebrated Montluc, bishop of Valence, whose intrigues eminently contributed to the elevation of Henry the Third to the Polish throne; and nephew to marshal Montluc, known in history, by his exploits, and by his commentaries. If Balagny, who, after the death of his benefactress, had retained possession of the city, would have consulted the felicity of its inhabitants; it seemed probable, that the acquisition might have been as permanent, as it was valuable. But, not satisfied with expelling the archbishop, under whose mild and limited jurisdiction, the citizens had always been protected and cherished; he seized on the temporalities

C H A P.
V.
1595.

Fuentes meditates the siege of Cambrai, 13th August.

State of Cambrai, at this period.

Tyranny of Balagny.

(3) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 407—408: Davila, p. 1380—1382. Chron: Nov. vol. iii. p. 506, 507.

C H A P.

V.

1595.

of the fee, and appropriated them to his own use. The inhabitants were deprived of their immunities, and loaded with exactions. His wife, who was sister to Buffy d'Amboise, the insolent favourite of the duke of Alençon, was a woman of undaunted intrepidity, and a masculine spirit: but, she exceeded her husband in rapacity, avarice, and violence. Nor were the neighbouring provinces exempt from Balagny's incursions and depredations. These circumstances, all of which were well known to the Spanish general, induced him to hazard so bold a measure as the siege of Cambrai; and he was, probably, not insensible to the glory of conquering a place, that even the duke of Parma himself, had regarded as beyond his power, and above his strength. He was further encouraged by the exhortations of the inhabitants of Artois and Haynault, who engaged to furnish ample supplies of money, and of provisions (4).

Henry takes
Balagny un-
der his pro-
tection.

During the troubles by which France was agitated in the last years of the reign of Henry the Third, Balagny had joined the party of the League. But, anticipating its destruction, he made his submission to Henry the Fourth, on condition of retaining Cambrai and its territory, as a fief, to be held of the French crown by a military tenure; and he from that time assumed the title of Prince of Cambrai and of the Cambresis. The frail and transitory foundation of the new principality, was, nevertheless, foreseen, and predicted, by many of the wisest men about the person of Henry. He himself, during a visit, which, at Balagny's solicitation, he made to Cambrai in the preceding year, had urged him to accept an equivalent in a more secure part of the dominions of France; and to allow a city so exposed, to be united to, and incorporated with the monarchy. But, the

(4) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 412—414. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 58.

vanity,

vanity, presumption, and folly of its possessor, ^{C H A P.}
 would not allow him to profit of so salutary an ^{V.}
 offer (5). He had, nevertheless, been deficient in ^{1595.}
 every precaution for perpetuating, and preserving his
 usurpation. The regular forces in the place, only
 amounted to about seven hundred; but, the duke of
 Nevers, whom Balagny solicited by repeated messen- ^{15th August.}
 gers, to afford him immediate aid, instantly dispatched ^{Difficulty of}
 his own son, at the head of near eight hundred ca- ^{the siege.}
 valry. In defiance of all the impediments opposed to
 the attempt, he found means to enter the city. It ^{11th Sep-}
 was further strengthened by the arrival and exertions ^{tember.}
 of de Vic, esteemed the most skilful commander in
 France, if not in Europe, in the science of fortifica-
 tion and of sieges. The assailants were repulsed in
 various efforts to storm the outworks: the autumnal
 season, so unfavourable to military operations, was
 rapidly approaching: it was well known, that the
 duke of Nevers was assembling forces, for the relief
 of the besieged; and the king himself might soon be
 expected to arrive in person, at the head of fresh
 troops (6).

Under these discouraging circumstances, Fuentes ^{Discontent}
 would have abandoned the enterprize, if the French, ^{of the inha-}
 serving in his army, had not besought him to persist, ^{bitants.}
 in the hope of speedily seeing a commotion within the
 place. Their expectations and assurances proved to
 be not imaginary. The citizens were by no means
 averse to the French government; but, they detested
 the tyranny of Balagny, and sought to be liberated,
 at any price, or by any sacrifice, from his oppression.
 After the commencement of the siege, they had de-
 puted some members of their body to Henry, at
 Lyons; and had besought of him to give them a
 promise, that they should be reinstated in the enjoy-

(5) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 291—295. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 429, 430.

(6) Davila, p. 1382—1388. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 512, 513. De Thou,
 vol. xii, p. 416—421.

C H A P. V. ^{1595.} ment of their antient liberties, under the protection of the crown. In return, they engaged for the fidelity and loyalty of their fellow citizens. But, the king, induced by the sollicitations of his mistress, Gabrielle, whom Balagny had found means to gain; and already fettered by his treaty with him; rejected, or eluded their request (7). His refusal produced the surrender of the city. Driven to despair, the inhabitants, availing themselves of the moment, when the garrison, in expectation of an immediate assault from the enemy, was occupied in the breach; rose tumultuously, and seized on one of the gates. Neither the exhortations of de Vic, nor the pathetic supplications of Balagny's wife, who offered to conduct them in person, and to perish at their head, could divert, or even delay their purpose. After a short parley with Fuentes, and a general promise of oblivion and protection on his part, the Spaniards were admitted into the city. ^{Infurrection.} The French, retiring to the citadel, might still have maintained their ground till assistance could have arrived; if the blind and improvident avarice of Balagny's wife had not completed her own, and her husband's downfall, by selling the grain and provisions, indispensable for the nourishment of the troops. She expiated her folly by a death, which the agitations of her own mind accelerated and produced, a few hours previous to the loss of her transitory greatness. Balagny, less sensible to shame, or more attached to life, supported his fall, with an indifference bordering on insensibility; and sunk without emotion, from a prince to a subject. ^{Spaniards, admitted into the place. 2d October.} The garrison, necessitated to surrender, obtained from the Spanish general, honourable conditions, and evacuated the citadel. Fuentes, returning victorious to Brussels, after a campaign of unexampled success, was received into that capital with acclamations, as the restorer of the glory of ^{Citadel surrenders. 9th October.}

(7) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 425—427.

Spain, which, since the duke of Parma's decease, had suffered a temporary eclipse. Cambray, lost by the incapacity, tyranny, and improvidence of Balagny, added to the delays and security of Henry, remained to Philip; and continued to form a part of the Spanish monarchy, till it was reduced to the obedience of Louis the Fourteenth, before the close of the last century (8).

The king, roused at length from his inactivity, by repeated information of the augmenting danger of Cambray; quitted Lyons, and hastened to the frontier. But, he arrived too late to remedy the evil, which his absence, at so critical a juncture, had, in some measure, occasioned. He found the army discontented and dejected; the capital full of faction and of complaint; and the northern provinces, from Calais to the gates of Sedan, terrified, defenceless, and open to invasion. It was some consolation, under these distressful circumstances, to know, that his absolution, so long denied, or protracted, had been obtained from the sovereign pontiff. Clement, after having fulfilled all the obligations which he thought due to the sanctity of his own character and office; to the security of the Romish religion; to the friendship of the Catholic king, the avowed protector of the holy see; and to the temporal interests of the successors of St. Peter; thought it prudent to relax in his severity. The example of England, which was lost by the injudicious, or timid deference of one of his predecessors, for the house of Austria; held out an instructive admonition. He dreaded the total separation of France, from the communion of the church of Rome; the diminution of his spiritual power, and the defalcation of his revenues. He saw Henry ac-

C H A P.
V.
1595.

Henry arrives in Picardy.

Motives of Clement, for absolving the king.

(8) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 428—436. Memoires de Nevers, vol. ii. p. 717—732. Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 98, 99. Davila, p. 1389—1392. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 59—62. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 526—529. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 360, 361.

knowledged

CHAP. V. ^{1596.} knowledgeable by almost all France, triumphant over the League, admired and venerated from one extremity of Europe to the other. Of the durability, if not the sincerity of his conversion, he had no room to doubt; and the king, with filial humility and contrition, still continued to entreat his benediction, as alone necessary to consummate his union with the Catholic church. Having determined to grant the absolution, it only remained to make the conditions annexed, as advantageous to the pontificate, as possible; and in this part of the negotiation, all the refinement of Italian policy was exhibited and exerted. Philip the Second, attentive to embarrass and to delay, if he could not altogether prevent the accomplishment of the work; endeavoured to procure the insertion of demands, dishonouring to the crown of France, or personally degrading to Henry. But, the patience, dexterity, and pliability of d'Offat and du Perron, the king's procurators, sustained by equal firmness and inflexibility upon certain points; surmounted every impediment (9).

Delays to its accomplishment.

Ceremony of the Papal absolution.

17th September.

The ceremony of the Papal absolution, was preceded by public acts of penitence and prayer; accompanied with all the observances of devotion and splendour, calculated to increase the veneration felt for the pontifical authority; and followed by festivities and marks of general satisfaction. The scene, chosen for its performance, was the rotunda, in front of the church of St. Peter. Clement, elevated on a superb throne, having on his head the tiara, and other ornaments of his sacerdotal dignity, surrounded by the members of the sacred college, and in presence of a vast multitude; beheld at his feet the suppliant representatives of the king of France. In imitation of the Roman mode of restoring slaves to liberty, the pontiff enfranchised Henry, by the application of a

(9) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 533—535. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 468—477.

wand or rod, with which, from time to time, he gently touched the shoulders of his two procurators. He then pronounced, as the immediate delegate and vicar of Christ, the sentence of absolution; after which, the doors of the basilique of St. Peter were thrown open, and mass was celebrated with unusual pomp. It must be admitted, that in so ostentatious a display of the apostolic power arrogated by the pope, the majesty of Henry and of the crown of France were not altogether respected. But, policy and necessity compelled him to submit to almost any humiliation, in order to obtain the Papal forgiveness; without which, neither his throne, nor even his life, were secure from rebellion and assassination. It removed the only remaining prop of the League, weakened the efforts of Spain, calmed the scruples of superstition, and disarmed the violence of sedition. The king received the intelligence with joy, and ordered public thanksgiving to be offered to Heaven, through the whole extent of his dominions. Sensible of the advantages derived from the friendship of the holy see, he cultivated it with warmth; and omitted no occasion, during his reign, of demonstrating the fervency of his attachment to the religion which he had embraced (10).

Anxious at the same time, to repair the breaches made by Fuentes on the frontier, which, he was conscious, might have been prevented by greater diligence and expedition; he determined, notwithstanding the approach of winter, to undertake some enterprise, calculated to restore his reputation, and to allay the general discontent. After receiving a reinforcement of troops from England, Scotland, and Holland, he sat down suddenly before La Fere, the

C H A P.
V.
1596.

Reflexion
ons it.

25th No-
vember.

8th Novem-
ber.

(10) Bruys, *Hist. des Papes*, vol. v. p. 117.—119. *Chron. Nov.* vol. iii. p. 536—538. Davila, p. 1356—1362. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 53—58. *De Thou*, vol. xii. p. 477, 478. *Memoires d'Chiverny*, vol. i. p. 360—375.

CHAP. V. only town possessed by the Spaniards, south of the river Somme. The situation of the place, environed by morasses; the numbers and intrepidity of the garrison, together with the advanced season of the year; rendered the siege, nevertheless, slow, and obliged the king to convert it into a species of blockade (11). In various parts of the kingdom, the flames of civil war, though diminishing in their fury, were not yet extinct. Marshal d'Aumont was killed, before an inconsiderable fort in Brittany: but, the indecision, or incapacity of the duke of Mercoeur, and his alienation from the Spanish commander, prevented their profiting of an event so injurious to the royal affairs (12). Hostilities had continued among the defiles and precipices of the Alps, between Lesdiguières and the duke of Savoy, with alternate success, till they were suspended by the truce, concluded at Lyons. Toulouse, and a part of Languedoc, continued to obey the duke of Joyeuse. Provence presented a scene of anarchy, confusion, and outrage. Epernon, who pretended to have received from Henry the Third, the reversion of the government after the death of his brother; and whose arrogance rendered him incapable of listening to moderate counsels; persisted to maintain himself in the province, by force of arms. Neither the open detestation of the people of every rank; nor the concealed opposition, which he experienced on the part of the crown, could shake his determination. Henry, unable to turn his forces to that quarter, and fearful to irritate so powerful a subject, by any act of severity; embraced the expedient of conferring the government of Provence on the duke of Guise. He adhered to the measure, notwithstanding

1595.
Henry be-
sieves La
Fere.

19th Au-
gust.

State of
Provence.

Duke of
Guise is sent
governor.

(11) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 439, and p. 601. Davila, p. 1402, 1403.
(12) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 443—453. Davila, p. 1393, 1394. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 67.

the remonstrances of various of his ministers, who, in forcible terms, exposed the imprudence of entrusting so important a maritime province to a young prince, scarcely emancipated from the League; and who, in virtue of his descent from the antient counts of Provence, might revive his pretensions to its sovereignty. Experience, nevertheless, justified the choice made by the king (13).

C H A P.
V.
1595.

The publication of the treaty, which had long been negotiating between Henry and the duke of Mayenne, took place soon after the commencement of the ensuing year. Though far less advantageous to the latter, than the terms which he might have exacted when master of the capital, and supported by a numerous army; the conditions were yet highly honourable, and such as have rarely been granted by a sovereign, to a rebellious, and vanquished subject. The principles, on which, as head of the League, Mayenne had taken up arms, were admitted to have been not only justifiable; but, in some measure, meritorious. He was acquitted, in common with all the princes and princesses of the family of Lorraine, from any participation in, or knowledge of, the assassination of Henry the Third. His incumbrances, within the kingdom, as well as those contracted for foreign troops, were declared to be debts of the state; and it was stipulated, that their liquidation should be made out of the royal coffers. Besides an indemnity and oblivion for every past transaction, the cities of Soissons and Chalons were left to Mayenne during six years, as places of security; and his eldest son, created a peer of France, by the title of duke of Aiguillon, was provided with the reversion of the government of Burgundy. The parliament of Paris did not manifest the same facility in register-

1596
Treaty with
Mayenne.
January.

Articles of
it.

Opposition
of the par-
liament of
Paris.

(13) Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 335—337. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 581, 582. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 463—465. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 46. Davila, p. 1407. Hist. d'Epéron, vol. ii. p. 102—107.

C H A P. V. ing, which the king had displayed in conceding, so liberal and comprehensive an edict. It was thought indecorous, if not degrading to the majesty of the crown, to recognize the innocence of the duke, and of his sister, the duchess of Montpensier, and their ignorance of the crime committed by Clement. A degree of indirect impunity was given by it, to regicide itself; the consequences of which might be even more pernicious, than the atrocious act, which it consigned to oblivion. Henry was not insensible to, nor unaffected by these considerations: but, weighty as they were, superior reasons compelled him to interpose his authority, and to consummate a treaty, which, alone, could extinguish the party of the League. Even after repeated injunctions, the parliament seems, nevertheless, rather to have yielded to force, than to have conceded to inclination, in verifying the treaty. It was carried into effect with the most scrupulous fidelity. The magnanimity and placability of the king, in his reception of Mayenne, confirmed his triumph; and transformed the leader of a rebellious faction, into a loyal and affectionate servant. It is rare, that history, which transmits so many monuments of the weakness or vices of princes, is enabled to commemorate such an instance of beneficence and clemency (14).

Magnanimity of the king.

State of the city of Marseilles.

While Henry was thus employed in pardoning and conciliating his enemies, the courage and fortune of his adherents in another quarter of the kingdom, atchieved an enterprize of the highest importance to the public safety and repose. Marseilles, which had originally embraced the Catholic League, and which, at a subsequent period, was nearly reduced to the obedience of Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy;

(14) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 63—66. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 356—360. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 602—608. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 598—604. Davila, p. 1396—1401. Journal d'Hen. IV. vol. i. p. 116, 117. Sully, vol. i. p. 327, 328.

had

had ultimately been subjugated by two of its own ambitious citizens. Casaux, and Aix, under the denominations of Consul and of Supreme Judge, had arrogated, and maintained themselves in an unlimited authority. Supported by an armed force, and protected by the strength of the place, they bade defiance to external attack. Henry had vainly attempted to induce them to return to their allegiance, by every offer which could tempt their vanity, or gratify their avarice. They preferred entering into a treaty with Philip the Second, who granted them all the conditions demanded, and who already anticipated the acquisition of Marseilles. Doria, who commanded the Genoese gallees in the Spanish service, was admitted into the harbour; and a short delay would have secured so invaluable a port, to the inveterate enemy of France.

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V.
1596.

Tyranny of
the Duum-
virs.

In this critical interval, the intrepidity of Libertat, a Corsican, to whom the Duumvirs had entrusted the principal gate of the city; overturned their usurpation, and frustrated the views of the court of Madrid. Having negotiated with the new governor of Provence, the duke of Guise, and encouraged by an assurance of ample reward, he undertook, and effected, the emancipation of Marseilles. On the day fixed for executing his design, the royal troops, under cover of the night, approached the walls; and Libertat, after having shut the gate upon Aix, who had gone out to reconnoitre, instantly put to death his colleague, Casaux. Aix, though pursued by the forces of the duke of Guise, was so fortunate as to regain the city; and in conjunction with the son of the Duumvir, recently killed, he attempted to make himself master of the gate where Libertat commanded. But, the struggle was short. Weary of the tyranny exercised over them, the inhabitants rose, and declared for the crown. The soldiery, headed by the duke of Guise, were admitted into the place: Doria, surprized,

Enterprize
of Libertat.

17th Febru-
ary.

Its success.

CHAP.
V.
1596.

Importance
of the acqui-
sition.

Epernon
quits Pro-
vence.

prized, and terrified, made no resistance, and crowded sail, to escape with the galleys under his command. The two surviving chiefs of the rebels, after maintaining themselves during some days, in the forts, which overlooked the city, capitulated on promise of their lives, and freedom. So complete a revolution was effected with astonishing rapidity, and almost without any effusion of blood. If we consider the political consequences, which must have attended the subjection of Marseilles to Philip; we shall admit, that it was hardly possible to pay too highly the service rendered to the state by Libertat. From so impregnable a post, the Catholic king might have desolated Provence, awed the states of Italy, and carried on the whole commerce of the Levant. Its central position, in the midst of the Mediterranean; would have connected the dominions of Philip on the Tuscan coast, in Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, with the continent of Spain; and have rendered him the undisputed arbiter of all the south of Europe (15).

The voluntary departure of Epernon from Provence, speedily followed the reduction of Marseilles; and restored a degree of tranquillity to that part of the kingdom. Pursued by the enmity of the natives; who endeavoured to take away his life by the most insidious, or atrocious contrivances; opposed in the field, by the duke of Guise; and enjoined by Henry to quit the province; he, at length, indignantly complied. Even when retiring, he made conditions with his sovereign; extorted new governments, in the place of the one which he evacuated; and maintained himself in a sort of full independence on the court and administration (16).

(15) Davila, p. 1404—1410. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 613—624. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 584—590. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 68—73. (16) Hist. d'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 107—127, and p. 137—141. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 73—75.

During

During these interesting transactions on the coast of the Mediterranean; and while the king was occupied before La Fere, the blockade of which threatened to be drawn into considerable length; the cardinal arch-duke Albert, a younger brother of Ernest, arrived at Brussels. He had already filled the post of viceroy, in Portugal; and Philip, who destined for his daughter, the infanta Clara Isabella, conferred on him the government of the Netherlands. Eager to prove himself deserving of so distinguished a situation; and emulous to equal, or surpass the exploits of Fuentes, his predecessor; Albert lost no time in preparing for the campaign. It was dangerous, if not impracticable, to attempt the relief of La Fere, in presence of a numerous army, superior in cavalry, and animated by the king in person. But, it might be equally beneficial, to make a powerful diversion, and to invest one of the frontier cities of Picardy, while the royal forces were incapacitated to advance speedily to its assistance. After mature deliberation, the advice of Rosne, who intimately knew at what part of the French monarchy to point his attack, decided the arch-duke to form the siege of Calais. Its distance from La Fere, and the degree of security in which its supposed strength had lulled the garrison, presented additional motives to justify the selection.

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V.
1596.

Arrival of
Albert in
the Nether-
lands.
11th Febru-
ary.

He deter-
mines to be-
sieve Calais.

9th April.

The town
capitulates.

The promptitude, celerity, and vigour of the Spanish commanders, were followed by corresponding and rapid success. Such was the supine and thoughtless negligence of the French, that the forts of Nieulay, and of the Risbanc, which guarded the entrance of the harbour, were carried almost without resistance. Every fort of Henry, who, on the first intimation of the danger that menaced Calais, had repaired to Boulogne, at the head of a body cavalry; was rendered ineffectual by the contrary winds, which prevented succours from entering the port. The town, battered by the cannon of the enemy, capitulated.

CHAP. V. 1596. lated. Bidoffan, the governor, an officer of valour and fidelity, but, deficient in military skill, continued to defend the citadel. But, the intrepidity of the assailants, guided by the superior talents of Rosne, overcame all opposition. They ascended the breach, stormed the fort, and put the troops found in it, to the sword (17). Calais, which, after a possession of above two centuries, had been lost to England by the incapacity of Mary, and the culpable neglect of her ministers, rather than by the exertions of Francis, duke of Guise; was transferred to Spain, by similar errors, or inattention. The distracted condition of France, convulsed by civil and foreign war, forms, nevertheless, too satisfactory an apology for Henry; who, since his accession, had been reduced to contend unremittingly for the crown itself; and who, engaged before La Fere, could not personally extend his vigilance over every part of so extensive a frontier.

23d April.
Citadel
stormed.

3d May.
Siege, and
capture of
Ardres.

21st May.
Surrender of
La Fere.

Animated to new exertions by his past success, Albert, still conducted by the same skilful counsels, marched out of Calais, to form the siege of Ardres. Neither the advantageous position of the place, a reinforcement of considerable magnitude, recently thrown into it, nor the expectation of receiving speedy assistance from the king himself, could prolong its defence. The pusillanimity of Belin, the governor, in defiance of the opposition made by his own officers, and the valour of the troops, surrendered the place to Spain; nearly at the precise time, when La Fere capitulated to Henry. The arch-duke, satisfied with his acquisitions, and not disposed to commit his conquests to the chance of war, did not wait for the approach of the royal forces. He retired, by hasty marches, into Flanders, in order to refresh

(17) Davila, p. 1413—1422. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 630—637. Sully, vol. i. p. 301, 302. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. 610—612. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 75—80.

his troops; after having provided for the safety of Calais and Ardres (18). It might naturally have been supposed, that a prince so active and enterprising as Henry, would have profited of the absence of the enemy, either to retake the places recently lost, or, to form some offensive plan of operation. But, such was the exhausted condition of the revenue, and so empty were the public coffers, as to incapacitate him for any undertaking of expence, or magnitude. The diseases which had manifested themselves in the camp before La Fere, had diminished his numbers; and the devastation of Picardy rendered it impossible to procure subsistence. In this situation, he was reduced, as he had been after the siege of Paris, to separate his army, and to station the soldiery in the garrisons along the banks of the Somme (19).

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1596.

Exhausted
state of
France.

The arrival of the Papal legate, Alexander, cardinal of Medecis, whose mission was intended to affix the seal to Henry's reconciliation with the holy see, recalled him to the capital. That prelate was received with distinguished honours; and met, at his entrance into Paris, by the young prince of Condè, presumptive heir to the crown, whom the king had recently caused to be taken from the Hugonots, and educated in the Catholic faith. By thus depriving his Protestant subjects of so powerful a support, as they must have derived from a prince of the blood, attached to their party and religion; he consulted equally his own tranquillity, and the repose of France; while he gave an unequivocal testimony of his sincerity, to the court of Rome. Soon afterwards, Charlotte de la Tremouille, princess of Condé, accused of having poisoned her husband, and long detained in confinement at St. John d'Angely;

July.

Prince of
Condè is
brought to
court.

(18) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 638—646. Davila, p. 1424—1429. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 612, 613.

(19) Davila, p. 1429, 1430.

CHAP. V. was set at liberty by Henry's command. The parliament of Paris, taking cognizance of the affair, after examination, declared her innocent of that atrocious crime. It is, nevertheless, probable, that policy, more than conviction, dictated the sentence; since, in the possible event of the king's decease, she would have stood in the near relation of mother to his successor, who was, likewise, a minor (20).

Embassy
sent to
England.

Impedi-
ments to a
treaty be-
tween
Henry and
Elizabeth.

Alarmed at the rapid advances of the Spaniards, who had, in two campaigns, levelled the principal bulwarks of Picardy, and opened to themselves an easy entrance into all the interior provinces; Henry applied for assistance, to his antient ally, Elizabeth. An embassy, at the head of which marshal Bôuillon was placed, arrived in the court of England: but, many causes had contributed to weaken the queen's affection, and to diminish her esteem for the king of France. His change of religion was not the least of these, however dictated, and justified, by necessity. Elizabeth's revenues, even with her frugal management, were unequal to the vast expenditure required to oppose Philip the Second in Europe, and on the continent of America. Her whole reign was only a state of open, or of indirect hostility with him; and the energy of her people supplied the deficiency, or the poverty of the crown. She was compelled to watch, with unintermitting vigilance over Ireland; to which country, Spain directed its constant attacks; the Dutch commonwealth, reared by her care, still required her protection; and she had, at different periods, advanced a vast sum to Henry himself, of which she vainly demanded restitution. Convinced, nevertheless, of the magnitude and reality of the danger with which she was menaced in common with

(20) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 618, 619. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 366—368; and vol. xiii. p. 25—29. Davila, p. 1430—1432. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 43-44, and p. 86, 87.

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V.

1596.

26th May
Alliance,
concluded.21st Octo-
ber.Siege of
Hulst.

July.

18th Au-
gust.Death of
Rosne.October.
Incurfions
of Biron,
into Artois.

France, by the progress of the Spaniards; and peculiarly sensible to the vicinity of such formidable neighbours, possessed of Calais, in addition to their Flemish dominions; she, at length, consented to sign a new treaty with the king. It was offensive, and bound the contracting parties to make the strongest efforts against their mutual enemies. The States General, for whom a place was specifically reserved, entered into the alliance, some months afterwards (21).

The cardinal arch-duke, after his exploits in France, did not resign himself to inactivity. Turning his arms against the Dutch, who, conducted by Maurice, prince of Orange, maintained a continual war in the Netherlands; he invested Hulst, an important town of Brabant, not far removed from Antwerp. It was defended with far greater skill, as well as perseverance, than he had experienced in the attack of Calais; and its surrender, after a long and generous resistance, was dearly purchased by the loss of Rosne, who had directed the operations. To his genius, and implacable animosity against Henry the Fourth, were, in a great degree, to be ascribed the splendid successes of Fuentes and of Albert (22). The weakness and lassitude of the French, incapacitated the king for availing himself of the arch-duke's absence; nor was the autumn otherwise distinguished, than by some incursions of Biron, at the head of a body of cavalry, who repeatedly ravaged the provinces of Artois and Hainault, to the suburbs of Arras. These ruinous depredations increased the calamities of war, without materially accelerating its termination; and were productive of little glory, or benefit (23).

(21) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 647—671. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 625—627. Davila, p. 1422—1424. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 83, 84. Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 102—160. Rapin, Hist. of England, vol. viii. p. 546, 547. (22) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 613—618. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 41—52. (23) Davila, p. 1439. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 52—54. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 620—622.

C H A P.
V.

1596.

Convocation
of an assembly,
at
Rouen.

4th November.

Resolutions,
framed in it.

Henry, unable to raise supplies from an exhausted and impoverished country; incapable of compelling the duke of Mercœur to lay down his arms in Brittany; and dreading an insurrection of his Hugonot subjects, who loudly demanded from his gratitude, an edict of permanent toleration for their religion; was far from enjoying repose, or even security. Pressed by a powerful, and victorious enemy, he had recourse to a popular assembly, in order to find expedients for liquidating the public debts, and ameliorating, or augmenting the revenue. But, instructed by the experience of his predecessor, he preferred convoking an epitome of the States General, to the dangerous experiment of calling together the States themselves. A limited number of persons, selected from the nobility, clergy, magistracy, and finance, who might be easily induced to lend assistance to the crown, from whence they derived their own lustre or support; were assembled at Rouen. Henry harangued them with a simplicity, frankness, and brevity, calculated to make the deepest impression. The wants, and the critical situation of the monarchy, were too obvious and apparent, to need exaggeration, or to require eloquence. Another successful campaign must enable the Spaniards to carry their arms into the heart of the kingdom, to approach Paris, and to dictate conditions of peace, such as their policy, or resentment might suggest. Penetrated with a conviction of these facts, the assembly, after reclaiming the rights and privileges of their respective orders; came to various resolutions, tending to enable the king to raise temporary supplies, by new impositions. But, he was not long in perceiving, that, it was easier to grant taxes, than to render them efficient. The domain of the crown, as well as the revenues, were in a state of such anticipation and alienation, as to be irrietricvable, except by a system of rigorous, and radical reform; nor could he venture to undertake so painful and arduous a work,

work, in the midst of a foreign war. Convinced that he should derive little benefit from the deliberations, or continuance of the assembly, he shortly afterwards permitted the members to separate (24). C H A P.
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1596.

Returning to the capital, he began to make preparations for opening the campaign with effect; when an event, equally unexpected and alarming, reduced the kingdom to extremities, and seemed to menace him with misfortunes greater than those, which he had suffered from the League. Portocarrero, governor of Dourlens, an officer of equal capacity and intrepidity, conceived the design of surprising Amiens; the protection of which had been, by Henry's facility, rather than his negligence, entrusted to the citizens. Availing himself of their careless security, Portocarrero approached the place with a considerable force, during the night; while a few soldiers, of approved valour, and disguised as peasants, or waggoners, entered the city. By an ingenious contrivance, some of them amused the guard; till the others, drawing their weapons, made themselves masters of one of the gates, and instantly admitted their companions. So admirable were the measures taken, and such the promptitude, silence, and skill, exerted in executing them, that the capital of Picardy, in open day, was seized by the Spaniards. 1597.
Portocarrero
surprizes
Amiens.
11th March. Fifteen thousand inhabitants, capable of bearing arms, after a slight and ineffectual resistance, were disarmed by about three thousand of the enemy. Scarcely any effusion of blood accompanied an enterprise, at once so bold, and so important. Portocarrero, whose genius had planned it, lost not an instant in endeavouring to render the possession secure; and

(24) Sully, vol. i. p. 334—341. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 628, 629. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 18—25. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 87, 89. Davila, p. 1441, 1442. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 387—390.

C H A P. the governor having fled, on the first intimation
V. of the danger, no effort was made by the French,
 1597. for recovering the city (25).

Consternation, which it occasioned.

Alarming state of France,

Popular discontent.

Difficult situation of the king.

The consternation, occasioned in the court, by the intelligence, was not exceeded by that consequent on the battle of Pavia, when Francis the First was made prisoner; nor by the defeat of St. Quintin, where the constable Montmorency, and the flower of the nobility, fell into the hands of the Spaniards (26). Paris, the metropolis of the kingdom, became, in some measure, after the loss of Amiens, a frontier place; nor was it any longer secure from insult, attack, and invasion, the intermediate country being open, and destitute of garrisons, or of fortresses. It is, in fact, difficult to conceive, if Spain had remained in possession of its recent acquisition, that Paris could have continued to be the capital of France; and it must have become requisite to remove the seat of government, from the banks of the Seine, to those of the Loire. The terror, natural in such a situation, was augmented by the general dissatisfaction. Those who desired to depreciate the king in the estimation of his subjects, attributed the calamity to his immoderate love of pleasures; and to the influence of his mistress, Gabrielle, who enervated his courage, or detained him in dissipation. Even such as judged more favourably of Henry, seemed ready to admit, that he was only victorious over his own people; and that, formed for civil war, his talents sunk, when opposed to foreign enemies (27). His own constancy appears to have been rudely shaken, by a reverse so severe; and to which it was difficult to apply any prompt, or efficacious remedy. The mismanagement and peculation of the revenues, incapaci-

(25) Davila, p. 1442—1446. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 103—108. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 667—669. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 386—388. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 391—369. (26) Sully, vol. i. p. 349.
 (27) Davila, p. 1446, 1447.

tated him for great, or continued exertion; and it was impossible to maintain forces, adequate to the siege of Amiens, without previously providing for their payment. It could not be doubted, that Philip the Second, and the arch-duke Albert, would make every effort, however ruinous to the affairs of the Netherlands, in order to preserve a conquest, which gave them entrance into the centre of France. Portocarrero might be expected to bury himself in the ruins of the city, which he had acquired with such consummate ability; or, to hold out, till relieved from Flanders. Despondency aggravated the weight of the calamity; and the factions of the metropolis, suppressed, but, not extinct, manifested themselves at a moment of general dejection (28).

Henry, under circumstances so fitted to appall the greatest fortitude, evinced, after the first shock, that adversity could not incapacitate, though it might agitate and disconcert him. All his measures were re-
Measures, embraced by Henry.

plete with wisdom, adapted to the exigency, and carried into effect with vigour. Biron was detached, at the head of those troops which could be immediately assembled, to harass the garrison, impede the entrance of provisions, and straiten them on the side of Flanders. The conduct of the finances was entrusted solely, and exclusively, to Rosny, known in history by the title of duke of Sully: a minister, who, in application, integrity, and frugality, was not inferior to any statesman, of whatever age, or nation. The Parliament of Paris gave the most disinterested, and efficient support to the exertions of the government; and the duke of Mayenne, anxious to erase every impression of his past conduct, brought to the king a number of his adherents. Pecuniary resources were found in the loyalty, or affection of the people; and Henry, quitting Paris, repaired to the camp,

June.

(28) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 92, 93.

where

CHAPTER V. where his presence diffused satisfaction, and accelerated all the military operations (29).

1597. During the interval of more than six months, Condition of which elapsed between the surprise of Amiens, and the king- its recapture, the interior of the French monarchy was agitated by various factions, which not only disturbed its repose, but, seemed to menace its very existence. The struggle between the two crowns, was, after near twelve years of open, or indirect hostilities, reduced to a point; and such was the precarious nature of Henry's title, as well as the fermentation in his dominions, that any further success on the part of his foreign enemies, might have produced a general defection, or revolution. In Brittany, the duke of Mercœur, attentive to the event of the siege, renewed his connexions with the court of Madrid, and refused to lay down his arms (30). All the ability and vigilance of Lesdiguières, could scarcely repel the inroads of Charles Emanuel, or prevent his entrance into Dauphiné (31). Ferdinand, great duke of Tuscany, availing himself of the opportunity, seized on two small islands near the entrance of the port of Marseilles, and garrisoned them with troops (32). The Hugonots, irritated against the king, whom they regarded as an apostate; and dissatisfied at his delay in granting them an edict of toleration; refused to aid him, and appeared to be ready to have recourse to the most violent expedients (33). In Paris, the partizans of Spain held nocturnal assemblies, and meditated open insurrection (34). Even many of the nobility, and some of the princes of the blood, despairing of the extrication of the state, and regarding the calamities of France as be-

Foreign, and domestic.

(29) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 128—111. Davila, p. 1447, 1448. Sully, vol. i. p. 352, 353. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 94—96. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 388—390. (30) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 128—136. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 671—673. (31) Ibid. p. 673—678. (32) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 98, 99. (33) Ibid. p. 99—101. (34) Ibid. p. 96.

yond Henry's ability to remedy; did not hesitate to meet, and to agitate propositions of the most reasonable nature (35).

C H A P.
V.
1597.

While symptoms of such universal fermentation appeared in the kingdom, the attention of Europe was fixed on the event of the siege. In its progress, the whole science of war, as known and practised at the conclusion of the sixteenth century, was displayed by the two powers. The activity and courage of Portocarrero repeatedly repelled the assailants, and frustrated, or retarded their operations. But, as the garrison, diminished by fatigue, sickness, and the sword, was unequal to contending with an enemy, whose numbers were perpetually recruited; it became indispensable either to march to its relief, or to expect its ultimate surrender. Portocarrero implored the arch-duke, not to suffer so important a city to be lost, without an effort; and that prince, though feebly supported by Philip the Second, wanted no exhortations to excite him to his duty. Under many impediments, and at the hazard of abandoning the Netherlands to the incursions of Maurice, prince of Orange, who only waited for the signal of his departure; Albert having assembled a considerable army, advanced towards the borders of Picardy. He was, nevertheless, from a variety of causes, unable to appear in sight of the besieged, before the death of Portocarrero. A musket ball which entered his left side, while exposed to a severe fire, terminated his life, and deprived Spain of so illustrious a captain. The command was immediately conferred, by unanimous consent, on the marquis of Montenegro, who approved himself worthy of the distinction (36).

Siege of
Amiens.
July.

August.
Death of
Portocar-
rero.
3d Septem-
ber.

Albert, long and impatiently expected, at length drew near to the bank of the Somme. Such was the

Albert
comes to
the relief of
Amiens.

(35) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 136, 137.
Davila, p. 1448—1463. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 390.

(36) Ibid. p. 113—118.

CHAP.

V.

1597.

15th Sep-
tember.Loses the
occasion of
attacking
Henry.

Retreats.

culpable negligence, or security of the French, and even of the king himself, that no adequate preparations had been made to oppose, or to repel the Spaniards. Universal alarm and confusion took place on their approach, which were augmented by Henry's absence; who, unapprehensive of any attack, had gone out to the chace. All the efforts of Biron, and the other commanders, could neither dissipate the panic, nor restore the confidence of the troops. Already, the enemy, in the anticipation of victory, was ready to commence the attack; when the arch-duke, unskilled in the conduct of military operations, and ill advised by those who surrounded him, issued orders to halt. The delay of three hours, at so critical a juncture, decided the fate of Amiens, and probably, of France. It was too late, to remedy the error; and it was not among the least singular events of the day, that the duke of Mayenne, who had so nearly overturned the monarchy; conduced eminently to its preservation, by causing cannon to be placed upon the most accessible quarter of the royal camp. Foiled in every subsequent attempt, either to force the lines, or to throw reinforcements into the city; harassed by the cavalry of the king; and incapable of remaining long in a country completely ravaged; the arch-duke began his retreat. If the enterprize had been entrusted to a general of greater capacity; if the duke of Parma had survived; or even if Rosne had not perished in the preceding campaign, the siege of Amiens would have been raised. It is difficult to conjecture, and impossible to ascertain, what might have been the consequence of such a disaster to France: these speculations do not belong to history; but, we are justified in supposing, that they must have been of the most serious nature (37).

(37) Davila, p. 1463—1469. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 679—685. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 118—124. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 390—393. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 396—404.

If Albert was unable to atchieve the principal ob-
 ject of his expedition, he, nevertheless, retreated
 without loss. Henry, at the head of all his cavalry,
 hung upon the rear of the enemy, and continually at-
 tempted to charge, or to disorder them: but, such
 was the admirable discipline, and superior military
 skill of the Spanish infantry in that age, as to render
 ineffectual every effort of the king. He returned,
 therefore, to the camp before Amiens; which city,
 hopeless of succour, capitulated on honourable terms.
 Elated with his good fortune, he entered Artois, ad-
 vanced to Arras, and endeavoured to provoke the
 arch-duke to hazard an action. So exhausted, how-
 ever, were the French forces, and so unequal to any
 enterprize of difficulty, that Henry was compelled
 soon afterwards to relinquish the siege of Dourlens,
 which he had imprudently and precipitately com-
 menced. Satisfied, therefore, with having obliged
 the Spaniards to retire; master of Amiens, the prize
 for which he contended; and unable to keep the field
 with an army diminished by diseases; he returned to
 Paris, where his arrival was celebrated with accla-
 mations (38).

C H A P.
 V.
 1597.

Surrender
 of Amiens.
 25th Sep-
 tember.

October.

Henry re-
 turns to
 Paris.

The ill success of Albert, and his retreat into the
 Netherlands, by disconcerting the vast projects, which
 the court of Madrid had formed, not without appa-
 rent foundation, on the possession of Amiens; dis-
 posed the two crowns to peace. Henry, who, during
 the greater part of his life, had been compelled to
 combat danger and adversity in every shape, desired
 to taste repose. He dreaded the instability of for-
 tune; and he had acquired the highest reputation,
 by his triumph over Spain and the League. The
 factions of France, inveterate, and powerful, re-
 quired time, and address, to extinguish. His reve-

November:
 Motives of
 Henry,

and of Phi-
 lip the Se-
 cond,

(38) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 135—128. Davila. p. 1469—1472. Meze-
 ray, vol. x. p. 108—110. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 685—688. Sully, vol. i.
 p. 368.

C H A P. V. nues were dissipated by mismanagement, unequal to prosecuting the war with vigour, and could only be re-established by tranquillity. Nor had Philip less cogent motives, to desire the termination of the war. He was approaching fast to the close of his life, and sinking under bodily infirmities, which impaired the energy of his counsels. His only son, heir to the vast dominions of the Spanish monarchy, was young, inexperienced, and of feeble capacity. The hostilities in which he was involved with England and Holland, occupied his arms; and during the short expedition of the arch-duke to relieve Amiens, Maurice, prince of Orange, had completely expelled the remaining garrisons of Philip, from every part of Groningen, Friesland, and Overysfel. He had already determined to give his daughter, Clara Isabella, in marriage to Albert, and to endow her with the Low Countries, as a fief to be held of Spain. His finances were scarcely less exhausted, than those of Henry; and he had recently been reduced to the humiliating necessity of violating his faith to the creditors of the crown, and of withholding payment of his debts, as he had done at an earlier period of his reign. Under these circumstances, he had lent a ready ear to the first propositions of a pacific nature, which were made to him through the medium of the court of Rome. Clement the Eighth, desirous to unite the Christian powers against the Turks; who, feebly opposed by Rodolph the Second in Hungary, made the most alarming progress; exerted all the influence of the pontifical authority, to terminate the quarrel between France and Spain. Commissioners, named by each crown, and acting under the mediation of the Papal legate, assembled at Vervins, a town on the frontiers of Picardy. Notwithstanding the numerous and intricate points, requisite to be adjusted, previous to a final accommodation; yet, such was the mutual disposition

1597.

to desire peace.

1598.

Mediation of the court of Rome.

February. Conferences at Vervins.

position to vanquish them, that the negotiation advanced rapidly, and promised a favourable issue (39). C H A P.
V.

Of all the principal adherents of the League, the duke of Mercœur alone still persisted in his rebellion; though every decent, or ostensible pretext for continuing in arms against his sovereign, had been removed by Henry's abjuration, and absolution. His hopes of retaining the duchy of Brittany, over which he had tyrannized a number of years, and of dis severing it from the monarchy of France; induced him to refuse every offer of accommodation. Even after the re-capture of Amiens, though he had consented to renew the truce with the royalists, he betrayed no disposition towards peace. The king was, therefore, exhorted to repair in person, at the head of his forces, to that quarter of the kingdom; and he executed the resolution without delay. At his approach, the frontier garrisons, which held for Mercœur, in Anjou and Poitou, and on which he had relied for covering Brittany, instantly submitted, and returned to their duty. So unexpected a defection left him exposed to immediate attack; nor had he any alternative, except to implore the forgiveness of his rebellion; or, to sustain a siege in the city of Nantes, whose inhabitants, he dreaded, might seize, and deliver him to his offended prince. Mercœur preferred the former expedient. His only daughter, heiress to the vast possessions of the family of Penthièvre, in right of her mother, was made the sacrifice, to propitiate Henry. Gabrielle d'Etrées became the mediatrix of a reconciliation, by which her eldest son, Cæsar, espoused the young princess. He was invested, at the same time, by the king, his father, with the duchy and patrimonial estates of Vendôme. They were betrothed, with equal solemnity and mag- 1598.
Conduct of
the duke of
Mercœur.

February,

He submits
to the king.

3d April.

(39) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 195, 196. Davila, p. 1473, 1474. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 113—115. Sully, vol. i. p. 375.

nificence,

CHAP. V. nificence, in presence of the court, though the youth of the two parties prevented the consummation of the nuptials; and Henry granted, in favour of so rich an alliance, the most honourable terms to Mercœur. His rebellion was not only pardoned, but, justified, as having originated in patriotic motives; and, like the duke of Mayenne, he received from the royal coffers, a considerable sum, for the liquidation of his debts. The government of Brittany was conferred on the young duke of Vendome. It cannot be denied, that in the whole course of this transaction, the king sacrificed every consideration of a public nature, to the gratification of his mistress, and the aggrandizement of his natural children (40).

Demand of
the Hugonots.

A still more delicate and important affair, demanded his attention, and called for some immediate, or decisive resolution. The Hugonots, dissatisfied at the continual procrastination of the edict of toleration promised them, seemed to be disposed to take up arms against the crown. Policy, as much as justice and gratitude, demanded, that the companions of Henry's adverse fortune, who had demonstrated their loyalty even to his predecessor, and who had so eminently conduced to place himself upon the throne; should not be the only description of his subjects, excluded from the general pardon and protection. Moved by these considerations, and apprehensive of the resentment of so powerful and numerous a body, who might have recourse to foreign interposition, and even impede the conclusion of a peace with Spain; the king, after mature reflexion, granted them an edict. It is one of the most celebrated in modern annals; and has always been denominated, from the city in which it was framed, the "Edict of Nantes." The basis on which it was founded, was that of Poi-

13th April.
Edict of
Nantes.

(40) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 196—206. Sully, vol. i. p. 375—377. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 710—712. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 118—123. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 9—12.

tiers,

tiers, promulgated by Henry the Third in 1577. C H A P. V.
 If we candidly appreciate the articles of it, we must 1598.
 be compelled to allow, that no more extended toleration could, with reason, have been demanded on one side; nor, with any regard to the public welfare and safety, have been conceded on the other. The exercise of the reformed religion, was, under some limitations and restrictions, permitted in every part of France. Every honour, dignity, and employment, civil, military, and even judicial, was thrown open, and rendered common to Catholics and to Hugonots. Various cities and places, in different provinces of the kingdom, the garrisons of which were paid by the crown, remained as securities to the Protestants, during eight years. Under the shelter of so wise, liberal, and salutary a law, they continued for near a century, to enjoy repose and protection. Yet, so little were the principles of toleration understood, or practised in that age; and such was the repugnance of the zealous Catholics, to admit the professors of the reformed religion to any participation of civil rights; that Henry did not venture to publish it, till the departure of the Papal legate. Even, when, in the ensuing year, the edict was brought to the parliament of Paris, to receive their sanction and verification, the strongest opposition arose among the members of that body. It required the personal interference of Henry, and all the force of his joint entreaties and menaces, to vanquish their resistance (41). Articles, accorded to the Protestants. Opposition of the parliament of Paris.

While the king was thus beneficially occupied, in restoring order to the province of Brittany; in extinguishing the remains of the League; and in dis- Impediments to the conclusion of peace.

(41) D'Aub. Hist. Unvi. vol. iii. p. 533—535. Hist. de France, par Matthieu, a Paris, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 197—261. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 208, and p. 373—386. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 123, 124. Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 198, 199. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 206, 207.

C H A P.
V.

1598.

Saluzzo.

Treaty with
Savoy.

May.

Opposition
of England
and Holland.

fusing tranquillity over the interior of his dominions, by quieting the alarm of his Hugonot subjects; the ministers of the two crowns at Vervins, proceeded happily in the great work of peace. The principal impediments to its conclusion, arose even less from the discordant pretensions of Henry and Philip, than from the inflexibility and pertinacity of Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy. That prince, whose natural ambition was inflamed and heightened by the recent success of his arms over Lesdiguières, from whom he had re-conquered the Maurienne, and made other acquisitions; peremptorily refused to relinquish the marquise of Saluzzo, seized by him during the reign of Henry the Third. If the ambassadors of the Catholic king had steadily supported him, the treaty appeared to be on the point of being broken off: but, their cold, or equivocal efforts in his favour, compelled him to relax in his demand. It was, at length, agreed, in order not to retard the pacification between the potentates principally interested, that the affair of Saluzzo should be referred to the arbitration of the pope, who was bound to decide on it within a year. Charles Emanuel restored to France the town of Berre in Provence, his sole remaining acquisition beyond the Alps (42).

The warm opposition, made by the queen of England, and the States General of Holland, delayed the publication, but, could not finally prevent the accomplishment of peace. Elizabeth remonstrated, reproached, and made, by the mouth of her ministers, the greatest offers of assistance, military and naval, for the prosecution of hostilities. But, Henry, secure of obtaining from Philip, all that he could hope to regain by force, in conjunction with his allies; pleaded, not without reason, in extenuation

(42) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 116—118. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 210, 211. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 59—61.

for breach of his engagements, the exhausted condition of France. He even offered to include her, as well as the States, in the treaty; but, his proposition was rejected by both powers, as equally contrary to the independence of the Dutch, and to the interests of the English (43). The king having, therefore, fulfilled, at least, the external demonstrations of friendship towards his confederates; no longer hesitated to sign a peace, which secured to him more than he could have expected from the most prosperous campaign. Except the county of Charolois, a small dependency of Burgundy, he possessed no part of the Spanish monarchy. Philip restored, besides several frontier towns of Picardy, the two important places and harbours, of Calais, and of Blavet in Brittany.

If we reflect on the facility which they afforded him, of landing forces, and of invading France in her most vulnerable quarters: if we consider the enormous expenditure of treasure which those acquisitions cost him, and the difficulty of their being reconquered by an enemy so exhausted as Henry; we shall admit, that, at a more active period of his reign, the Catholic king would not have acquiesced in so inglorious a treaty. But, he was already sinking under the diseases, which shortly afterwards conducted him to the grave; and his anxiety to devolve the Spanish monarchy to his successor, unembarrassed by a foreign war, augmented, as he approached the close of life. The arch-duke, Albert, not less impatient to accomplish his marriage with the infanta; and apprehensive, lest any unforeseen impediment to its completion might arise, accelerated the negotiation. Cambray alone was retained by Spain, as having been reconquered from an usurper, and not taken from its rightful prince. If the peace of Cateau,

C H A P.
V.
1598.

Conclusion
of peace.

Considerations on the
treaty of
Vervins.

Its beneficial effects
to France.

(43) Sully, vol. i. p. 380, 381. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 125—127.

C H A P. V. made by Philip, near forty years preceding, with
 1598. Henry the Second, was injurious and dishonourable
 to France; that of Vervins, was equally advan-
 tageous and beneficial. It covered Henry with per-
 sonal glory, and proportionately humbled the house
 of Austria, which had so long impressed Europe with
 12th June. terror. The publication of the treaty, was every
 where accompanied with testimonies of joy, and it
 was regarded as the signal and commencement of a
 26th June. new period of felicity (44). Biron, raised by the
 Biron is sent king, to the rank of a duke and peer, in considera-
 to Bruffels. tion of his services to the crown, was dispatched to
 Bruffels, in order to swear, on the part of his master,
 to the observance of the articles. He was received
 with honours and distinctions, above the condition of
 a subject; flattered by extravagant encomiums on his
 valour; and treated as the restorer and saviour of the
 French monarchy. The insidious poison of such
 praises, operating on a mind already distempered by
 ambition, arrogant, and deeming every recompence
 below its merits; was eventually productive of most
 fatal consequences. It shook his fidelity and alle-
 giance, excited convulsions in the state, and finally
 conducted Biron himself to a premature and igno-
 minious death (45).

(44) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 209—213. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 47—
 66. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 128—130. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 187
 192. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 13—21. Cayet. Chron. Septennaire,
 a Paris, 1605, p. 8—11. (45) Memoires de Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 22
 —25. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 75—83. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 218.
 Journ. d'Hen. IV. vol. i. p. 192, 193. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 156, 157.
 Sully, vol. i. p. 391, 392.

C H A P. VI.

*State of France, at the conclusion of the peace of Ver-
vins.—First measures of Henry.—Death of Philip the
Second.—Ambitious projects of Gabrielle d'Etrées.—
Her death.—Fermentation, and discontents in the king-
dom.—Divorce of the king.—Amours of Henry.—
Visit of the duke of Savoy.—Ineffectual negotiation of
that prince.—His return.—Domestic transactions.—
War with Savoy.—Rapid progress of the French
arms.—Inactivity of the duke of Savoy.—Conferences
for peace.—Marriage of Henry, with Mary of Me-
decis.—Conclusion of the treaty with Savoy.—Re-
flexions on it.—Tranquillity of France.—Birth of the
Dauphin.—Internal regulations.—Alliance renewed
with the Switzers.—Commutations in Poitou.—Conspi-
racy of Biron, revealed by La Fin.—Arrest of Biron.
—His trial, and execution.—Reflexions.*

BY the treaty of Vervins, Henry the Fourth be-
held himself the undisputed possessor of the
crown of France. After having vanquished the most
powerful faction which ever arose in any state, and
which had nearly accomplished the destruction of the
monarchy; his valour, constancy, and fortune, had
surmounted all the efforts of foreign enemies. Philip
the Second, his inveterate and implacable rival, had
not only recognized his title; but, had restored all
the conquests made during the period of anarchy and
commotion, which followed the death of the late
king. France, which for a period of near forty
years,

C H A P.
VI.
1598.
July.
Situation of
Henry.

CHAP.
VI.
1598.

years, since the accession of Francis the Second, had been desolated by its own citizens, resumed its antient situation and weight in the system of Europe; nor, if we except the marquisate of Saluzzo, had a single fortress, or town, been dismembered from the kingdom. But, a more toilsome and laborious, though a less dangerous task, remained to be accomplished: the restoration of order, the revival of industry, the alleviation of the public misery, and the diffusion of tranquillity, civilization, and obedience to the laws. It required talents, widely different from those which Henry had hitherto exerted, to produce these beneficial changes; and the qualities of a general would be of little avail, without the wisdom and policy of a legislator. It is in the latter capacity, that we are henceforward principally to contemplate him; and in which, by an uncommon example of felicity, he lays the strongest claim to esteem and admiration.

State of
France,

and of Paris.

France, at the restoration of peace, had suffered almost every calamity, except the extinction of its existence and independence, by which a state could be afflicted. The majesty of the crown had been degraded by the pusillanimity, and polluted by the vices, of the last prince of the family of Valois. His dissipation had anticipated the revenues, alienated the royal domains, and involved the finances in almost inextricable ruin. The sanctity of the laws was violated, and the asylum of justice, converted into an engine of oppression. Paris, the capital of the kingdom, garrisoned by Neapolitans and Walloons, besieged by hostile armies, pressed by famine without, and tyrannized within; presented only an emaciated and extenuated shadow of its former population, opulence, and prosperity. The nobility, accustomed to all the licentious violence of civil war, acted like the despots of a conquered country; and practised, with impunity, every outrage on the inferior orders. Abuses, equally subversive of piety, and contrary to decorum,

decorum, had crept into the Gallican church, and required the most vigorous exertions to eradicate. Commerce languished, without protection: manufactures declined: many of the public roads had totally disappeared, under thorns and briars: the communication from one province to another, was dangerous and precarious: fastnesses and castles covered the country, which served as retreats to numbers of banditti; who, whether they adhered to the royal cause, or to that of the League, were alike the scourges of the people. The unfortunate peasant, pursued by rapacious collectors of the revenue, destitute of protection, pillaged, insulted, and despised, was reduced to the last stage of poverty, and scarcely hoped for any salutary change (1).

C H A P.
VI.
1598.
Commerce.

From such a complication of misfortunes, become inveterate, by long prescription, only time, wisdom, and the most lenient remedies, could extricate a nation. The first measures of the king were directed towards the preservation of public tranquillity, safety, and property. In order to protect his subjects against the outrages of such, as being disbanded from the military service by the reduction of the regular forces, might have recourse to violence for subsistence; he issued an edict, prohibiting, under severe penalties, the carrying of fire-arms (2). A great diminution of the cavalry and infantry was made: but, in order to qualify a step, which, however useful and necessary, was at once delicate and dangerous, permission was given to serve in Flanders, and in Hungary (3). To the clergy, who, having held an assembly of their own body in the metropolis, demanded of Henry, the speedy reform of the venality, simony, and profanation of ecclesiastical preferments, which dishonoured the church; he replied with equal dignity,

Measures of
the king.

4th August.

September.

(1) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 151, 152.

(2) De Thou, vol. xiii.

p. 218, 219. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 132. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 152, 153.

(3) Ibid. p. 153, 154.

condescension,

C H A P. VI. 1598. condescension, and circumspection. His speech, which is worthy of Trajan, or Marcus Aurelius, evinced at once his zealous attachment to the Catholic religion, and his consciousness that all expedients of severity, or violence, would only aggravate the evil (4). A remission of the vast arrears of taxes, due from the people, but, which their poverty rendered them incapable of paying, was granted. Commissioners were sent into the provinces, to enquire into, and to report on the abuses, or grievances; and the letters, or patents of nobility, which in the late reign, had been one of the disgraceful modes adopted to fill the royal treasury, underwent a rigorous examination (5). The finances, which, under three successive princes, had attained to the utmost point of subversion and confusion, assumed a new form, and were managed with consummate skill. Henry's frugality was aided and sustained by the inflexible integrity and parsimonious vigilance of the superintendent, Rosny. France, liberated from foreign and domestic war, began already to feel the effects of a wise administration; and to enter upon that period of its history, which, if we compare it with the times by which it was preceded, and those by which it was followed, may, perhaps, deserve with more justice, than any other portion of its annals, the epithet of the golden age (6).

Death of Philip the Second. 13th September.

Philip the Second did not long survive, to taste the beneficial effects of that peace, for the attainment of which he had made such important sacrifices. Exterminated by the attacks of a cruel and loathsome disease, which baffled every effort to check its progress; he surmounted his sufferings by a constancy and serenity, superior to all eulogium. The sanity of his mind, and the perspicuity of his judgment, were nei-

(4) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 220, 221. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 160—163. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 133, 134.

(5) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 159 160.

(6) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 159.

ther diminished, nor obscured, by the decay of his frame, by age, nor by the most acute pain. Jealous and tenacious of his power, he continued to the last moments of his life, to retain, and to exercise the supreme authority. Anxious to secure his acquittal at the tribunal where he felt that he must speedily appear, he had recourse to all the superstitious observances, or practices, of credulity and terror. Desirous to prolong his reign beyond the grave, he laid down the most specific injunctions for the conduct of his only son; while he secured to his beloved daughter, Clara Isabella, the rich inheritance of the Low Countries, dissevered in her favour from the Spanish monarchy (7). With him, may be said to have sunk that enormous and gigantic power, which had so long menaced, invaded, and even nearly, at times, subjected Europe. Only the shadow survived under his feeble successors, who were incapable of propelling into vigorous action, a disjointed, torpid, and exhausted mass. The incapacity of Philip the Third, his indolence, and inaptitude for affairs of moment, augmented, and rendered incurable, the diseases of the state. Spain, under his government, continued essentially, though, during some years, not ostensibly, to decline; as France, from the same æra, rose with similar rapidity, in the scale of European powers.

The stability of the crown, and the tranquillity of the kingdom, might be said, nevertheless, to repose on a very precarious basis, while Henry was destitute of legitimate issue, to inherit his dominions. Not only the age of his presumptive successor, the young prince of Condé, who had not passed the limits of childhood; but, the circumstances of his birth rendered his title subject to question; and it was to be apprehended, that in case of Henry's decease, the

(7) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 225—238. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 134—137. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 95—148. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 30—42. Sully, vol. i. p. 408, 409. Chron. Septenn. p. 24—31.

ambition

C H A P.
VI.
1598.

Dispositions
of that
prince.

C H A P.
VI.1598.
Gabrielle
d'Etrées.Her cha-
racter.Impedi-
ments to
Henry's
divorce.1599.
January.

ambition of the count of Soissons, or the factions a-
tent in the vitals of the country, would involve France
in new calamities (8). Gabrielle d'Etrées, recently
created duchess of Beaufort, already nourished and
matured the project of ascending the throne. Her
personal beauty, the amenity of her manners, and
the charms of her society, had given her an almost
unbounded ascendant over her lover; and she had
recently produced him a second son. The benefi-
cence of her disposition, which disposed her to acts
of generosity and kindness, had procured her nume-
rous adherents in the court; nor, if the qualities of
her mind alone were considered, did she appear to
be unworthy of so great an elevation. Henry was
himself disposed to legitimate his union with her;
and he even ventured indirectly, to found the Papal
legate on the subject. But, that prelate, conscious
of the fatal consequences which must inevitably result
from such a measure, declined all interference in its
negotiation, or accomplishment. Even Margaret of
Valois herself, though immured in a fortress among
the mountains of Auvergne, and not averse to the
dissolution of her marriage, in order to enable the
king to give heirs to the state; yet, peremptorily re-
fused to consent to a divorce, if Gabrielle was to
occupy her place (9). In defiance, nevertheless, of
these impediments, she persisted in her design; and
Sillery, one of the most able ministers of that pe-
riod, was sent to Rome, with injunctions to press its
speedy decision. Clement, averse to gratify the
king, at the expence of decorum, and at the hazard
of entailing endless misfortunes on the kingdom, in-
terposed many delays to the proceeding; but, it is
probable that they would have been easily surmounted,
if the premature death of the duchess, which took

(8) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 376, 377.
P. 427, 428.

(9) Sully, vol. i.

place soon afterwards, had not overturned her projects of ambition (10). C H A P.
VI.

Catherine, princess of Navarre, only sister of Henry, was rather sacrificed, than married, nearly at this time. She espoused the duke of Bar, eldest son and heir of the duke of Lorraine. The two parties were equally victims to the policy of their respective courts; and the union was neither lasting, fortunate, nor fruitful. Catherine's inflexible attachment to the tenets of the reformed religion; the bigotry, or scruples of her husband; and the advanced age of the princess, which rendered it improbable that she ever could have issue, conduced to their mutual infelicity. It was not even without the greatest difficulty, that any prelate could be persuaded to pronounce the nuptial benediction; and it required all the interposition of the king's authority, to surmount the repugnance manifested by the ecclesiastics on the occasion (11). 1598.
29th January.
Marriage of
the princess
Catherine.

The dispute between Henry and the duke of Savoy, relative to the marquifate of Saluzzo, which at the treaty of Vervins, had been referred to the judgment of the Papal see; far from advancing to a determination, seemed to be involved in almost insuperable difficulties. Charles Emanuel, in possession of the territory litigated, not only refused to resign, or to entrust it to any person named by Clement, during the continuance of the process; but, he attempted to elude, or to corrupt the arbitrator himself. Secretly supported by the court of Madrid; determined never to relinquish, except by force, the object in dispute; and relying on the reluctance, or inability of the king, to come to a rupture; he Disputes relative to Saluzzo.

(10) Amours d'Henry IV., a Leyde, 1663, p. 53—56. Sully, vol. i. p. 382—386, and p. 404—407. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 139, 140, and p. 143, 144. Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 76—79. (11) Sully, vol. i. p. 416, 417. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 140, 141. Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 59—69. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 204, 205. Chron. Sept. p. 64.

C H A P. VI. perpetually invented new subterfuges to evade a surrender of his usurpation. Yet, conscious of the inferiority of his strength, and deprecating hostilities, he expressed on every occasion, his readiness to terminate the affair, by pacific and amicable negotiation (12).

Death of
Gabrielle,
30th April.

In the midst of these transactions of policy, and at the moment when her schemes seemed to be on the point of completion, Gabrielle d'Etrées was carried off by a death no less sudden, than violent. On the most candid and impartial consideration of all the symptoms which preceded, and accompanied her distemper, it is difficult not to suppose, that unnatural means were used to hasten, or to produce her end. It must, nevertheless, remain among those problematical events, of which history is full, and relative to which no absolute certainty can be obtained. The king shewed great sensibility for her loss; though his heart, incapable of remaining long unoccupied, soon transferred his fondness for Gabrielle, to a new object. When we consider the dangers which Henry had surmounted, in his attainment of the throne, and the perpetual vigilance which it demanded, to retain in subjection a people grown familiar with rebellion and civil war; we cannot sufficiently wonder at his weakness in committing to hazard so vast an acquisition. When we reflect on the wisdom, vigour, and affection for his subjects, which characterize and illuminate his general administration; we are penetrated with concern, to see him sacrificing every public consideration to the gratifications of passion. It must, however reluctantly, be admitted, that, throughout his whole life, and not less in its decline, than during its meridian, he was, on the article of love; (if, indeed, a transitory and criminal impulse

Reflections
on that
event.

(12) De Thou, vol. xlii. p. 367—373. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. p. 283—307. Mezeray, vol. x. 163—165

can merit that title;) inferior in prudence and conduct, to ordinary men. His marriage with Gabrielle, had it been accomplished, must have rendered him, in some measure, contemptible to his own subjects, and to foreign nations. It would have awakened all the dormant factions of the state, involved the succession in obscurity, weakened the energy of the government, and eventually plunged the country into calamities more irremediable than those from which it was so recently extricated (13).

C H A P.
VI.

1599.

France, though no longer in a state of foreign, or internal war, was nevertheless, capable, from the slightest causes, of being dangerously agitated; and, like the ocean, after a tempest, it still continued to heave. A wretched mechanic, whose daughter had been taught to counterfeit the contortions of a demoniac, had nearly endangered the tranquillity of the metropolis, and of the kingdom. Such was the credulity, ignorance, and disposition of the lower classes to believe in every absurdity, which assumed a supernatural appearance, that they crowded to behold this impostress, and to listen to her ravings. It was in vain, that physicians, and prelates of the highest sanctity, declared her to be such: the interference of the royal authority, and the interposition of the parliament, became necessary to suppress and extinguish an exhibition, which, it was dreaded, might be converted to purposes of sedition (14). The edict of Nantes had excited the murmurs of the disaffected, the bigotted, and the intolerant. Discontents prevailed among the nobility, who, accustomed to the licence and disorders of civil war, were already weary of a peace,

Internal agitation of the kingdom.

Effects of the edict of Nantes.

(13) Amours d'Hen. IV., p. 56—60. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 307—309. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 388, 389. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 211, 212. Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 79—86. Sally, vol. i. p. 421—425. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 144, 145. Chron. Septenn. p. 77, 78. (14) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 392—407. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 334—342. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 209—211, and p. 213, and p. 216.

which

CHAP. VI. which reduced them to comparative insignificance
 and dependance. Biron, incapable of concealing,
 or of moderating his resentment at the supposed in-
 gratitude of the king, exhaled his anger in complaints,
 in menaces, and even in opprobrious invectives
 against his sovereign. His criminal designs inspired
 alarm, and, he seemed to emulate the example of the
 duke of Guise, under a prince of a different character
 from Henry the Third (15). The pulpits of Paris
 began to resound with insolent and violent declamati-
 ons, calculated to shake the allegiance of the weak,
 the superstitious, and the disloyal. All the exertions
 of the executive government were demanded, to
 impose silence on these ecclesiastics (16). More than
 one desperate fanatic, who had undertaken to assassi-
 nate the king, was seized, convicted, and executed.
 It increased the horror of the discovery, to know
 that the Papal nuntio at Brussels had instigated them to
 commit so atrocious a crime; and he had selected
 his agents from the monastic orders (17). The
 court of Spain secretly fomented these seeds of dis-
 content, or commotion, and endeavoured to under-
 mine the foundations of that throne, which it had
 not been able to overturn by violence.

Seditious
sermons.

Fanaticism.

Transfer of
the Low
Countries,
to Albert
and Isabella.

August.

The Netherlands had, meanwhile, been transfer-
 red, in virtue of the last dispositions of Philip the
 Second, to the infanta, conjointly with the arch-duke,
 her husband. After his decease, the young king
 religiously fulfilled his father's dying injunctions. The
 nuptial ceremony was performed at Valentia: the two
 princes returned to Brussels, and with the consent of
 the states of the Low Countries, assumed the sove-
 reign authority. A new power appeared to arise in
 Europe, which from its central position between
 France, England, Germany, and Holland, added to

(15) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 155—157
p. 213—215.

(16) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i.
(17) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 417—423.

its maritime strength, industry, and commerce, might materially affect the policy and interests of all the surrounding countries. But, the independence of Albert and Isabella, was only nominal; and Philip had taken ample precautions to secure either the obedience, or the reversion, of those valuable provinces, to his successors. Even though the infant's marriage should be productive of issue, a circumstance very problematical; yet, so binding were the ties, which chained the Netherlands to the Spanish monarchy, that no possible revolution, except that of conquest by a foreign enemy, appeared to be capable of weakening, or dissolving them (18). Nor did the arrival of the new sovereigns promise any speedy termination to the long war with the republic of Holland, nor any salutary change in the principles and system of its conduct. The offer, made to the United States by the arch-duke, for an accommodation, when he announced to them, his approaching nuptials, and the cession made by the Catholic king to his daughter, was deemed inadmissible, and rejected almost without the forms of consideration (19).

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VI.
1599.
Conditions,
annexed to
it by Spain.

The dissolution of Henry's marriage, which had met with some impediments at Rome, while Gabrielle d'Étrées was alive, advanced rapidly after her decease, to a final determination. Margaret of Valois herself joined in the supplication to the sovereign pontiff; and the honour of the repudiated princess, was carefully preserved in all the proceedings. Compulsion, and the defect of various formalities in the nuptial contract, as well as consanguinity, were the pretexts upon which the commissioners named by Clement, proceeded to pronounce a sentence of divorce (20).

Divorce of
Henry.

10th No-
vember.

(18) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 251—255. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 178—185. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 137. 138. (19) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 255—257. (20) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 379—383. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 430—433. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 220, 221.

C H. A. P.

VI.

1599.

Negotiation
began at
Florence.Reflections
on that
choice.Amours of
Henry.

The parliament of Paris had already address'd the king, in terms of affection and energy, to beseech of him to make choice of a queen; and they had not scrupled to exhort him to select for his partner in the French throne, a princess of royal, or sovereign extraction; as alone worthy of so distinguished an elevation (21). His embassadors in Italy, and cardinal d'Osset, and Sillery, authorized for the purpose, opened a proposition in his name, at the court of Tuscany, for the hand of Mary of Medecis, niece to the reigning grand duke, Ferdinand, and daughter to his elder brother, Francis. It was received with testimonies of the highest satisfaction, and solemnized by procuration in the ensuing year. We are naturally impressed with some degree of wonder, that the king should voluntarily wish to form so close and intimate a connexion with a family, which not only was beneath the rank of crowned heads; but, which, from his sense of the recent enmity of Catherine of Medecis, towards the house of Bourbon, and especially towards himself, must naturally have been regarded by him with a species of alienation. His choice was, in effect, dictated by necessity: neither the Spanish, nor the imperial branch of Austria, possessed at that time, any princess of an age proper for marriage; and Henry did not judge it consistent with policy or prudence, to enter into a matrimonial union with the daughter of a Protestant sovereign (22).

Unfortunately for his domestic repose, in the interval of a few months which elapsed between the decease of Gabrielle, and the first proposal of his marriage with Mary of Medecis, he had already disposed of his affections, and almost of his hand. History, which ought only to commemorate actions of a national and public nature, is too frequently

(21) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 375—378.
382, 383. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 384, 385.

(22) Sully, vol. i. p.

compelled

compelled to descend to the vices, the weaknesſes, and the amours of kings. They have, in every period, influenced deeply and materially, the fate of empires, and the felicity of mankind; nor has this truth, perhaps, ever been more forcibly exemplified, than in the reign under our conſideration. If we would love and venerate the character of Henry the Fourth, we muſt conſider him in his kingly capacity, as the conqueror, the reſtorer, and the father of France. He ſinks, when we inſpect his perſonal and private life; where, by a natural and unavoidable compariſon, he appears leſs, from his preceding greatneſs.

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1599.

Henrietta d'Entragues was deſtined to ſucceed to the place, occupied by Gabrielle d'Etrées. If her perſonal attractions were not equal to thoſe of her predeceſſor, ſhe compensated for it by all the charms of coquetry, gaiety, and ſuperior powers of amuſement. Capricious, haughty, inflexible, arrogant, ſhe was deſtitute of the ſoftneſs and tenderneſs which the king had found in the object of his former paſſion. Inſtructed by her mother, the celebrated Mary Touchet, miſtreſs of Charles the Ninth, and perfectly aware of the predominant weakneſs of the prince who purſued her; ſhe artfully inflamed his deſires, while ſhe protracted their fruition. Availing herſelf of his ardour, impatience, and fondneſs, ſhe exacted from him, previous to the ſurrender of her honour, an engagement, that, if in conſequence of the gratification of his wiſhes, ſhe ſhould produce him a ſon within a year, he would legitimate his connexion with her, by raiſing her to his throne and bed. Henry, in defiance of the generous remonſtrances and fruitleſs oppoſition of Roſny, delivered to her in writing, a paper ſuch as ſhe demanded. It encreaſes our condemnation, of the act, when we reflect that he was already paſt the period of life, at which the violence of the paſſions is uſually felt, and that he could

Character of
Henrietta
d'Entragues.

Henry con-
tracts with
her an en-
gagement.

C H A P. VI. could neither plead youth nor inexperience in his justification. Furnished with so dangerous a weapon to invade his future tranquillity, Henrietta submitted to all his desires: but, the king had frequently reason, during the course of his reign, to lament his error; and he experienced in its fullest extent, the fatal consequences that result from the vengeance of an offended and vindictive woman (23).

Charles
Emanuel
visits
France.

Wearied with fruitless endeavours to obtain from Henry the cession or dereliction of the marquisate of Saluzzo, and confident in his own powers of insinuation; the duke of Savoy embraced the precipitate resolution of repairing in person, to the court of France. Neither the remonstrances of his wisest ministers, nor the apprehension of exciting the jealousy and resentment of Philip the Third, his brother-in-law; could prevail on Charles Emanuel to postpone his design. The coldness with which the proposition was received by the king, produced no alteration whatever in his conduct. In defiance of winter, he quitted Turin, descended the Rhone to Lyons; and thence pursuing his journey through the interior provinces, to Orleans, he arrived at Fontainebleau. The interview of the two princes at that palace, was accompanied with every external demonstration of amity; and Henry, after a stay of a few days, conducted his guest to Paris, where, during a residence of more than two months, he was amused with continual exhibitions of varied pleasure and magnificence (24). But, Charles Emanuel was not long in discovering, that the unqualified and immediate restitution of the usurped marquisate, must precede every attempt on his part, to establish a friendship, or to form an alliance with the French crown. It was in

13th Dec.
His recep-
tion.

1600.
January.

(23) Sully, vol. i. p. 429—431. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 60—62. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 167, 168. Memoires de Bassompierre, a Cologne, 1721, tome i. p. 42—46.

(24) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 419—432.

vain,

vain, that he exerted by turns, the versatility, the eloquence, and the blandishments of flattery, which he eminently possessed, in order to soften the king. He soon found, that Henry was equally inaccessible to the allurements of ambition, to the promises of interest, and to the supplications of humility. Instead of the facility and prodigality which had characterized Henry the Third, he met with inflexible firmness, sustained by reason, and only irritated by resistance. His efforts to corrupt, or to remove, the principal obstacles to his success, were ineffectual. The demand which he ventured to make, that Henry should abandon the protection of the city of Geneva, excited indignation in the council of state. All his offers to facilitate the conquest of Milan and of Naples, made no impression on a prince, already fatiated with war, covered with glory, and who felt the necessity of peace, in order to restore and reinvigorate the kingdom. The interposition of Henrietta d'Entragues, recently created marchioness of Verneuil, whom he had engaged in his interests; could not induce the king to depart from his demands; and Charles Emanuel, though endowed with almost all the great qualities that usually secure success, beheld himself in a situation, at once unfortunate and humiliating (25).

Driven to despair by a treatment that he had not expected and which he did not venture openly to resent; frustrated in all his hopes; and incapable of yielding the territory which he had usurped; the duke embraced a system, which promised him better success. He was well acquainted with the various causes of discontent that existed in the French court and monarchy: nor did he want spies, or agents, to

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VI.
1600.

His negotiations, and intrigues.

Henry rejects them;

Criminal projects of the duke of Savoy.

(25) Chron: Septen. p. 98—101. Sully, vol. i. 433—435. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 445—448. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 434—437. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 169—172. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 221—223, and p. 227, 228. Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 769, 770.

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1600.
with Biron.

facilitate all his machinations. By artfully inflaming the secret resentment of Biron against his sovereign; by misrepresentations, flattery, and insidious arts of every kind, he totally overturned the allegiance, and seduced the loyalty of that misguided nobleman. Resolutions of a criminal nature, which, as it afterwards appeared, were subversive of the repose of France, and even of the throne itself, were entered into between them. La Fin, a Burgundian gentleman, to whose treachery and duplicity Biron ultimately fell a victim, carried on the intercourse; and Charles Emanuel, anxious to secure an associate of such rank, capacity, and resources, did not hesitate to attach him by promises of the most flattering kind. Time and favourable conjunctures were alone wanting to mature their plans; nor could occasions fail to present themselves for carrying into execution their treasonable intentions (26).

Treaty, con-
cluded.

27th Feb.

As it was become, nevertheless, indispensable to fix a period to the duke of Savoy's residence in the kingdom, and to conclude some agreement relative to Saluzzo; the commissioners, named by the two princes for transacting the affair, at length terminated it by a definitive treaty. It was optional, and left to the duke the choice, either of restoring, in the space of three months, the usurped marquisate; or of ceding in compensation for it, the county of Bresse, with Bourg, its capital; the castle of Pignerol, and some other vallies contiguous to the province of Dauphiné. Having signed the conditions, with apparent testimonies of satisfaction, Charles Emanuel quitted the court of France, and returned into his own dominions; leaving the king, as well as all those who had approached his person, impressed with sentiments of admiration at the variety of his talents, the

2d March.

Return of
Charles
Emanuel.

(26) Guichenon, Hist. de Sav. vol. i. p. 772, 773. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 437—439. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 448—450. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 172—174. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 468—470.

magnificence

magnificence of his donations, the condescension of^{C H A P.} his manners, and the elevation of his character. ^{VI.} Even the injustice of his demands, and the failure of ^{1600.} all his efforts for retaining the territory in dispute, could not obscure the lustre of those great qualities, which, if they had not been sullied by ambition, and stained with perfidy, would have placed him among the most illustrious princes of the age in which he lived (27).

By a singular transition; which strongly charac-^{Conference}terizes the genius of the century, these negotiations ^{of Fontain-}of state were immediately succeeded by controversies ^{bleau.} of divinity. Du Perron, bishop of Evreux, a pre-^{4th May.}late celebrated for the elegance of his talents, having sent a theological defiance to du Plessis Mornay, one of the Hugonot chiefs, on the subject of a work composed by the latter upon the Eucharist; the two disputants appeared in person, to defend their respective tenets; at Fontainbleau. Henry, whose whole life had been passed in camps, and whose amusements or occupations seemed to have little analogy with polemical subjects; was present, attended by the great officers of the crown, and many of the nobility. He only assumed the quality of spectator; and, in some measure, of moderator; three persons of eminence having been named arbitrators of the dispute. It was not among the least curious circum-^{Circum-}stances accompanying it, that the duke of Mayenne, ^{stances at-}who only a few years preceding, had opened the con-^{tending it}vocation of the States General in Paris, as head of the League, and as the representative of the kingly dignity; assisted at this conference, in the humble capacity of a private courtier. The partiality of the king, who was desirous to sacrifice du Plessis at the

(27) Chron. Septenn. p. 110—115. Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 770—772. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 441—444. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 518—528. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 174, 175. Sully, vol. i. p. 442. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 466—468.

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shrine of the Papal power; the timidity of the arbitrators; the eloquence of du Perron, accustomed to the subtleties of scholastic controversy; and, perhaps, the temerity of du Pleffis, who had engaged to defend a number of propositions or citations of doubtful authority: all these combined causes gave to the Catholic champion an easy victory. It was announced by Henry, with testimonies of exultation, little becoming the dignity of his character; and indecent in a prince, the sincerity of whose conversion to the Romish faith, must always have been matter of doubt and uncertainty (28).

25th April.
Conclusion
of Henry's
marriage.

His marriage with Mary of Medecis, which had been in agitation during several months, was concluded at this time, and published at Florence, with demonstrations of joy. The princess had already passed the flower of youth: but, the beauty of her person, and the modesty of her deportment, inspired favourable expectations of the future queen. Henry, throughout the whole course of the transaction, appears to have been passive, and to have allowed his ministers to dispose of his hand, as of a thing in which he had little personal concern. The recollection of his first marriage with Margaret of Valois, so unproductive of felicity; his habits of inconstancy and dissipation; and the dread of domestic altercations, if the wife, destined for him, should be of a temper violent, or unaccommodating; these natural reflexions rendered him not merely indifferent, but, even reluctant to enter anew into the same state. Other embarrassments added weight to them: the marchioness of Verneuil was pregnant, and demanded with importunity, the accomplishment of his pro-

Situation of
the king.

(28) Chron. Sept. p. 123—141. Hist. de du Pleffis, liv. ii. p. 260—273. Embassades de du Perron, Paris, 1623, p. 75—78. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 445—449. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 535—562. Sully, vol. i. p. 441. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 177—181. Journal d'Hen. IV. vol. i. p. 234—245. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 471.

mise,

mise, if she produced him a son. On the other hand, the princess of Florence was distant; the nuptial ceremony was incomplete, while not consummated; and it might yet be in some measure doubtful, which of the two rivals would eventually ascend the throne (29). Fortune decided the contest. The marchioness, terrified by the effects of a thunderstorm, miscarried; and an event, at once so happy and so unexpected, while it liberated the king from his engagement, left him free to follow the wishes of his people (30).

On the arrival of the duke of Savoy at Turin, it soon became evident, that he would not fulfil the treaty lately concluded at Paris. When summoned by the French ambassadors to execute it, and to make the option left him, he demanded a prolongation of the term: but, his conduct sufficiently disclosed the insincerity of his intentions. Henry, not less determined to compel him by violence, if negotiation was ineffectual, advanced therefore, to Lyons, with a view of being nearer the scene of action, and of propelling by his presence, the tardiness of the ministers employed on either side. Apprehensive of immediate hostilities, and desirous to protract, if he could not avert, so great a misfortune; Charles Emanuel had recourse to his usual artifices. A new treaty, confirmatory and explanatory of the former one, was concluded at Lyons: but, at the moment when the king, in virtue of it, prepared to take possession of Saluzzo, the duke threw off the mask, and declared that the most calamitous war would be preferable to the accomplishment of so ignominious and ruinous an agreement. Hostilities instantly commenced on the part of France, and were prosecuted with equal vi-

C H A P.
VI.
1600.

May.

Duke of Savoy refuses to accomplish the treaty.

9th July.

Negotiations at Lyons.

August.

Hostilities.

(29) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 245, 246. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 533, 534. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 552, 553. Sully, vol. i. p. 436. Chron. Sept. p. 120, 121. (30) Sully, vol. i. p. 442. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 185, 186. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 61, 62.

C H A P. VI. gour, celerity, and success. While Biron entered the province of Bresse, and made himself master of the city of Bourg, almost without loss; Crequi, dispatched by Lesdiguières, carried the town of Montmelian, with similar rapidity. Chamberry, capital of the duchy of Savoy, attacked by Henry in person, capitulated in a few days. The fortress of Conflans, which defended the entrance of the Tarentaise, surrendered. Miolans opened its gates; and Charbonnières, the key of the Maurienne, after a siege of fifteen days, followed the example. Lesdiguières, at the same time, penetrated into that province, entered the capital, and subjected the whole country, to the foot of Mount Cenis. Of all the dominions subject to Savoy, west of the Alps, only the citadels of Montmelian and of Bourg, together with the fort St. Catherine in the vicinity of the city of Geneva, continued to make resistance (31).

Inactivity of the duke of Savoy. During these exploits, which seemed to menace him with a fate not less severe than that of his ancestor, Charles the Third, despoiled by Francis the First; the duke of Savoy remained in a state of inaction at Turin. He did not even suspend the course of his ordinary pleasures; and though he made an effort to stop the torrent, by means of Calatagirone, who had been instrumental towards producing the peace of Vervins, and whom he dispatched to Henry, with offers of accomplishing the treaty of Paris; yet, he appeared to be totally insensible to the loss of his territories, and the capture of his places. He relied on a variety of secret springs, more effectual than arms, for his extrication. The opposition of many

(31) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 517—525. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 183—193. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 774, 775. Sully, vol. i. p. 443—450. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 570—584, and p. 587—592, and p. 598—604. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 471—476. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 48—51. Chron. Sept. p. 162—169.

individuals in the counsels, or cabinet of France: the effects of his treasonable correspondence with Biron: the approach of winter, in a mountainous country, covered with almost perpetual snow: and the powerful assistance of Philip the Third, king of Spain, deeply interested in the preservation of Savoy, as well as in the exclusion of the French from Italy. In all these expectations, he was, nevertheless, deceived. The pusillanimity of the French ministers who opposed a rupture, was overruled by the king's vigour and determination; as the obstacles arising from the nature of the territory and climate, were anticipated by his rapidity. Biron, though he had entered into the most criminal intrigues with Charles Emanuel, as well as with Spain, wanted means, or ability, to execute them; and all his motions were watched with jealous circumspection.

C H A P.
VI.
1600.

His schemes
are frustrat-
ed.

Conduct of
the court of
Madrid,

The court of Madrid was destitute of energy; and beheld with indifference a contest, in which, at other periods, it would have interfered in the most decided manner. Philip the Third, unwarlike, indolent, and feeble, had resigned the government to his minister, or, rather, his favourite, the duke of Lerma; who possessed neither the talents, nor the inclination, to venture on plunging his master into a war. In Flanders, the Spaniards had recently sustained a defeat near Nieuport, where Maurice, prince of Orange, obtained a signal victory over the arch-duke Albert; and it was requisite to send supplies to that quarter. The count de Fuentes alone, governor of the Milaneze, desired to march to Charles Emanuel's assistance. He was at the head of a numerous army; and his implacable animosity towards the French king, impelled him to seize every occasion of invading his repose, or diminishing his power. But, Fuentes was fettered by the instructions of the cabinet of Spain, and

and of Fu-
entes.

C H A P. VI. and compelled to remain a reluctant spectator of the victories of his mortal enemy (32).

1600.

October.

Capitulation
of Mont-
melian.

The citadel of Montmelian appeared to oppose a more insurmountable barrier to Henry's further progress. Its situation on the summit of an insulated rock, the difficulty of approaching, and still more, of bringing cannon to act against it with effect, added to the strength of the works, seemed to bid defiance to all his efforts. But, the presence of the king, the emulation between his officers, and the indefatigable exertions of Rosny, recently created master-general of the artillery, surmounted many of the impediments. The pusillanimity, or treachery of the governor, effected the rest. Unmindful of his honour, the importance of the charge confided to him, and the fidelity due to his sovereign; he consented, after a short and feeble defence, to open a parley.

16th Oct.

It was stipulated, that the fortress should surrender, if not succoured by the duke within a month. Hostages were given for the execution of the articles, and intimation of the conditions was conveyed to Charles Emanuel, at Turin (33).

Alarm of
the holy See.

Justly alarmed at the rapidity of the French conquests, Clement the Eighth, who had so lately mediated a peace at Vervins, by which he had hoped to secure the repose of Europe, began to manifest his apprehensions. Lombardy, which, during more than forty years, had enjoyed a profound tranquillity, might again become the theatre of war. Henry, animated by the apparent facility of the enterprize, and seconded by a warlike nobility, victorious troops, and all the resources of so powerful a monarchy as France, might speedily enter Piedmont, and subject

(32) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 471—478. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 193, and p. 197—199. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 604, 605. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 776.

(33) Chron. Sept. p. 169—174. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 776, 777. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 525, 526, and p. 532, 533. Sully, vol. i. p. 450—453. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 612—616.

the Milanese. Italy would anew be involved in the calamities which had desolated it during a great part of the sixteenth century; and the popes must be necessarily compelled to take a political, if not an active part, in the dissensions between the contending princes. If Henry should extend his claims to Naples, even the Papal dominions were not secure, and Rome might be sacked by some desperate, or vindictive chieftain, as it had been by the constable of Bourbon, under the pontificate of Clement the Seventh. Stimulated by these considerations, to which were joined the entreaties of the Spanish ambassador at the court of Rome; Clement dispatched his nephew, cardinal Aldobrandini, to conjure the king of France to suspend his attacks. The legate having previously obtained from the duke of Savoy and the count de Fuentes, an assurance that they would acquiesce in, and faithfully execute the treaty of Paris; proceeded to Chamberry, where the king gave him audience. But, though Henry protested his desire of peace, and his disposition to maintain the articles agreed on at Vervins; he, nevertheless, refused to listen to any suspension of arms in the actual position of affairs, before the final surrender of Montmelian. That fortress, anticipating the term fixed for admitting the French, opened its gates; and the governor, by his subsequent conduct, and by retiring into France, sufficiently betrayed the disgraceful motives which had accelerated its evacuation (34).

C H A P.
VI.
1600.

Clement the
Eighth in-
ter-popes.

14th No-
vember.
Surrender of
Montme-
lian.

Charles
Emanuel
takes the
field.

12th No-
vember.

(34) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 777, 778. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 621—625, and p. 633—645, and p. 651. Sully, vol. i. p. 454.

C H A P. VI. province of Aoste, at the head of more than ten thousand infantry, and five thousand cavalry, as if with intention to give battle to the enemy. Henry manifested equal impatience to decide the contest by an action. But, though the two armies were almost in sight of each other, and only separated by an intervening mountain; yet, such was the nature of the country, the severity of the weather, and the quantity of snow which fell, as to render all his efforts for the purpose, fruitless. He quitted therefore, the camp, and repaired in person to the siege of fort St. Catherine. This fortress, constructed at a vast expence, within two leagues of the city of Geneva, which it was intended to bridle; might still, in so advanced a season, have retarded the French arms for a considerable time. Unfortunately for the duke of Savoy, the governor, imitating the example of Montmelian, preferred capitulating, rather than defending the place. He obtained from the king, ample and favourable conditions. Amidst so many instances of treachery, or cowardice, Bouvens, who commanded in the citadel of Bourg, magnanimously refused to listen to any terms, however advantageous. In defiance of the pressure of famine, and destitute of any hope of relief, he could neither be intimidated by the menaces, nor corrupted by the offers of the besiegers; and if the improvidence of Charles Emanuel had not left him in want of provisions, he would have finally repulsed every attempt to become master of the place (35).

Operations
in Savoy.

6th Decem-
ber.

Fort St. Ca-
therine sur-
renders.

Arrival of
Mary of
Medecis, at
Lyons.

After the reduction of fort St. Catherine, Henry could no longer delay the consummation of his nuptials with Mary of Medecis, who waited at Lyons, with impatience, his arrival. Embarking therefore,

(35) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 476—479. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 537—541. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 778. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 197. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 653—659, and p. 660—663. Baffomp. vol. i. tom. i. p. 52—54. Sully, vol. i. p. 456, 457. Chron. Sept. p. 174—175.

on the Rhone, he descended that river with the ut-^{C H A. P.}
 most expedition. The solemnity of the princess's ^{VI.}
 marriage had been performed more than two months ^{1800.}
 preceding, at Florence, by procuration, with extreme
 magnificence; the cardinal legate Aldobrandini offici-
 ating on the occasion. Escorted by the Papal, ^{3d Novem-}
 Maltese, and Tuscan gallies, from Leghorn, and ac-^{ber.}
 companied with a splendid retinue, she coasted the
 Genoese territories; and after a stormy passage, en-
 tered the port of Marseilles. She was received by
 the constable Montmorency, the chancellor, and
 many of the first nobility, whom Henry had dis-
 patched to welcome her, on her landing in France.
 Proceeding to Lyons, she made her public entry into ^{3d Decem-}
 the city, amidst the acclamations of the people; who ^{ber.}
 regarded her union with the king, as at once the seal
 of his felicity, and the confirmation of the national
 repose, by the prospect which it afforded of heirs to
 the throne. Henry himself arrived soon afterwards,
 in the equipage and habit of a soldier. Without ^{9th Decem-}
 waiting for a renewal of the nuptial benediction, he ^{ber.}
 proceeded immediately to consummate his marriage; ^{Henry cele-}
 though the public ceremony of his nuptials was again ^{brates his}
 repeated on the following day, and followed by all the ^{marriage}
 exhibitions of splendour or gaiety, suitable to the ^{with her.}
 occasion (36).

The negotiation for a peace, which the king had ^{Negotiation}
 declined at Chamberry, was revived with more effi- ^{for peace,}
 cacy at Lyons, by the intervention of the legate, ^{renewed.}
 Aldobrandini, in conjunction with the ambassadors of
 Savoy. As the French ministers demanded a confi-
 derable sum, by way of compensation for the ex-
 pences of the war; the province of Bugey, toge-
 ther with the district of Valromey, were offered by ^{Terms, of-}
^{ferred.}

(36) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 270—272. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 552—561. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 202, 203. Sully, vol. i. p. 457. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 479—481. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 666—679. Chron. Sept. p. 181—191.

C H A P. VI. Charles Emanuel; who, in exchange for some dependencies of Provence, contiguous to the marquise of Saluzzo, added likewise the territory, or bailiwick of Gex, in the vicinity of the lake of Geneva. In consideration of these important cessions, together with the original stipulation of Bresse, Henry consented to restore all his conquests, without dismantling any of the fortresses; and to abandon to the duke of Saluzzo, the primary cause of the rupture. But, at the moment when all the preliminaries were adjusted, a new obstacle arose to retard their accomplishment. At the solicitation of the inhabitants of Geneva, a private commission had been issued, to destroy the fortifications of fort St. Catherine; and as the execution was entrusted to Rosny, a Hugonot, he lost not an instant in demolishing so obnoxious a citadel. Mines having been sprung for the purpose, it was completely reduced to a heap of ruins; and even the materials composing it, were carried off by the Genevese, anxious to leave no vestige of its existence. When the intelligence was conveyed to the legate, he expressed the utmost indignation at an act, which he not only affected to consider as an infraction of the principles of the treaty, but as an indirect insult to the holy see itself; Geneva, the center and asylum of heresy, being by the demolition of fort St. Catherine, emancipated from its greatest object of apprehension. The conferences were, nevertheless, resumed after some days, at the entreaty of the Savoyard ministers; who, terrified lest the citadel of Bourg should be compelled by famine to capitulate, besought of the legate to terminate the business. He complied; when, to his astonishment and concern, the duke's ambassadors produced an order, prohibiting them from signing, without further directions. Vanquished, at length, by his entreaties, menaces, and assurances of responsibility, they, however, affixed their signatures, on the express condition, that

VI.
 1700.

Fort St. Catherine, demolished.

1601.

January.
 Conferences, resumed.

17th January.
 Conclusion of peace.

the

the term of a month should be allowed to their sovereign, in which to send his ratification (37). C H A P. VI.

Henry, conceiving the war ended by this agreement, quitted Lyons immediately; leaving the queen to follow him to the capital, by slower journies: but Charles Emanuel, and the count de Fuentes were far from acquiescing in a treaty, which they regarded as dishonourable and ruinous. The duke had not renounced his hopes of assistance from Biron; nor was it improbable that Philip the Third might be induced to enter into and espouse his quarrel. Bouvens still held out in the citadel of Bourg; and Fuentes acted in concert with the court of Turin. All these expectations were speedily extinguished by the duke of Lerma. That minister, desirous of peace, and seeing the security of the Milanese amply guaranteed by the exclusion of the French from Italy; was little affected by the losses, or sensible to the misfortunes, of his master's ally. Biron was unable to carry into execution, his criminal purposes. The legate loudly demanded the accomplishment of a negociation, in which his own honour, and the dignity of the holy see, were deeply interested. The citadel of Bourg, reduced to extremities, was on the point of surrendering; and Fuentes could extend no protection. In these distressful circumstances, the duke, after exhausting every subterfuge, and protracting to the last moment, reluctantly ratified the treaty. The articles were executed on both sides, with fidelity (38).

If we consider its effects in a political point of view, we must admit, that they were equally glorious and beneficial to France. Henry not only aug-

(37) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 779—782. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 571—568. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 1—31. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 481.—486. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 203—207. Sully, vol. i. p. 458—460. Chron. Sept. p. 204—211.

(38) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 782—784. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 568—572. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 207—210. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 31—39. Chron. Sept. p. 211, 212.

C H A P.

VI.

1601.

Beneficial to
France.

Reflexions.

mented the lustre of his arms, and the splendor of his reputation ; but, he acquired a vast and valuable increase of territory. The two provinces of Bresse and Bugey, extending near thirty leagues, covered and protected the city of Lyons, which antecedently was liable to perpetual insult or attack, from the vicinity of Bourg. Dauphiné and Burgundy derived similar advantages from the acquisition. The king became master of the Rhone, from its passage out of the lake of Geneva, to its confluence with the Saone : he facilitated his communication with Germany and Switzerland ; straitened the county of Burgundy, possessed by Spain ; and rendered himself in effect, as well as in name, the protector of the republic of Geneva. So important an accession of dominion had not been made, since the seizure of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, by Henry the Second ; and it has remained, during near two centuries which have since elapsed, irrevocably annexed to France. Henry resigned, it is true, the only entrance left him, whereby to penetrate into Italy ; but, when we reflect on the unhappy termination of the numerous attempts made to subject the Milanese and Naples, that renunciation may be esteemed wise and salutary. On the other hand, Charles Emanuel, though vanquished, betrayed, and abandoned, yet retained the original subject of the war. Nor, must we estimate the marquisate of Saluzzo, by its magnitude, or its revenue. Its situation in the neighbourhood of Turin, the access which it opened to Piedmont, and the facility lent by it to invade Italy ; compensated, if they did not overpay, the cession of a much more extensive tract of country. Some degree of honour was supposed to accrue even from a contest however unfortunate, with a power (so much superior : and Lefdiguières sarcastically asserted, that “ the king had
“ negotiated

“ negotiated with the spirit of a merchant, and the
 “ duke with the spirit of a prince (39).”

From this period, to the close of Henry's reign, during more than nine years, France presents a scene almost uninterrupted, of serenity and prosperity. By a singular and rapid transition, a kingdom which had for near half a century, been harrassed by domestic, or foreign commotions, passed to the extreme of repose. It may be justly questioned, whether the Roman world under Antoninus Pius, enjoyed a more auspicious calm, or a more unchequered felicity, than the French people under Henry the Fourth. The transient clouds which arose, were almost instantly dispersed by his wisdom, or dissipated by his vigilance. All the remainder of his life was passed amidst the diversions of a magnificent court, in the cultivation of the arts, the improvement of the revenue, the pursuits of gallantry, and, however incompatible, the practices of devotion. After the reception of the new queen at Paris, Henry accompanied her on a pious excursion to Orleans, where the indulgences granted by the holy see in the year of Jubilee, were to be obtained. Advancing from thence to Calais, attended by a numerous train, his presence on that frontier diffused the utmost terror through the Netherlands. The arch-duke Albert, occupied in the long, and uncertain siege of Ostend; conscious that the court of Madrid, had given the king some recent subjects of complaint; and apprehensive that he might extend assistance to the Dutch; dispatched a nobleman of his court, to compliment the French monarch. But, Henry's views and attention were directed towards England. Elizabeth, desirous of an interview with a prince whose exploits had justly rendered him an object of admiration to all Europe,

C H A P.
 VI.
 1601.
 Commence-
 ment of a
 period of
 tranquility.

March.

Henry visits
 Calais.

(39) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 784, 785. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 39—41. Chron. Sept. p. 212, 213.

C H A P.
VI.

1601.
He sends
Rosny to
Elizabeth.

repaired to Dover, with a view of facilitating the conference, desired. Motives of caution, or of policy, nevertheless, frustrated their mutual inclination; and induced the king to dispatch Rosny, his confidential minister, to discover the queen's secret intentions relative to their common enemies of the house of Austria. He fulfilled the commission, and carried back to his master the most positive assurances of her unalterable hostility to Spain, and of her desire to form a treaty with the crown of France, for the purpose of attacking Philip the Third in every quarter of his dominions (40).

Embassy of
Biron to
England.

Desirous of displaying his respect towards so illustrious and so faithful an ally, Henry sent over Biron, at the head of a splendid embassy, to the court of London. Elizabeth received him with all the testimonies of personal consideration, due to a man whose valour had made him deservedly dear to his sovereign, and who had rendered the most essential services to the state. The recent execution of the earl of Essex, who had enjoyed a distinguished place in the queen's affection, and who had expiated his rebellion by an ignominious death; might, nevertheless, have instructed Biron in the fatal consequences of his criminal connexion with the enemies of France, if he had been capable of profiting by example. But, his presumptuous confidence in his own merit, and his implacable resentment of the supposed indignities which he had received from the king, induced him to continue his treasonable practices with the duke of Savoy and Fuentes. Neither the admonitions, the caresses, nor the benefits of Henry, could alter his determination, nor avert his impending destruction (41).

(40) Sully, vol. i. tom ii. p. 11—15. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 573, and p. 610. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 214—218. Matthieu vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 92, 93.
(41) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 93—105. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 611, 612. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 286—289.

The pregnancy of the queen of France had been long announced; and the king, in common with all his subjects, expected with the utmost impatience, the event. Mary of Medecis, after a long and painful labour, gratified the hopes of the nation, and gave birth to a son, who afterwards ascended the throne by the name of Louis the Thirteenth. The French people, who, during more than forty years, since the death of Henry the Second, had not beheld a lineal successor to the crown, exhibited the warmest proofs of loyalty and affection, on so joyful an occasion. The king himself was overcome with the emotions of gratitude to Heaven, and of lively satisfaction, at sight of a Dauphin. It confirmed the general felicity, strengthened the government, suppressed the pretensions of the princes of the blood, and extinguished the expectations of the seditious or disaffected (42).

C H A P.
VI.
1601.
Birth of the
dauphin.
27th Sep^r
tember.

Liberated from foreign enemies, Henry had leisure to inspect the state of his dominions, to ascertain its diseases, and to apply the necessary remedies. Not less vigilant and active in time of peace, than he had been intrepid when menaced by external invasion, his views embraced every object, calculated to promote, or to augment, the national prosperity. The number of persons employed in the collection of the revenue, was diminished; and some attempt was made to bring to justice those, who during the past commotions, availing themselves of the general distress, had amassed enormous wealth, by every species of rapine and peculation. A tribunal was instituted for enquiring into, and trying the offenders: but, such was their power and interest, that they found means to elude the pursuit; and though the experiment was renewed, it was never attended with

Internal regulations;

of various kinds.

(42) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 649, 650. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 284, 285. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 105—108. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 22.

C H A P. any beneficial consequences. Sumptuary laws were
 VI. enacted, and rigorously enforced; while measures
 1601. were taken to prevent the exportation of gold and
 silver, in which articles a very pernicious traffic was
 carried on with the surrounding countries. The use
 and currency of foreign coin, which was circulated
 in payments and commercial transactions, at a higher
 value than that of France, was interdicted; and,
 notwithstanding the immediate inconveniencies or
 losses occasioned by the prohibition, they were com-
 pensated by its eventual benefits. Usury, which had,
 like other abuses, grown up to a destructive height,
 was repressed; and the rate of legal interest was li-
 mited to six and one quarter per cent (43).

Foreign af-
 fairs.

These internal regulations did not diminish the
 king's attention to objects of more enlarged or dis-
 tant policy, beyond the frontiers of France. It was
 of the highest importance, to renew the alliance with
 the Swiss cantons, whose troops, by their intrepidity
 and fidelity, had on various occasions, augmented
 the glory, and even preserved the existence of the
 monarchy. During the period of anarchy that suc-
 ceeded the death of Henry the Third, the governors
 of the Milanese, availing themselves of the bigotted
 adherence of the five smaller cantons to the Catholic
 religion, had induced them to contract stipendiary
 engagements with the court of Madrid. Even the
 remaining members of the Helvetic union, no longer
 retained by the powerful operation of regular and
 constant subsidies, which the poverty of the crown
 rendered Henry unable to remit; had relaxed in their
 adherence to the French nation. It demanded ta-
 lents, patience, and insinuation, supported by an
 ample remittance of money in discharge of arrears,
 to obliterate the impression made by the agents of

State of the
 Swiss can-
 tons.

(43) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 135—143. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 223—
 226. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 19—23.

Philip the Third, and to recal the Switzers to their antient connection with France. They betrayed much irresolution in their diets; and long declined, or refused to accede to a new treaty. But, the address of Henry's ministers, at length surmounted every impediment; and the arrival of Biron at Soleurre, completed the work. His high reputation and acknowledged valour; the attachment felt for the memory of his father, marshal Biron, who had always expressed a peculiar affection for the Switzers; added to the personal merit and exertions of his son; cemented the alliance. It was renewed, not only for the king's own life, but, likewise, for that of the Dauphin: We must confess, that, if it was the last, it was not among the least of the numerous services, rendered by Biron to the crown (44).

C H A P.
VI.
1601.

1602.
January.
Alliance re-
newed with
them.

Notwithstanding the apparent tranquillity of the kingdom, Henry received continually the alarming intimations of seditious designs or machinations. The interior provinces along the Loire, as well as those on the Garonne, manifested symptoms approaching to revolt. Limoges, and Rochelle, irritated at the continuance of some severe and unpopular taxes, which had been imposed during the war against Spain; resisted by force the officers appointed to levy them in the king's name: It was apprehended, not without reason, that the concealed agents of Philip the Third and the duke of Savoy, fomented these discontents, which menaced a civil war. Biron, though the most illustrious and desperate, was; by no means, the only conspirator. The Hugonots, discontented, alienated from Henry since his abjuration, and inflamed by violent, or artful men, sought for foreign protection; and meditated to erect a species of commonwealth in France, of which the queen

Commotion
in the pro-
vinces.

Discontent
of the Hugo-
nots;

(44) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 166—185. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 229—231. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 106—108.

C P A P. VI. of England, or some of the princes of Germany, might be constituted the chief. Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, whom the king's partiality and friendship had raised from the rank of viscount Turenne, to the sovereignty of the duchy of Bouillon, repaid his benefactor with the same ingratitude as Biron. Not inferior to that nobleman in courage, he was far superior to him in capacity, caution, and solidity of judgment. Attached to the reformed religion, he possessed great influence in the counsels and deliberations of the Protestants. He was supported by the duke de la Tremouille, another of the Hugonot leaders. The court itself abounded with malcontents. Epernon, reduced to a comparative state of insignificance, was secretly disposed to aid an insurrection, though he was too wise to sacrifice his dignities, possessions, and life, by entering into any positive engagements with so disjointed a party. Charles of Valois, count of Auvergne, natural son of Charles the Ninth by Mary Touchet, and uterine brother to the marchioness of Verneuil, was one of the accomplices. His ferocity, duplicity and perfidy, rendered him more dangerous to his friends, than to his enemies; and his love of life prompted him, on all occasions, to betray the projects, in which he had precipitately engaged (45).

May. Roused by the reiterated advices of an approaching, and imminent insurrection, Henry instantly repaired to the scene of danger. After visiting Blois and Tours, he advanced to Poitiers, while he dispatched Rosny to Rochelle. His presence, vigilance, and exertions, speedily dissipated the storm, and restored submission: but, the apprehension of new and similar evils arising in other quarters of his dominions, determined him no longer to delay recurring to

1602.
and of the
duke of
Bouillon.

Epernon.

Count of
Auvergne.

May.

June.
Henry re-
pairs to Poi-
tiers.

(45) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 44, 45. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 237, 238. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 61, 62.

C H A P.
VI.

1602.

La Fin re-
veals the
practices of
Biron.Biron arrives
at court.

the strongest remedies, in order to eradicate so inveterate a distemper. Conscious that lenity and clemency were unequal to reclaiming minds, accustomed to consider treason as scarcely a crime; and aware, that only some signal example and severity could impose a restraint on a turbulent and factious nobility, habituated to the licentiousness of civil war; he resolved to begin with Biron. The treachery of La Fin, a Burgundian gentleman, who had carried on his negociations at Turin, and at Milan, had already put the king in possession of all the evidence requisite to prove his guilt in the most satisfactory manner. This man, ruined in his fortune, destitute of virtue or principle, and offended that Biron no longer treated him with the same confidence as formerly, had retired to his own estate. Terrified at the idea of being seized and punished, he was easily induced by an assurance of pardon and protection, to repair to court; where, in several private interviews with Henry and his ministers, he revealed every circumstance respecting the conspiracy. Even the papers and documents written by Biron, which that infatuated and misguided nobleman conceived that La Fin had destroyed by his orders, were presented to the king. He was confirmed in his security on so material a point, by the protestations of his faithless agent, who acquainted him, that in the various conferences and examinations which he underwent, no circumstances tending to criminate Biron had transpired. Deluded by these false declarations; confiding in the honour of La Fin; pressed by Henry to repair to court, upon matters of public concern; and incapable of resisting by force, if, as it was natural to expect, the king, irritated at his delay, should march into Burgundy; Biron, at length, reluctantly quitted Dijon, and arrived at Fontainebleau (46).

(46) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 256—264. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 65, 66. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 231, 232, and p. 235—239. Bassomp. vol. i. tom. i. p. 57. Chron. Sept. p. 285—289.

C H A P.

VI.

1660.

13th June.
His reception.

Henry received him with testimonies of regard, notwithstanding his cold and arrogant deportment; and in repeated conversations, he besought of Biron to confess his treasonable practices, and assured him of pardon and oblivion, if he would merit it by a candid disclosure of his fault. But, such was his credulous reliance on La Fin, and so intoxicated was he with his own past exploits and services to the crown, that he persisted inflexibly to deny the charges, or suspicions entertained by the king. It was not till after a long, and severe conflict with himself, and after ineffectually exhausting every means to soften or reclaim him; that Henry issued orders to arrest a man, whose valour had been so instrumental to placing him on the throne. Biron, unprepared for such a blow, was seized as he quitted the royal presence, disarmed, and soon afterwards transferred, with every requisite precaution, to Paris, where Rosny, governor of the Bastile, received him into his care. At the time that Vitry arrested Biron, the count of Auvergne was in a similar manner put into confinement, and conveyed to prison (47).

He is arrested.

15th June.

His trial.

The trial of Biron took place almost immediately afterwards, before the supreme court of criminal judicature, the parliament of Paris. It was conducted with the utmost solemnity, and with all possible attention to the dignity of the prisoner. His guilt was established by every species of evidence; the voluntary confession of the person accused; the depositions of La Fin and of Renazé, another accomplice; and lastly, by the production of the culprit's letters written with his own hand. In extenuation, if not exculpation of these charges, Biron urged, that, however culpable his intentions, they had never passed the limits of his mind, and had not proceeded to

Defence.

(47) Sully, vol. i. tom. ii. p. 48—50. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 262—282. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 66—68. Chron. Sept. p. 289—292.

actions.

actions. He pleaded the pardon which Henry had granted him at Lyons, soon after the termination of the war with Savoy; when, actuated by remorse, he had confessed his criminal connexions with the enemies of the state; and he denied his having renewed them subsequent to that event. The testimonies of La Fin and Renazé, he attempted to invalidate; and he opposed to his fault, a life passed in the service of the crown, his father's loyalty and merits, his own body covered with honourable scars and wounds. With loud and violent imprecations, he repelled the accusation of having ever meditated any design against the king's life; and he threw himself on the clemency of a prince, who was not only distinguished by that virtue; but, who, in the course of his reign, had frequently extended his forgiveness to criminals of a far more heinous description than himself. The tribunal unanimously adjudged him to lose his head on a scaffold, in the "Place de Greve," declared his peerage attainted, and his possessions confiscated to the crown (48).

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Condemnation.

A sentence, which however just, was nevertheless so severe, might still have been commuted, or alleviated by the king: but Henry, on this single occasion, seems to have been insensible to the emotions of compassion. He rejected every supplication made in Biron's behalf, confirmed the decree of the parliament; and only changed the scene of execution, to the court of the Bastile. Even in this alteration, policy had a greater share than lenity: the prisoner was adored by the soldiery whom he had so often conducted to victory; and the public spectacle of his death, in the midst of a populous and tumultuous capital, might have been highly dangerous. In the interval between his condemnation and his punishment,

Severity of the king.

Behaviour of Biron.

(48) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. iv. p. 187—190. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 285—329. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 72—91. Chron. Sept. p. 292—307.

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ment, and still more at the time of his execution, he betrayed all the disordered transports of a furious, vindictive, and irritated mind. He passed with rapid transitions, from patience and sorrow, to menaces, complaints, and every expression of rage against his accusers. Such was the violence of his despair, and the well-known intrepidity of his character, that he impressed with terror his judges, the spectators, and the executioner himself. It became necessary to soothe, and to gratify him in some particulars, in order to dispose and induce him to submit quietly to the sentence of the law. Even at the instant when his head was about to be severed from his body, he lost neither his presence of mind, nor any portion of his natural ferocity. He threatened to strangle the executioner with his own hands, if he presumed to approach, or to touch him while he was yet alive; and the blow which terminated his existence, was anticipated by the dexterity of the minister of justice (49).

31st July.

His execution.

Reflections
on the crime,
and punishment
of Biron.

The people, and even many persons of incontestable loyalty among the higher orders, manifested their regret at the unhappy conclusion of a life, which, however forfeited, had, nevertheless, been distinguished by the most brilliant services. They lamented, that the first sovereign in Europe, possessed of the affection of his subjects, victorious over foreign enemies, and in the midst of profound peace, should deem his life and crown insecure, unless cemented by the blood of Biron. They thought that a less rigorous punishment might have been equally effectual; and that he might, without hazard, have either received a pardon, or expiated his offences by imprisonment. If it is difficult to blame the severity of the king, it is equally impossible not to admit, that

(49) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 192—169. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 284—250. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 329—359. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 91—94. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 492—496. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 50, 51. Chron. Septenn. p. 308—315.

he would have appeared more amiable and more exalted, in pardoning, than in condemning his unfortunate and culpable subject. But, Biron had rendered himself personally odious to his sovereign. The crimes of Bouillon, Epernon, and Mayenne, were political, and admitted of forgiveness. The arrogance of Biron had wounded, and his obdurate pertinacity had irritated, an indulgent master. Henry dreaded the vengeance of a haughty and implacable spirit: he knew the extent of Biron's treasonable practices with Spain and Savoy, as well as his ambition to ascend above the condition of a subject: he looked forward, with natural and wise solicitude, to the possible event of his own death, and the disorders incident to a minority. When the considerations of a public nature, were added to his private causes of resentment, he no longer hesitated to sacrifice one individual, to the safety of his family, and the tranquillity of France (50).

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(50) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 93, 94. Journ. d'Hen. IV., p. 199—201. Chron. Sept. p. 317—322.

C H A P. VII,

Submission of France, to Henry.—Duke of Bouillon quits the kingdom.—Attempt of the duke of Savoy, on Geneva.—Death of Elizabeth.—Embassy of Rosny, to James the First.—Treaty between France and England.—Domestic events, and quarrels.—Internal fermentation, and intrigues.—Policy, and conduct of the court of Madrid.—Conspiracy of the marchioness of Verneuil.—Arrest of the principal conspirators.—Surrender of Ostend.—Affairs of Germany.—Trial of the count of Auvergne, and his accomplices.—Henry pardons them.—Foreign transactions.—Journey of the king, to Limoges.—Conspiracy of Merargues.—Preparations of Henry, for war.—State of the cabinet.—March of the king to Sedan.—Submission, and pardon of Bouillon.—Tranquillity of France.

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1602.

August.
Effect of the
late severity.

THE example of severity exhibited by the king in the seizure and execution of Biron, was productive of the most salutary and beneficial effects, during the remainder of his reign. It instructed the French nobility, who had long been accustomed to regard connexions with sovereign princes, as neither criminal nor dangerous; that no rank nor services, however eminent, could protect them from the punishment due to treason. Even beyond the limits of France, the death of so illustrious a culprit, inspired caution, if not terror; and imposed a restraint on the machinations of the courts of Turin and Madrid. The ambassadors of Philip, and of Charles Emanuel, joined in the general congratulations to Henry, on the

the discovery of so alarming a conspiracy; and were eager to disown, in the names of their respective princes, all participation in the guilt of Biron. Fontenelles, a gentleman of Brittany, convicted of a design to deliver up to the Spaniards a port and island belonging to that province, in the vicinity of Brest, was put to death at Paris, with every circumstance of ignominy. Toward all the other individuals involved in the late projects, Henry extended his accustomed clemency. The baron de Lux, who had succeeded to La Fin in the confidence of Biron, and who alone possessed the secret of his last negotiations with the duke of Savoy and Fuentes, experienced in its full extent, the generosity of the king. Having, on the assurances of safety given him, repaired to court, and made an ingenuous disclosure of every circumstance, he received not only a pardon, but, a confirmation in his post of lieutenant-governor of Burgundy. The count of Auvergne, equally criminal, but, more fortunate than Biron, was liberated from the Bastile, after a short confinement, and reinstated in his preceding favour. He owed so signal a display of lenity, not less to the tears of his sister, the marchioness of Verneuil, than to his paternal descent from the house of Valois. The prince of Joinville, brother to the duke of Guise, convicted of having carried on some treasonable, or dangerous intelligence with the emissaries of Spain, was treated with similar indulgence. Lavardin, dispatched by Henry, took possession of the castles of Dijon and of Beaune, without resistance; and tranquillity appeared to revive in every part of the kingdom (1).

The duke of Bouillon alone, more terrified at the fate of Biron, than encouraged by any instances of mercy shown towards others, refused to trust him-

(1) Chron. Sept. p. 324. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 361—373. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 94—96, and p. 105. Sully, vol. i. tom. ii. p. 53, and p. 73—76. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 202, 203, and p. 204, 205.

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1602.

Execution of
Fontenelles.

27th Sept.

Henry pardons Au-
vergne.
2d October.Submission
of Burgun-
dy.Conduct of
Bouillon.

C H A P. self to the honour, or to throw himself on the friendship and affection of the king. Neither entreaties, VII. expostulations, nor menaces, could alter his resolution. He retired into the province of the Limousin, and offered to submit his cause to the judgment of the tribunal of Castres, which was composed of Catholics and Protestants in equal numbers: but, that court declining to interfere in an affair to which its jurisdiction was incompetent, Bouillon apprehensive of being arrested, quitted France, and took refuge at Geneva. He even ventured to publish an apology, or more properly, a manifesto, justificatory of his innocence, and conceived in terms little calculated to mollify the resentment of Henry. It was powerfully sustained by the intercession of the Hugonots, among whom the duke occupied a distinguished place; and even by the applications of foreign princes in his favour. Elizabeth, either convinced of his innocence, or desirous, in his person, to display her attachment to the party to which he belonged, addressed a letter to the king in his behalf. The example of the queen of England, was imitated by the elector palatine: but, Henry remained inflexible, and exacted the personal submission of Bouillon, previous to every act of grace, or of oblivion on the part of the crown (2).

November.
He quits the
kingdom.

Intercession,
in his fa-
vour.

24th Oct.
Swiss em-
bassadors ar-
rive at Paris.

The gloom, which had been spread over the capital by the late executions, was dissipated by the arrival of the ambassadors deputed by the thirteen cantons, to swear in the name of the Helvetic union, to the observance of the treaties recently concluded. The king, on an occasion so solemn and so happy, displayed at once, the utmost cordiality and magnificence, in his treatment of the deputies. They were regaled by the ministers, the princes of the blood, and the magistrates, during their stay at Paris, and

(2) Hist de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 221—265. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 96—105, and p. 138—140. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 253, 254. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 371. Sully, vol. i. p. 51. Chron. Sept. p. 324—326.

dismissed

dismissed with marks of bounty. In the accomplishment of an alliance which attached Switzerland to France by the closest bounds of political union, the ascendancy and wisdom of Henry's counsels were not less manifested, than the vigour of his arms had been exerted, during the short contest with Savoy. The feeble efforts, or timid acquiescence of the court of Madrid, while so formidable a rival was annually acquiring force, amassing treasures, and extending influence over Europe; accused the indolence, or incapacity of the duke of Lerma. It was already apparent that the Spanish monarchy, badly administered, impoverished, and exhausted, could no longer make those efforts, or equip those fleets, which under Philip the Second, had justly alarmed every surrounding state. Nor could the Catholic king derive any assistance from the German branch of the house of Austria, which in the person of Rodolph the Second, had insensibly lost all consideration, or respect. Albert and Isabella, occupied in the long and uncertain siege of Ostend, incapable of paying the numerous troops requisite to maintain hostilities against the Dutch, and opposed by the most active general of his age, Maurice, prince of Orange; were unable to make any exertions beyond the limits of the Netherlands. The adherence of Charles Emanuel to Spain, was precarious; and it would always be in Henry's power to regain his friendship, by tempting his ambition. The balance of power, which had so long inclined to the Spanish branch of Austria, began, though insensibly, to preponderate in favour of France. It only required a few years of internal tranquillity, frugality, and attention to the revenues, to render that kingdom the arbitress of Europe.

Desirous by a stroke of vigour and policy, to repair the breaches made in his dominions during the late unfortunate war, the duke of Savoy meditated an attack upon Geneva. The project was conceived with

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1602.

Able policy
of Henry.

State of
Spain,

of Flanders,

and of Savoy.

Attack of
Geneva.

CHAP. VII. with so much ability, concealed with such care, and finally executed with such success till the very moment of its entire completion, that the reduction of the city to his obedience appeared to be infallible. It was, nevertheless, frustrated by a train of accidents, equally singular, and impossible to have been averted by any exertion of prudence, or valour. The assailants, provided with every weapon or instrument that could facilitate the attempt, conducted by officers of capacity, and sheltered under cover of the night, approached the walls. They placed the ladders, ascended them, put to death the sentinel without noise, and during near two hours were masters of the place. But, the alarm being at length given, the inhabitants flew to arms. The Savoyards, overpowered by numbers, prevented from admitting their companions who waited without the gates, and confused by the darkness; were obliged to precipitate themselves from the battlements. Thirteen of the most distinguished and intrepid, capitulated, sword in hand, on promise of life and safety: but, the fury of the populace, justly irritated, compelled the magistrates to deliver them up as victims, and they were strangled on the ensuing day. Charles Emanuel, who, in full confidence of being speedily master of Geneva, had advanced to a village only a league distant from it, returned to Turin, covered with confusion. In his letters to the Swiss cantons, he attempted to colour the proceeding, under various pretences. It is, nevertheless, difficult to justify, or even to palliate an enterprize, undertaken in time of profound peace, against a republic, incontestably, though not specifically, included among the allies of France, and guaranteed by the two recent treaties, at Lyons and at Vervins. The powerful interposition of Henry, who menaced the duke of Savoy with a renewal of hostilities, if he repeated the attack on Geneva; and the mediation of the Helvetic body, deeply

1602.

22d Dec.

Its ill success.

Savoyards, put to death.

Interposition of Henry.

deeply interested in its preservation; produced a definitive agreement between them, in the ensuing year. C H A P.
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That little republic still subsists by the same protection: nor in the lapse of near two centuries, has any descendant of Charles Emanuel, though the princes of his family have been eminent for ambition and capacity, ever ventured to attempt the reduction of Geneva by force (3). 1603.

History, which, during the first nine years of the reign of Henry the Fourth, from his accession, to the peace of Vervins, can scarcely keep pace with the number of events which present themselves; finds an equal sterility in the concluding period, between the execution of Biron, and the king's assassination by Ravailiac. The operations of war, rapid, decisive, and picturesque, excite a more lively interest, and awaken a more animated attention, than regulations of policy, or establishments of domestic utility. But, the activity of Henry, which had been called out by the dangers of the field, did not slumber in the security of peace. Attentive to avail himself of every occasion which offered, to emancipate the crown from its dependance on the nobility, he repaired to Metz, accompanied by the queen and court. The government of that important city and citadel, which covered the eastern frontier towards Lorraine and Germany, had been conferred by the late king, on his favourite, Epernon, who placed in them one of his own devoted adherents. This man, profiting of various accidents, had not only in a great measure, thrown off all submission to his benefactor; but, he proceeded to exercise a violent and indefinite authority over the liberty, and even the lives of the inhabitants. Epernon having vainly endeavoured to accommodate the difference, or to render himself mas-

Vigilance
of the king's

March

He acquires
the pos-
session of
Metz.

(3) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 421—443. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 56. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 124—129. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 787—789. Chron. Sept. p. 364—368.

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1603.

ter of the citadel, was compelled to be a passive spectator of its surrender to the king. He preserved only the nominal government of Metz; the efficient command being given to Montigny, one of the most zealous of the royal followers, on whose fidelity and allegiance Henry knew that he might securely confide (4).

14th March.
Death of
Elizabeth.

His return to the capital was accelerated by the unpleasing intelligence of the decease of Elizabeth, queen of England. That illustrious princess, during a reign of more than four and forty years, had excited the admiration of all Europe. To Henry, at every period, whether prosperous, or adverse, she had extended her protection, and lent her assistance. In the two arduous sieges of Rouen, and of Amiens, her forces had served with distinguished valour; and even after the abjuration of the king of France, Elizabeth, though she upbraided and condemned, did not desert her ally. The magnanimity, policy, and enlargement of mind, common to them both, cemented their friendship. In their irreconcilable enmity to the house of Austria, they united; and it was difficult to determine which of the two princes had received the deepest wounds from the hand of Philip the Second. Elizabeth disdained to be included in that treaty, which, only five years before, had terminated the long war between the crowns of France and Spain. She continued to desolate the Spanish monarchy in every quarter of the globe, and to aid the Dutch with her troops and treasures. Henry, by the medium of Rosny, as well as of Biron, whom he sent successively to the court of England, had recently received the most unequivocal proofs of her affection; and they only waited for a convenient occasion

Policy of
that prin-
cess.

Her union
with Henry.

(4) Chron. Septen. p. 382, 383. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 84—86. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 130, 131. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 470—474. Hist. de Epernon, vol. ii. p. 256—265.

of attacking Philip the Third; with their united ^{C H A P.} strength (5). ^{VII.}

The regret which he felt for the loss of so valuable an ally, was increased by his uncertainty relative to the character, intentions, and conduct of her successor. A vast and important revolution in the system of Europe was about to take place, by the union of the two crowns of England and Scotland. James the First might neither inherit the talents, nor embrace the views of his predecessor. Confined to a remote corner of the North, his capacity and disposition were very imperfectly known beyond the limits of his native dominions. But, many circumstances led to apprehend, that he might pursue a less glorious, as well as a less judicious system of policy, than that of Elizabeth. He had hitherto displayed neither aptitude, nor ability for war; and far from being disposed to aid the united provinces, he had betrayed a contrary inclination on various occasions. The court of Madrid already anticipated with joy his accession, as the signal of peace between the two crowns; and it was well known that Cecil, who presided since his father's death, in the counsels of England, was not averse to such a measure, for a variety of reasons (6).

1663.
Accession of
James the
First.

Expecta-
tions formed
of him.

Impelled by considerations of such magnitude and importance, Henry determined to send an ambassador without delay, to sound the intentions of the new king. He selected for a charge, at once so delicate and so arduous, the minister whom he had formerly employed on a similar errand to the deceased queen. Rosny, superintendent of the finances, was a servant, on whose capacity, zeal, and fidelity, he could not only rely; but, whose person and mission, he well

Embassy of
Rosny.

(5) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 86. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 488—508. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 142—148. (6) Hume, Hist. of England, vol. vi. p. 7. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 274.

C. H. A. P. knew, would be rendered acceptable to James, from
 VII. their common adherence to the Protestant religion.
 1603. His instructions, framed with consummate skill, em-
 braced every proposition, which could tend to cement
 the alliance between France and England; to humble
 the house of Austria; and to reduce the dominions
 of Philip the Third to narrower limits. The embaf-
 13th June. fador was empowered to enlarge, or to contract
 them, as he should find it expedient, or judicious.
 His recep- Rosny, accompanied by a splended train, arrived in
 tion, London, and was received by James with demon-
 strations not only of regard, but, of the warmest at-
 tachment. In the course of little more than a fort-
 night, that able statesman moved every spring, and
 availed himself, of every means, by which the object
 of his negotiation could be facilitated, or accel-
 erated. He awakened the sensibility, and pointed the
 attention of the king, to the inordinate ambition,
 and disproportionate greatness of the Spanish mo-
 narch. He shewed the ease with which, by a union
 of their forces and counfels, supported by the kings
 of Denmark, Sweden, and the Protestant princes of
 the empire; Henry and James might dissever Milan,
 Naples, and the other detached provinces of Spain,
 from the obedience of Philip. To his arguments,
 he added every flattering eulogium, and every gene-
 rous incentive, calculated to propel the deliberations
 of the Scottish prince. But, he was not long in
 perceiving, that the love of peace, however insecure
 or inglorious, was James's predominant passion; that
 pusillanimity, inconstancy, and levity, characterised
 his measures; and that no co-operation of energy or
 duration was to be expected from such a government.
 and negoti-
 ation.
 Success of it. He wisely, therefore, limited his exertions to the at-
 tainment of more practicable objects; a defensive
 alliance between the two kingdoms, the support of
 the United Provinces, and a treaty for the mutual
 protection of France and England, if attacked by
 Spain. To these propositions, James lent a favour-
 able

rable ear, and gave his immediate assent. Rosny was dismissed with testimonies of personal esteem; and received by Henry on his return, with the gratitude justly due to his distinguished services (7). It was, nevertheless, apparent, by the peace shortly afterwards concluded between the new king of Great Britain and Philip the Third, that James had determined to adopt a policy widely different from that of the preceding reign.

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1603.

While Henry directed his attention to conciliate the friendship of England, he was not inattentive to every measure which could confirm the tranquillity, or augment the prosperity of his subjects. Manufactures, whether of necessity, or of taste and refinement, received a liberal encouragement. The fabrication of silk, which Francis the First had attempted to introduce among the French; but, which, in common with many other useful inventions, had disappeared during the civil wars, was revived. Silk-worms were brought from Italy and Sicily, into the southern provinces of France; and the cultivation of mulberry-trees, so requisite for the nourishment of those insects, was enjoined. With a view to give additional energy to the industry of his people, the sumptuary laws, regulating, and restraining articles of dress, were annulled. In the adoption of principles so enlarged, the king ventured to oppose the advice of Rosny, his minister; who remonstrated with warmth against establishments calculated to enervate the French, and to destroy their martial originality of character. But, Henry, either more sagacious, or more enterprising, remained inflexible; and experience justified the expansion of his views, by the profits derived from the various branches of manufacture, which he introduced into his dominions (8).

Internal regulations.

Establishment of manufactures of silk.

Enlargement of the king's views.

(7) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 89—165. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 151—153; Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 535—548. Hume, vol. vi. p. 6—8. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 274—277. Chron. Sept. p. 410—412. (8) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 180, 181. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 277—281. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 455—457. Chron. Sept. p. 409, 410.

C H A P.
VII.1603.
Domestic
troubles of
Henry.

His amours.

Marchionefs
of Verneuil.Conchini,
and Leonora
Galigai.

The profound repose, enjoyed by France at this period, neither diminished the king's vigilance and circumspection, nor exempted him, in his private capacity, from a variety of troubles. He had not found in his marriage with Mary of Medecis, all the domestic comforts and alleviations, of which that union is capable, when cemented by mutual esteem and confidence. If the source of these misunderstandings was in part to be attributed to the queen, a greater portion of them might without injustice be laid to the account of Henry. The obstinacy, coldness, jealousy, and violence, which characterized the Tuscan princess, derived their origin from the inconsistency and infidelity of her husband. Far from reforming his conduct as he advanced in years, his amours became more numerous. He sought in the animated conversation, wit, and gaiety of the marchioness of Verneuil, to dissipate the dullness, or to obliterate the vexation, which he found at home. That insolent and artful female, did not scruple to level the severest shafts of satire or of malevolent ridicule, against the queen herself. Neither the extraction, the personal defects, nor the intellectual weaknesses of Mary, were spared on these occasions. All the expressions of the marchioness were reported with exaggeration to her rival, by the spies, or emissaries whom she retained. Two Florentines, Conchino Conchini, and Leonora Galigai, who became unhappily, in the sequel, too famous in the history of France, divided the affections of that princess. They embittered the causes of her uneasiness, alienated her from the king, and inspired her with projects of vengeance against the person who molested her repose. Henry, weak, irresolute, and almost timid in his family, neither punished, nor removed from the queen's presence, the authors of their mutual discord. They even continued to augment in their influence, as well as in their power and arrogance, during

during the remainder of his reign. The Louvre became a scene of perpetual strife, and of indecent altercation; the publicity of which, diminished the respect and veneration felt for a prince, so illustrious in his public capacity. Scarcely could the interposition, or mediation of the ministers, establish, from time to time, a frail reconciliation, perpetually succeeded by new, and more inveterate disputes (9).

Nor did Henry experience in his family alone, the disquietudes annexed to the condition of man; and to which kings are more exposed, in proportion to their elevation. The court and kingdom, teemed with malcontents of every description. He was compelled to tolerate the insolence of the count of Soissons, and even to interpose his authority, in order to suspend, or avert the effects of that prince's enmity to Rosny, which revived on the slightest, and most groundless pretences (10). With Epernon he was involved in perpetual quarrels, respecting the patronage and prerogatives annexed to his office of colonel-general of the French infantry: a post, which the improvident folly of Henry the Third had rendered almost independent of the crown. That haughty favourite appeared, on various occasions, to be disposed to take up arms; and he even ventured to retire, with intentions the most hostile, to his government of Angouleme: his apprehensions, nevertheless, restrained him from proceeding to extremities, and induced him to repair his fault by a voluntary submission (11). The Hugonots demanded the unceasing vigilance of government, to watch their motions, and to anticipate, or frustrate their designs. Bouillon, though in a species of exile, was still formidable; and La Tremouille excited dangerous intrigues in Poitou. Lesdiguières, du Plessis Mornay,

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VII.
1603.

Malcontents.

Count of Soissons.

Epernon.

The Hugonot leaders.

(9) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 43, 44. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 282, and p. 298—300. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 71—76. (10) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 177—179.

(11) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 283, 284.

and

C H A P.
VII.1603.
October.
Synods, held
by the Pro-
testants.

and the other Protestant chiefs, were either discontented, or destitute of attachment towards a prince, who had abandoned their party and persuasion. Propositions of a nature highly offensive to the person and dignity of the reigning pope, Clement the Eighth, as well as to the pontifical character and office, had been agitated and adopted, in one of their synods, held at Gap, a town in Dauphiné. They had even arrogated in the assembly, a right which seemed to be incompatible with the subjection due to the crown, by admitting and giving audience, not only to delegates from the Protestant churches within the kingdom; but to ambassadors, deputed by foreign powers (12).

Rosny, made
governor of
Poitou.

December.

With a view to counteract these machinations, and to balance the credit of La Tremouille in Poitou, a province of great extent, in which the Hugonots were numerous; the king conferred the government of it on Rosny. He already possessed many of the highest offices of state, besides the superintendence of the finances; and Henry, who reposed an unlimited confidence in his talents and fidelity, raised him soon afterwards to the summit of honours, by creating him duke of Sully (13).

1604.

Commercial
rupture with
Spain.

If the exhausted condition of the Spanish monarchy, and the incapacity of its sovereign, prevented an open rupture between the two crowns, it could not suspend the secret effects of the animosity of the court of Madrid. Continual occasions of jealousy and dispute, commercial, or political, presented themselves. Henry continued to aid the United Provinces with supplies of men and money, notwithstanding the peace concluded at Vervins. Philip having imposed a duty of thirty per cent. on the importation of all articles of merchandize belonging to France, in which prohibition he was imitated by the

(12) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 596—604. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 157—160. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 284—288. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 183, 184.

(13) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 187—189.

arch-duke Albert; the king, irritated at a measure so injurious to his subjects, interdicted by an edict, all communication whatsoever with Spain, or Flanders. He even persisted in it, notwithstanding the complaints of his own people, and the indirect menaces of the duke of Lerma. Mutual necessity, and the distress, occasioned by the suspension of every species of commercial intercourse, induced the two powers, at length, to submit to the Papal arbitration. The prohibitions were taken off, and trade revived between their respective subjects (14). Unable, since the discovery and punishment of Biron's conspiracy, to induce any of the great nobility to renew a similar correspondence, the Spanish minister did not neglect the inferior instruments of treason. A young man, named L'Hofte, who filled a confidential situation in the office of Villeroy, secretary of state for foreign affairs; corrupted by a considerable sum, betrayed the most important secrets of the department, to Zuniga, the ambassador of the Catholic king. Being at length discovered, he fled, and had already reached the banks of the Marne, near La Ferté, on his way to the frontiers of Lorraine, when he was overtaken; and in endeavouring to effect his passage, he perished in the river. His body, brought to Paris, was torn in pieces by wild horses. Villeroy himself narrowly escaped disgrace and dismissal for the crime of his clerk, in whom he had confided with too implicit security: but, the difficulty of replacing him with a successor of equal talents, soon obliterated the transgression, and restored him to favour (15).

C H A P.
VI.
1604.

Accommodation of it.

Affair of L'Hofte.

24th April.
His death.

February.
Conspiracy of the marchioness of Verneuil.

(14) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 263—265. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vii. p. 659—661, and p. 772—775. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 218, and p. 223, 224. Chron. Sept. p. 452—455, and p. 498—500. (15) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 318—320. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 210—217. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 294—297. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vii. p. 661—668. Chron. Sept. p. 465—476.

C H A P. VII.
 1604. at this time, without issue. But, his emotions were soon transferred to another source of uneasiness, at once more painful and more alarming, which originated in his licentious amours. Henrietta d'Entragues, marchioness of Verneuil, though frustrated in her views of ascending the throne, by the king's marriage with Mary of Medecis; yet, continued to carry on with him a commerce of gallantry, and to occupy a distinguished place in his affections. She had even produced him a son, whom he had owned, and publicly legitimated (16). Such was her audacity, that she did not hesitate to assert on various occasions, that his union with the queen was invalid, their issue incapable of wearing the crown, and her own title to the rank and prerogatives of his wife, indisputable (17). Neither menaces, nor offers, however advantageous, could prevail on her to restore the paper which Henry had given her, contrary to the advice of Rosny, as the price of her honour; and which she preserved with the most scrupulous care, and with a variety of precautions. Conscious of the influence which her personal beauty, and the charms of her society, had enabled her to obtain over the king, she abused it by perpetual acts of insolence, and of infidelity. Stimulating his passion by affected scruples, by coquetry, and refusals, she maintained her empire over him, in defiance of himself, of the remonstrances of his ministers, and of the suggestions of his own mind; nor was she ever more secure of retaining him, than at the moment when their final separation appeared to be imminent and inevitable (18).

Causes of it.

(16) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 129, 130. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 75, 76.
 (17) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 321. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 204, 205.
 (18) Cabinet d'Henry IV., par d'Anquetil, vol. i. p. 92—94, and p. 171, 172. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 72—76.

Mary of Medecis, incensed at her temerity, and alarmed at her pretensions, insisted with importunity, that the promise of marriage which Henry had given her, should be resumed. The demand only served to irritate, and to drive to extremities the marchioness. Her father, nevertheless, on receiving a sum of money not far short of nine thousand pounds sterling, and a promise of the dignity of marshal of France, presented a paper, which he declared to be the original. It was delivered to the king, in presence of various princes of the blood, and officers of state, who witnessed its identity by an act drawn up for that purpose. The queen's apprehension, calmed by the restitution of an engagement, which might have been converted to purposes the most injurious to herself and her children, subsided; and a temporary tranquillity succeeded to the late violent agitation in the court (19). But, Henry had speedily reason to repent of having exasperated a haughty and vindictive woman, neither restrained by principle, nor by affection, from seeking to revenge the insult offered to her pride. Her brother, the count of Auvergne, though recently liberated from confinement, and indebted for his pardon to the clemency of the king, yet lent his assistance to all her projects. Francis de Balzac d'Entragues, her father, deeply wounded by the past dishonour of his family, and still more, by Henry's attempts to seduce his second daughter; not only entered into the general conspiracy, but, appears to have meditated designs, levelled personally against his life. He even ventured to attack his sovereign in one of those nocturnal expeditions which Henry undertook to gratify his passions; and from which he extricated himself only by valour and good fortune. The greatest prince in Europe, the hero of his age,

C H A P.
VII.

1604.

Entragues
restores the
engage-
ment, given
by Henry to
his daugh-
ter.

2d July.

She deter-
mines on
revenge.Projects, to
assassinate
the king.

(19) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 320, 321. Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 178
—180. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 300, 301. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 248, 249.

C H A P.
VII.
1604.

had nearly fallen a sacrifice to his indecent pursuit of pleasures, equally unbecoming his station, and his period of life. History vainly attempts to draw a veil over these excesses, which involuntarily diminish our veneration for Henry the Fourth (20).

The

(20) Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 180—185. *Memorie reconдите de Vittorio Siri*. iv. partie, p. 292. *Le Laboureur sur Castelnau*, vol. ii. p. 600—603. *Journ. d'Hen. IV.*, vol. ii. p. 55, 56. *Matthieu*, vol. ii. liv. viii. p. 796. *Memoires d'Amelot de la Houffaye*, artic. "Entragues."

There is not any transaction of the French history, since the accession of the family of Bourbon, perplexed with such doubts, or involved in such obscurity, as the conspiracy of the marchioness of Verneuil. The contemporary writers were either ignorant of the particulars, or, they did not venture to disclose them, from obvious motives of delicacy and caution. De Thou confines himself to circumstances, from their nature universally known. Matthieu stops short, and declares, that it is not permitted to subjects to raise the veil, which conceals the mysterious secrets of the sovereign. He minutely relates the seizure of the count of Auvergne; but, he presumes not to enquire into, nor to account for its cause. Bassompierre gives no lights; nor do we find in the "Amours d'Henry IV." written by Margaret of Guise, princess of Conti, any solution of the enigma. The "Journal d'Henry IV." is limited to judicial facts, of general notoriety. Only short and detached fragments are to be gleaned from Sully. In the "Memorie reconдите," of Vittorio Siri, there is a considerable detail: but, it is embarrassed, confused, and contradictory. The "Chronologie septenaire" of Cayet, goes only to the end of the year 1604. The nature and genius of Mezeray's history, did not allow him to descend to minute narrations of any kind; and he wrote at the distance of more than sixty years after the facts. D'Anquetil, in his "Cabinet d'Henry IV." has, with great labour, endeavoured to collect, to arrange, and to compare, all the different accounts of this plot. Yet, he confesses his inability to discriminate, or ascertain the truth. He seems even either never to have seen, or to have omitted to mention one of the most curious and entertaining documents to be found in any author; namely, the relation of the capture of the count d'Entragues, by the provost Desfontis, in the castle of Marcouffis. We are indebted for it, to the diligence of "Le Laboureur sur Castelnau;" and the piece carries in every line, the most genuine marks of authenticity. It appears from thence, beyond a question, that d'Entragues did not deliver to the king the original promise of marriage, given to his daughter. That engagement, in Henry's own hand writing, was found by Lomenie, secretary of state, sent expressly for the purpose. We may judge of the importance annexed to it, by the precautions taken for its preservation. Lomenie discovered it in a glass bottle, sealed; within a second glass bottle, laid upon cotton, and closed up in a wall of one of the apartments, at Marcouffis. He brought it to the king. The treaty between Philip the Third and the conspirators, the cypher used in their correspondence, and various other letters, were, likewise, discovered at Marcouffis.

The attempt of the count d'Entragues, to kill the king in the forest of Verneuil, when going disguised to find his youngest daughter; is not one of the least wonderful, or strange events, of the conspiracy. It cannot be doubted that he did attack him, and that Henry only escaped by vigour and address. Fifteen men were stationed in different parts of the wood, in order to intercept and murder him. Some of them, he avoided, without knowing it: his horse, and his courage

rage

The three principal conspirators, in repeated conferences with Taxis and Zuniga, successively embassadors from the Catholic king to the court of France, laid open their intentions, and demanded the powerful co-operation of Spain. Philip, charmed to find an occasion of wounding the private peace, at the same time that he endangered the crown of his inveterate enemy, complied with all their requisitions. He stipulated on oath, that if the marchioness would deliver up to him her son by Henry, the child should be immediately acknowledged Dauphin, and heir to the French throne. It was likewise added, that five fortresses in Portugal should be ceded to him as places of security, together with an annual revenue of more than twenty thousand pounds sterling, and an asylum for his mother. Appointments, pecuniary and military, of magnitude and of trust, were agreed to be given to the counts of Auvergne and of Entragues. At the same time, an invasion was to be made by the duke of Savoy, in Provence; by the count de Fuentes, in Burgundy; and by Spinola, in Champagne. In every part of the kingdom, concealed adherents were asserted to be ready at a proper moment, to appear and aid the insurgents. The count of Auvergne repaired immediately to the province of that name, situated in the centre of France; where his influence, authority, and the attachment of the inhabitants to the family of Valois, from which he sprung, would enable him to excite a dangerous in-

C H A P.
VII.

1604.

Stipulations
of Philip
the Third,with the
conspirators.

rage enabled him to disperse the others. Even after this escape, d'Entragues compelled his youngest daughter to give him an appointment in a solitary place, where it was intended to have assassinated him: but, though she was obliged to comply with her father's commands, she took care to warn the king of his danger. None of these facts came forward on the trial; and it became equally an object to Henry, to the marchioness, and to the count d'Entragues, to bury them in the deepest oblivion. All the documents and proofs, tending to throw light upon it, were carefully suppressed.

surrection.

C H A P. VII. surrection. Only a favourable opportunity was wanting, to carry these projects into execution (21).

1604.

Henry discovers the plot.

It was difficult long to conceal a plot of such magnitude and extent, from the vigilance of Henry and his ministers. An intercepted letter of the count of Auvergne to one of his friends, conveyed the first intelligence of it, and excited so much alarm, as to induce the king to command his attendance at court without delay. Terrified at such a summons, conscious of his guilt, and expecting to be again imprisoned in the same prison; he invented continual pretexts, to account for his not complying with the order. After vainly expecting him during a considerable time, measures were, therefore, taken to seize his person. But, so unremitting was his circumspection, that it required equal dexterity and courage to secure him, without coming to the last extremities.

Seizure of the count of Auvergne, September.

Every obstacle was, nevertheless, surmounted by the intrepidity and address of two officers, d'Eurre and Nereftang, who, having approached him under pretence of respect, unhorfed, disarmed, and made him prisoner. He was conducted, with the greatest precautions, to Paris, and confined anew in the Bastille, where he occupied the apartment lately inhabited by Biron. Entragues, nearly at the same period, was arrested at his castle of Maleherbes, and committed to the prison of the "Conciergerie," in the "Palais;" a place become, unhappily, but too famous in the annals of the present age, as the last stage of the imprisonment and sufferings of the unfortunate Mary Antonietta, queen of France. The marchioness of Verneuil, treated with more distinction than her father and brother, was only guarded in her own house at Paris, by the lieutenant of the police. Orders were immediately issued by Henry, directing the

and of his accomplices.

(21) Cabinet d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 185—187, and p. 194, 195. Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 602. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 301, 302.

parliament, as the supreme criminal tribunal of the kingdom, to prosecute the delinquents with the utmost severity (22). C H A P.
VII.
1604.

While the public mind throughout France, was suspended in astonishment at these occurrences, the city of Ostend surrendered to Albert and Isabella, after a siege of more than three years. It is one of the most memorable in the modern history of Europe; and it long served for a theatre, on which the youth of England, France, and Holland, eagerly sought renown, and acquired experience. Every resource of the military art then known or practised, was exerted on both sides; and Pompeo Targon, a Roman engineer, who afterwards became celebrated by constructing the dyke to expel the sea before Rochelle, attempted, though vainly, to prevent the entrance of supplies into the port of Ostend. During the prosecution of the siege, Maurice, prince of Orange, landing on the isle of Cadzand, invested Sluys, and rendered himself master of it, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the Spaniards to relieve the place. The capture was justly regarded by the Dutch, as no inadequate equivalent for Ostend; which did not capitulate till the works were reduced by the artillery of the enemy, to a heap of ruins. Above seventy thousand of the veteran troops of Spain and Flanders perished under the walls, by sickness and the sword. To the great abilities of Ambrose Spinola, who commanded the army of the arch-duke, its final reduction was principally due. He was the last general of transcendent merit and talents, sent by the court of Madrid to the Netherlands; and he approved himself neither unworthy to succeed to the prince of Parma, nor to oppose Maurice, prince of Orange. In the

20th Sept.
Siege of
Ostend,
and surren-
der.

Maurice
takes Sluys

Appearance
of Spinola,

His exploits.

(22) Chron. Sept. p. 505. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vii. p. 781—800. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 321—324. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 302—304. Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 187—191. Journ. d'Hen. IV. vol. ii. p. 62, 64. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 261, 262, and p. 267—270.

succeeding

C H A P. VII. succeeding campaign, he once more transferred the war to the banks of the Rhine; invaded the provinces beyond the Maese, from which the Spaniards had long been expelled; and retarded, though he could not ultimately prevent, the complete emancipation of the United States from the yoke of the house of Austria (23).

State of
Germany,
and of Hun-
gary.

At the other extremity of Europe, the Ottoman armies, though checked and impeded by the revolts of the Janizaries, by the feuds or intrigues of the seraglio, and by the death of Mahomet the Third, who was succeeded by Achmet, a minor; yet continued to advance in Hungary. The Tartars even made incursions to the gates of Presburg and of Vienna. Rodolph the Second, immured in his laboratory at Prague, and employed in researches of alchymy, abandoned to his brothers, the arch-dukes Mathias and Maximilian, the care of Austria, and all his other dominions. Childless, and declining in years, the emperor was scarcely known to exist, except by report; and the imperial power, which, only fifty years before had threatened to swallow up the liberties of Germany, was fallen into a state of total oblivion (24). In the north, Charles, duke of Suedermania, youngest of the sons of the celebrated Gustavus, after having administered the affairs of Sweden during several years, and having expelled from the throne his nephew, Sigismund, king of Poland; was ultimately elected to fill it himself, by the states of that kingdom (25). He retained the royal authority and title to the end of his life; and transmitted the sceptre to another Gustavus, destined to augment the fame of the family of Vasa, while he carried the vic-

Revolution
in Sweden.

(23) DeThou, vol. xiv. p. 193—222, and p. 349—361. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vii. p. 699—714, and p. 726—755. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 314—316.
(24) La Croix, Hist. Ottom. vol. ii. p. 56—74. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 169—176, and p. 273—284. Pfeffel, Hist. d'Allemagne, vol. ii. p. 233—244. Sacy, Hist. d'Hongrie, vol. ii. p. 151—157. (25) Puffendorf, Hist. of Sweden, p. 394—400. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 263—273.

torious arms of his countrymen, beyond the banks of the Danube, and almost to the frontiers of Italy.

The parliament of Paris, being authorized, and even enjoined by the crown, proceeded, meanwhile, to interrogate the prisoners submitted to their jurisdiction. They were separately examined, and afterwards confronted with each other. But, instructed by the example of Biron, who relying on the fidelity of La Fin, had unguardedly admitted the validity of his testimony; they began by loading each other with maledictions and reproaches, calculated to weaken or totally destroy the force of their respective depositions. The count of Auvergne accused his sister of a participation in every act, and endeavoured to diminish his own criminality, by her equal, or deeper guilt. D'Entragues, on the contrary, exculpated his daughter, and imputed to her brother the whole machination. They both admitted their interviews with Taxis and Zuniga: but, denied that any treasonable propositions had been ever agitated in those conferences. Auvergne pleaded moreover, a pardon already granted him by Henry; and asserted, that he had carried on the correspondence with the ambassadors of Spain, not only with the privity, but, even by the express command of the king himself.

The defence of Entragues was rather a crimination of his sovereign, than a justification of his own conduct. With bitter reflexions on his personal misfortune, he deplored the lot of an aged and dishonoured parent, on whose family an eternal opprobrium had been fixed by the licentious passion of the prince, who now attempted to crush him by the imputation of fictitious crimes. He justified the intention of his daughter to withdraw into Spain, or Flanders, by the apprehension which she necessarily felt of becoming the victim of an enraged and jealous queen, who breathed only vengeance. Nor did he scruple to inform his judges, of the endeavours used by Henry

C H A P.
VII.

1604:

November.
Trial of the
conspiratorsTheir de-
fence.

December.

Entragues
recriminates
on the king.

to

C H A P.
VII.

1604.

Behaviour
of the mar-
chionefs.

to seduce his second daughter; of the disguises and nocturnal expeditions in which he had repeatedly engaged with that view; and of the contents of his amorous epistles still in her possession. He concluded by insinuating in very unequivocal language, that the object of the present prosecution was only levelled at his life, in order to deprive his helpless child of the natural and incorruptible guardian of her honour. The marchionefs, when brought to the bar, manifested more indignation, than terror, or contrition. Neither the fear of punishment, nor the desire of life, could bend her haughty spirit; and she still persisted to consider herself as the legitimate, though oppressed and persecuted wife, of the king of France. At the bare mention of the count of Auvergne, she became furious; stigmatized him with every epithet of abhorrence, or ignominy; and demanded a pardon for her father, justice for herself, and a scaffold for her brother (26).

1605.

They are
condemned.1st Febru-
ary.
Sentences:

Notwithstanding a defence so framed to operate on the judgment, while it affected the passions of her judges, they did not hesitate to pronounce sentence against her. She was condemned to be closely imprisoned in the convent of Beaumont, near Tours, till more ample information could be obtained, relative to her pretended crimes. The counts of Auvergne and of Entragues, were at the same time, sentenced to expiate their offences on a scaffold in the "Greve;" together with an Englishman named Morgan, their accomplice: but, the execution was suspended, by an order from the court. Mary of Medecis already anticipated the disgrace of her insolent rival, the punishment of those who had presumed to espouse her pretensions, and the exile of a woman whom she equally dreaded and detested. In this ex-

(26) Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 192—200. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 418—428. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 317, 318. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 64, 65, and p. 69.

pectation,

pectation, she was, nevertheless, deceived. A powerful advocate pleaded in the bosom of the king, for a mistress whom he still loved. She soon received permission to retire to her castle at Verneuil: by a subsequent mitigation of the sentence, she was restored to the full enjoyment of her freedom, and the proceedings against her were annulled. Entragues, reinstated in blood and honours, was exiled to his house at Maleherbes; and Morgan was commanded to quit the kingdom. The count of Auvergne alone, whose duplicity had rendered him undeserving and incapable of being trusted, remained a prisoner in the Bastille, where he languished many years, and was only set at liberty under the regency, in the ensuing reign (27).

O H A P.
VII.

1605.

23d March.
Henry pardons them.Imprisonment of
Auvergne.

In reflecting on the whole of this extraordinary transaction, we know not whether most to wonder at the indecency of Henry, in thus unveiling to the whole nation, the irregularities of his private life; or, whether most to reprobate his rendering the highest criminal tribunal of France, the engine and instrument to humble a haughty mistress. It was not a crime of state, but, a love intrigue, which was submitted to their enquiry, and afterwards withdrawn, at a proper time, from their jurisdiction. The king, it was evident, never meant to dishonour the object of his affection, though he desired to reduce her to a necessity of complying with his will. The children whom she had borne him, were the pledges of her safety. Biron had, it was true, suffered capital punishment, for acts of inferior atrocity. But, Henry was not disposed to put to death Entragues, for attempts, which however criminal, were aimed more at the man, than at the monarch; and which origi-

Reflections
on the trans-
action.Motives of
the king's
conduct,
in sparing
the conspirators.

(27) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 429, 430. Cabinet d'Henry IV, vol. i. p. 200
—205. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 70, 71. Sully, vol. i. tome ii.
P. 333.

C H A P.
VII.
1605.

New amours
of Henry.

Tranfac-
tions in
Lombardy.

nated more in private vengeance, than in treason against the state. Many reasons induced him to spare the count of Auvergne; the dying recommendations of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third; the blood of Valois, which circulated in his veins; and perhaps still more, the natural apprehension, that such an example might, at another period, form a precedent for bringing to the scaffold his own illegitimate issue, if involved in treasonable accusations. Far from renouncing his connexion with the marchioness of Verneuil, he renewed with her a commerce of gallantry; and indirectly permitted, if he did not encourage her, in lancing the shafts of her malicious pleasantry against the queen. Yet, inconstant to his mistresses, as to his wives, he commenced a fresh amour with Jaqueline de Beuil, whom he created countess of Moret; after having, in the view of all the inhabitants of Paris, caused her to solemnize a mock ceremony of marriage with a young man of condition. She soon afterwards brought him a son. If we consider the age of Henry at the time when he committed these excesses, we must feel the condemnation excited by them, aggravated. The veneration for the royal dignity, and the affection felt for his person and character, must have been great, to counterbalance, and extinguish the sense of his irregularities, in the minds of his subjects (28).

The attention of the court was soon diverted from the consideration of domestic intrigues, to foreign transactions. Italy attracted expectation, and excited alarm. The count de Fuentes, governor of the Milanese, revived the obsolete pretensions of the Viscontis and the Sforzas, dukes of Milan; summoned the petty princes, or nobles of Lombardy, to produce the titles of their respective fiefs; and diffused

(28) Amours d'Henry IV., p. 82—85. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 103, 104. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 320, 321. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 67, 67.

terror over all that part of Europe. At the same time he constructed the celebrated fort, which still bears his name, at the entrance of the Valteline; and endeavoured by force, as much as by the arts of corruption, to render Spain arbiters of the Grisons (29). Clement the Eighth terminated his pontificate at this period, after having occupied the chair of St. Peter above thirteen years. Besides the honour of according absolution to a king of France, and receiving him into the bosom of the Romish communion; he had the felicity of augmenting the patrimony of the ecclesiastical state, by the subjection of the duchy of Ferrara, on the demise of Alfonso the Second. The cardinal Alexander of Medecis, who had been sent legate to Henry the Fourth, succeeded Clement, by the exertions of the French faction in the Conclave. He assumed the name of Leo the Eleventh; and from the beneficence of his character, inspired expectation of a mild and happy reign. But, these premature hopes were blasted by his death, only a few days afterwards; and Borghese, a native of Rome, was elevated to the papal throne, by the title of Paul the Fifth. Baronius, a member of the sacred college, and known in the annals of literature by the elegance of his historical writings, was twice on the point of attaining, by the voluntary suffrages of the cardinals, the pontifical dignity. He was as often rejected in consequence of the efforts of the Spanish party, irritated at the doubts which he had thrown on the validity of the Catholic king's title to the crown of the Two Sicilies; and apprehensive of his transcendent virtue and talents (30).

Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, last survivor of that illustrious house, after having passed

H. A. P. VII.
1605.
3d March.
Death of Clement the Eighth,
1st April.
and of Leo the Eleventh.
25th April.
16th May.
Election of Paul the Fifth.
Return of Margaret of Valois, to Paris.
August.

(29) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 408—411. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 324—326. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 297—305. (30) Histoire des Conclaves, vol. i. p. 294—368. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 400—408. Hist. de Papes, par Coulon, 2d partie, p. 202—207.

more than twenty years in obscurity and indigence, among the snows and precipices of Auvergne; re-appeared at this time, in Paris. The facility which she had lent to the dissolution of her marriage, and the marks of attachment exhibited by her towards the king, during the late conspiracy of her nephew, the count of Auvergne; obliterated in the placable mind of Henry, her multiplied infidelities of every kind. He received her with marks of consideration and respect, lodged her on her arrival, in the royal castle of Madrid, near the capital; and extended to her the most ample protection. In that metropolis, she passed the residue of her life, and preserved, notwithstanding the shocks of adversity, and the progress of age, all the originality of her character. She divided her leisure between the dissolute gratifications of the senses; and the practices of austere devotion; with which, in imitation of her ancestor Francis the First, she mingled the love of letters, and the cultivation of the fine arts. Margaret survived the king, and experienced after his death, a continuance of the same attention from Mary of Medecis, then become regent of France (31).

July.
Fermenta-
tion in the
interior pro-
vinces.

Neither the execution of Biron, the imprisonment of the count of Auvergne, the death of the duke of La Tremouille, which took place nearly at the same period, nor the voluntary exile of Bouillon, could extinguish the fermentation in the interior provinces of the kingdom. The relations of Biron waited impatiently for a favourable occasion of revenge; and the adherents of the duke of Bouillon were numerous. These latter derived strength from the powerful support of the Hugonots, who not only solicited his pardon and recall, but, indirectly menaced to adopt measures equally derogatory to the royal autho-

(31) Vie de Marguer. de Val. p. 391—394. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 434. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 289, 290, and p. 365, 368, and p. 368, 373. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 321—323.

rity,

rity, and to the public tranquillity. Intelligence of ^{C H. A. P. VII.} secret practices, and even designs of delivering up ^{1605.} various important ports to Spain, was received by the government. But, all these symptoms of insurrection were anticipated by Henry's promptitude, or ^{Vigilance of the king.} dissipated by his vigour. Rosny, repairing to the ^{4th July.} assembly of the Protestants at Chatelherault, in Poitou, contrived to mollify their resentment, and to ^{4th August.} allay their apprehensions, by granting in the name of their common sovereign, a prolongation of the term stipulated for the surrender, or restitution of the places of surety. That period was lengthened three years. The concession diffused universal satisfaction, and disarmed the most mutinous of the Hugonot leaders (32).

No sooner was the king relieved from his uneasiness on so delicate a subject, than he prepared to reduce the remaining malcontents by the most rigorous exertions of severity. Quitting Paris; he advanced towards the Loire, preceded by the duke of Epernon, at the head of a body of infantry, and several troops of cavalry. Rosny followed, with a small train of field artillery, adequate to the reduction of any forts which might venture on resistance. A special commission accompanied the forces, designed for the trial and punishment of the rebels: it was composed of only two masters of requests named for the purpose, and vested with ample authority. Attended by ^{His measures.} such a military and judicial escort, Henry continued ^{15th Sept.} his progress, and entered Limoges, amidst the warmest testimonies of popular affection. His presence instantly produced submission. The principal insurgents either concealed themselves, or fled beyond the limits of France, or embraced the determination of meriting a pardon, by disclosing the designs of their accomplices. Turenne, and the other fortresses of ^{He repairs to Limoges.} ^{October.} ^{November.}

(32) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 359—390. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 329—331.

C H A P. VII. Bouillon, though compréhended among the places of surety granted to the Protestants, yet did not presume to oppose the royal troops. They opened their gates, by orders from the duke himself, on the first summons. It only remained to inflict chastisement on such, as were juridically convicted of treasonable machinations. The tribunal, which was held at Limoges, condemned five to lose their heads, and the sentence was carried into immediate execution. Others were put to death in effigy, and their estates confiscated. The whole conspiracy, which appears rather to have existed in intention, than to have been carried into practice, was rendered abortive; and the king, without waiting to be a spectator of the punishments decreed by the judges, returned to the metropolis (33).

1605.
Seizure,
trial, and
execution,

16th Dec.
of the mu-
tineers.

November.
Troubles in
Paris.

Their cau-
ses.

New troubles awaited him in that capital, of a nature different, indeed, from open insurrection; but which, nevertheless, required the utmost dexterity to appease. They originated in the œconomical and financial plans of Rosny, for diminishing the debts of the crown, and replenishing the royal treasury. With a view to effecting those purposes, the superintendent caused commissioners to be instituted, who were authorized to pay off the life-rents issuing out of the town-hall of Paris. Not content with so limited a field for their activity, it was agitated to inquire into the origin, validity, and legitimacy of the respective contracts, or annuities; and even to suppress such as should appear to be defective. A measure which involved in its consequences, so great a number of individuals, excited the most universal alarm throughout Paris; and Myron, the first municipal officer of the city, ventured with a hardy frankness, to state to the king himself, at once the injustice, and the danger, of

(33) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 391—399. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 434—439. Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 272—276. Meseray, vol. x. p. 331—333.

persisting

persisting in its prosecution. There were not wanting persons in the council, who thought such a conduct highly censurable, and who advised the arrest of Myron. It was, nevertheless, hazardous to attempt it, the Parisians having manifested a disposition to take up arms in defence of their virtuous magistrate. But, Henry had no intention to push matters to extremity with his subjects. Convinced of the rectitude of Myron's motives, and appeased by the supplications of the proprietors of the annuities in question, who protested their readiness to submit their rights, and their property, to his sovereign arbitration, he commanded that no further proceedings should be taken on the subject (34).

C H A P.
VII.

1605.

Henry appeases them by his wisdom and lenity.

So general was the propensity to conspire against the government, that it could neither be repressed by rigour, nor extinguished by clemency. Plots perpetually succeeded each other; and they were all fomented or produced, by the emissaries of the court of Madrid. Merargues, a gentleman of Provence, undertook to deliver up Marseilles to the Catholic king; and he repaired to Paris, in order to concert measures for the purpose, with Zuniga, the ambassador of Philip. It would seem, nevertheless, that he possessed more inclination than ability, to effect so arduous a project. Intimation of his design having been transmitted by the duke of Guise, to the government, the conspirator was followed and taken into custody, together with Bruneau, secretary to the Spanish ambassador. They were in the act of conferring together, when seized; and a paper having been found upon the secretary, which tended to prove his criminal intentions, he was committed to the Bastile. Merargues was speedily interrogated, and confronted with Bruneau, before the tribunal of the parliament. Zuniga, with menaces, reclaimed his

Conspiracy of Merargues.

He is seized, 5th Dec.

together with the Spanish secretary.

(34) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 443—446. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 333—335.

secretary,

C H A P.
VII.

1605.

secretary, and complained to the king, that the rights of nations were violated, by the seizure of a person regarded as sacred. But, Henry justified on the principles of state necessity and preservation, his past conduct; and did not liberate Bruneau, till he had confessed the whole transaction. He was then sent back to the ambassador, with a copy of the proceedings. Merargues justly suffered the punishment of his crime, in the "Greve," and his four quarters were exposed over the principal gates of the capital (35).

19th Dec.

Execution of
Merargues.January.
Projects of
Henry.

Incensed at such reiterated proofs of the inveterate enmity of the Spanish crown, which never ceased to molest his repose, and even to attack his life; the king began to meditate the execution of that vast project for the humiliation of the Austrian greatness, which he was on the point of commencing only four years afterwards, when assassinated by Ravallac. It is probable, that he would not even have so long delayed it, if Elizabeth, his firm and magnanimous ally, had still continued to reign over the English: but, from her timid and irresolute successor, his expectations of support or assistance could only be negative. France, in the lapse of more than seven years since the treaty of Vervins, had in a considerable degree, recovered the wounds inflicted by civil and foreign war. The indefatigable assiduity of Rosny had re-established the finances, which were in a perpetual state of augmentation. In the arsenal was laid up a formidable apparatus for offensive hostilities; and a prodigious treasure was already accumulated in the Bastile. The veteran troops, as well as the youth of France, anxiously anticipated a rupture with Philip the Third. Henry opened a secret negotiation with the duke of Savoy, in order to detach him from

Measures
for their
execution.Negotiations
with foreign
powers,

(35) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 6, 7. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 439—443. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. p. 88, 89. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 343—347.

Spain,

Spain, by the tempting offer of the Milanese, with the title of king of Lombardy; and the marriage of his eldest daughter to the prince of Piedmont, to cement the alliance. To the duke of Bavaria he held out the imperial dignity, which must probably soon be vacant by the death of Rodolph, who was declining in health and years. The Venetians were closely allied with Henry, and had, on every occasion, during his greatest adversity, given him proofs of attachment. From the republic of Holland he was secure of vigorous, and effectual co-operation. All the Protestant princes of the empire looked to him for protection against the encroachments of the house of Austria. Even beyond the Baltic, he counted allies. Christian the Fourth, king of Denmark, professed for him an admiration, bordering on idolatry; and Charles the Ninth owed in a great measure the Swedish crown, to his timely supplies of a pecuniary kind (36).

C H A P.
VII.
1606.

throughout
Europe.

Many causes, nevertheless, contributed to delay the commencement of a war, from which Europe might justly expect, whenever it should take place, a great political revolution. Mary of Medecis, from whom Henry neither desired, nor, perhaps, could easily have concealed his designs, interposed every obstacle in her power to their accomplishment. Bigotted to the Catholic faith, she looked with predilection to Spain, the protectress of that religion; and deprecated all connexions, political or personal, with heretics. Sprung from the 'Austrian family', she already desired to lay the foundation of the double marriage between the two crowns, which, when regent of France, after her husband's death, she ultimately effected. All the zealous Catholics, and the antient adherents of the League, who were numerous, joined

Impedi-
ments to
their exe-
cution.

Mary of
Medecis.

The Catho-
lics.

(36) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 7. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 326, 327. Mathieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 568, 569.

C H A P.
VII.
1606. the party of the queen; nor were there wanting in the cabinet itself, ministers inimical to every measure, by which the Spanish monarchy would be humbled or attacked. Time was necessary to mature the plans concerted with Savoy and Bavaria; and the body of the Hugonots, though apparently loyal, yet was internally agitated by the intrigues, and powerfully excited to action by the emissaries, of the duke of Bouillon (37). It was becoming a prince of wisdom and experience, to secure on a solid basis the tranquillity of his own dominions, before he listened to any propositions however seductive, of foreign conquest or glory.

Henry resolves to reduce Bouillon.

Influenced by these reflexions, Henry determined to begin with reducing to obedience his expatriated and mutinous subject. During more than three years which had elapsed since the execution of Biron, the duke of Bouillon had resided beyond the limits of France; professing, it is true, his fidelity and allegiance to the king; but, refusing to give the only solid testimony of his assertions, by personally justifying himself from the charges imputed to him. He had even recently induced four of the Protestant cantons of Switzerland, to address a petition to Henry, in his behalf. That prince replied, that he was ready either to grant the duke a trial before a fair and impartial tribunal; or to give him the warmest proofs of friendship, if he would throw himself on the royal clemency (38). Finding every pacific means of conciliation ineffectual, he issued orders to assemble forces, and prepared to attack Sedan, capital of the duchy of Bouillon, with a considerable army. Many persons, employed in offices of the highest trust about the throne, endeavoured to delay and to prevent so

March. He assembles forces.

(37) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 7, 8. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 326.
(38) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 430, 431.

hostile

hostile a proceeding. They represented the danger to be apprehended, if the Protestant princes of the German empire, and the king of England, should aid the duke; who, in addition to foreign succours, might expect an insurrection of the Hugonots in his favour. They exaggerated the strength of Sedan, the military resources of its possessor, and the hazard incurred by undertaking the siege of such a place. But, these imaginary difficulties could not deter the king. Encouraged by Rosny, recently created duke of Sully, who engaged to render him master of the city in a few days, he began his march at the head of a body of cavalry, accompanied by the queen and court. Sully had orders to follow, with the infantry and artillery (39).

C H A P.
VII.
1606.

Begins his
march.

Dangerous
predicament
of Bouillon.

He submits,

and surrenders
Sedan.
1st April.

Bouillon beheld himself, by these vigorous exertions, in a situation more perilous than that of his predecessor, Robert de la Mark, when, encouraged by Francis the First, he ventured to declare war on the emperor Charles the Fifth. Neither Spain, England, nor Germany, shewed any disposition to arm in his behalf, nor to stand the shock of an army, conducted by the greatest prince and the ablest commander in Europe. No internal symptoms of insurrection appeared in France; and Sedan was incapable of a long resistance. In so desperate a condition, he renewed the negotiation which he had never altogether discontinued, and demanded an interview with one of the ministers, for the purpose of adjusting the terms. Villeroy was dispatched by Henry, and soon disposed the duke to submit to every requisition. The enmity of Villeroy to Sully, induced him to accelerate the conclusion of a treaty, which rendered useless the military preparations of his rival. Mary of Medecis herself interposed her good offices,

(39) Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 276, 277. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 9—27. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 547.

C H A P. VII. in order to mediate a reconciliation, and save from ruin a nobleman whose talents she respected, and whose adherence she desired to secure. Sedan was surrendered to the king, who in return, granted letters of pardon and abolition to the duke, and to all his adherents (40).

Henry pardons him,

No sooner was the treaty reciprocally signed, than Bouillon repaired to Donchery, where Henry had established his head quarters; and arriving before the king was risen; threw himself at his sovereign's feet. That beneficent prince not only forgave, but replaced him in the familiarity and favour which he had previously enjoyed. Entering Sedan, Henry remained in the city three days, and left in it a governor: but at the termination of a month, he caused the citadel to be restored to its former master. On his return to Paris, he conducted the duke of Bouillon in a sort of honourable captivity, and made a public entry into the capital, accompanied by his prisoner, where he was received amidst general acclamations (41): A profound tranquillity succeeded to this transitory storm, and soon obliterated its remembrance. The court was immersed in pleasures and dissipation, of which Henry gave in his own person the example; and every circumstance appeared to promise a long continuance of the public felicity.

and returns to Paris.

Danger, incurred by the king, and queen.

9th June.

It was, nevertheless, on the point of experiencing the most lamentable interruption, by an accident which had nearly proved fatal to the king. As he was returning from the palace of St. Germain to the Louvre, in a coach, accompanied by the queen, the princess of Conti, and the dukes of Vendome and Montpensier; the horses, in passing the river Seine at Neuilly, leaped over the side of the boat, and precipitated the

(40) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 547, 548. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 347—351. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 30—36.

(41) Hist. de Bouillon, vol. ii. p. 277—281. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 548—550. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 36—38. Bassompierre, vol. i. tome i. p. 115, 116.

carriage

carriage into the water. Henry was soon succoured C H A P. VII. by the attendants: but Mary of Medecis narrowly 1606. escaped death, and was dragged out by the hair. A circumstance so serious in itself, and which might have terminated so tragically for the queen, only served to afford new matter of insolent pleasantry and sarcastic ridicule, to the marchioness of Verneuil. She even indulged herself in these effusions of malignant wit, in the society of Henry himself, who seems not to have expressed any resentment at her levity. Mary, on the contrary, gave vent to her indignation; and the alienation, which so many causes of offence naturally produced between her and the king, continued to subsist, if it did not augment, during the remainder of his life (42).

Insolence of
the marchioness of
Verneuil.

(42) *Amours d'Henry IV.*, p. 86—88. *De Thou*, vol. xiv. p. 550. *Journal d'Henry IV.*, vol. ii. p. 117. *Mezeray*, vol. x. p. 353, 354.

C H A P. VIII.

Prosperity and tranquillity of France.—Policy of the king.—Affairs of Holland.—Conferences for peace, between the United Provinces and Spain.—Obstacles to the treaty.—Conclusion of a truce.—Terms of it.—Death of the last duke of Cleves.—Disputes relative to that succession.—State of the French court.—Marriage, and flight of the prince of Condé.—Ineffectual efforts to procure his return.—Negotiations with Lorraine, and Savoy.—Vast confederacy, formed for attacking the house of Austria.—Reflexions on its probable effect upon the system of Europe.—Assembly of the German princes.—Prince of Condé repairs to Milan.—Preparations for opening the campaign.—Coronation of the queen.—Assassination of Henry, by Ravaiillac.—Circumstances of it.—Mary of Medecis is declared regent.—Character of Henry.

C H A P.
VIII.

1666.

Sterility of
the French
history, at
this period.

THE period, including nearly three years, which elapsed immediately after the submission of the duke of Bouillon, is perhaps more sterile in events, and more destitute of historical matter, than any portion of time in the annals of France, during the last, or the present century. If we cast a general view over the reign of Henry the Fourth, we shall find it full of great and brilliant transactions, from his accession to the peace of Vervins. Even subsequent to that treaty, it still awakens curiosity, and powerfully excites attention. The short war with Savoy, so rapid, and so successful; the treason, and execution of Biron; the mysterious conspiracy of the family of Entragues, involved an impenetrable obscurity;

rity; lastly, the reduction of Bouillon to his duty and obedience: all these successive actions conduct us forward, and furnish ample subject for the historian. But, his labours seem at this point of time, to suspend; and France presents, if considered politically, a species of void, till it again lights up for a short space, before the assassination of the king. Henry at length beheld himself elevated to a point of glory and prosperity, which left him nothing to envy, and little to dread. His rebellious subjects had felt his power, and experienced his clemency. The last great vassal of the crown had recently implored, and obtained his forgiveness. He had not only subjected his revolted people; but he had humbled a more formidable phalanx, the nobility; who since the commencement of the civil wars, had insensibly become the companions, and almost the equals of the sovereign. Spain, incapable of attacking him by open force, had found it equally difficult to circumvent his vigilance. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, despoiled in the late unfortunate contest, of some of his most fertile provinces, looked to the same hand which had depressed, to elevate him again. The house of Lorrain, in all its branches, sued for his protection. England, so renowned under Elizabeth, was fallen into insignificance, under James; and the sovereign of Great Britain excited less respect, and inspired less apprehension, than a woman, who only reigned over a part of that extensive island. Henry was confessedly, the arbiter and the umpire of Europe; the political destiny of which, might be said to depend, in a great degree, on his counsels and determinations.

C H A P.
VIII.

1606.

Prosperity
of France,and of the
king.Fermentation in the
court.

France exhibited the image of a perfect calm; and it is by the events of the surrounding states, rather than by the internal transactions of the kingdom itself, that we are enabled and compelled to continue its history; which, as distinct from that of Europe, may

C H A P. VIII. may be almost deemed a blank. The court alone
 1606. was agitated and tumultuous, in the midst of the national tranquillity. The jealousy of the queen; the inconstancy of her husband; the malice of the marchioness of Verneuil; the efforts of contending candidates, to obtain the pre-eminence in Henry's affections; and the augmenting ascendant, acquired by Conchini and his wife Leonora, over Mary of Medici: those conflicting principles and passions produced a perpetual fermentation, and at times threatened to excite a tempest (1). Splendour and pageantry diversified the scene; and at the ceremony of the public baptism of the Dauphin, all the pomp of a magnificent sovereign was displayed at Fontainebleau (2). The fertility of Mary, who successively brought into the world two other princes, assured the succession in the house of Bourbon, while it gave an additional security to the general felicity. Henry, though considerably past his meridian, yet from the vigour of his bodily and mental faculties, promised a reign of long duration. Educated in camps, and habituated to the exercises of a military life, he had little taste for sedentary pursuits, or literary occupations. His leisure was divided between the embellishment of the royal palaces, the recreation of the chace, and the more pernicious indulgence of a rage for play; which characterized the age, and involved him in expences of incredible magnitude (3).

14th Sept.
 Grandeur,
 and diversions.

Vigilance of
 Henry.

These relaxations, nevertheless, did not prevent the king from discharging with severity, the public duties annexed to his station. Sully, always an enemy to those pleasures which tended to enervate his mind, and to indispose him for exertions of danger, or of labour; perpetually recalled to him the considerations

(1) Bassomp. vol. i. tom. i. p. 116—122, and p. 126—129. Amours d'Henry IV., p. 88—92. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 546. (2) *ibid.* p. 552. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 355, 356. (3) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 114, 127, and p. 134. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 305, 327, and p. 328, 360.

of glory, and the elevation of France. At the same time that he inculcated maxims so becoming the minister of a great sovereign, he was attentive to facilitate the projects of aggrandizement, of policy, or of ambition, which he recommended. It must perhaps be admitted, that in some of his financial regulations, and in various of his pecuniary impositions, the superintendent was more impelled by the view of filling the royal coffers, than attentive to the happiness or ability of the people. Many of the taxes were oppressive in an extreme degree; and the rigour used to enforce them among the inferior orders, accused in some measure, the beneficence of the government (4). France, though in a state of rapid and progressive prosperity, yet had neither enjoyed a calm of sufficient duration, nor possessed those commercial resources, which enabled Louis the Fourteenth, before the end of the century, to impose burthens of far superior weight.

C H A P.
VIII.
1606.

Severity of
the taxes.

The vigilance of Henry was by no means confined to the increase of his revenue, or limited to his own dominions. It pervaded Europe, and anticipated, or regulated all the events, by which the balance of political power, or the existing system, could be affected. In Italy, where Paul the Fifth had imprudently engaged in a contest with the Venetians, which threatened the degradation of the pontifical authority, and the repose of all the countries along the shore of the Adriatic; the interposition of the king mediated an accommodation (5). His negotiations were sensibly felt in all the circles of the German empire, where a great convulsion appeared to be imminent. The princes of the Austrian family, weary of the supine and passive incapacity of the emperor, had already

1607.

Foreign policy of Henry,

in Italy.

State of the German empire.

(4) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 324—326, and p. 444—446, and p. 448, 449, and p. 553, 554; and vol. xvi. p. 2, 3. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 310—314, and p. 328.

(5) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 363—375.

C H A P. VIII. adopted as their chief and representative, the arch-
 duke Mathias his brother. In the following year, 1607. Rodolph was compelled to resign to him the crown of Hungary, the administration of Austria, and to declare him successor to the kingdom of Bohemia; sole remain of his extensive patrimonial dominions. The oppressions, suffered by the Protestants; and the seizure of Donawert, a free imperial city, which the duke of Bavaria appropriated and incorporated with his own territories, in virtue of an imperial mandate; gave alarming indications of approaching war (6).

Affairs of
 the United
 Provinces.

But it was towards Holland, that the attention of Europe was peculiarly directed; nor could Henry remain an unconcerned spectator of any event, which affected the existence of the United Provinces. After above forty years of unremitting efforts against the Spanish tyranny, that power began to despair of ever reducing its revolted subjects. Neither the cruelty of the duke of Alva, the valour and decision of Don John of Austria, the sublime talents, military and civil, which united in the prince of Parma, nor the enterprize and fortune of Spinola, could achieve the conquest of a people, impelled to resist by a just detestation of intolerable oppression. Philip the Second was no more: the Low Countries had nominally passed into other hands; and Albert, who by his marriage with the infanta, governed the Netherlands, manifested an anxious desire to terminate so long and so destructive a contest. Spain was powerfully incited to embrace similar counsels, The general debility of that extenuated monarchy; the feeble genius of its sovereign, and the pacific disposition of his minister, impelled them to preserve tranquillity, and to stop the vast expenditure requisite for feeding the war in Flanders. Motives still more cogent propelled the

Exhausted
 state of the
 Spanish monarchy.

(6) Pfeffel, *Abregé Hist. d'Allem.* vol. ii. p. 244--247. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 638--643.

flow and irresolute cabinet of Madrid. They dreaded the maritime strength of the rising commonwealth; the loss of their colonies, flotas, and the valuable monopoly of the trade of both the Indies. Even their own coasts were not secure from depredation, insult, and hostility. Heemskirk had recently attacked and burnt the fleet of Philip, in the bay of Cadiz, under the greatest disadvantages of number; while Hautain, another of the Dutch commanders, engaged the squadron returning from India, at the mouth of the Tagus (7). The very foundations of the Spanish greatness and wealth in Asia and Africa, were in danger of being overthrown. On the coast of Coromandel, in the Moluccas, at Malacca, and at Mozambique, it was necessary to oppose those enterprising enemies (8):

C H A P.
VIII.
1607.
Naval enter-
prizes of the
Dutch.

Nor had the Dutch less powerful reasons to induce them to prefer peace to the continuance of hostilities. They had incurred a prodigious public debt, and laboured under heavy burthens of every kind. The democratic party in the republic dreaded the talents and ambition of Maurice, prince of Orange; who aspired to possess a power more extensive than that of Stadtholder, and who was adverse to every proposition of a pacific nature, as he must be thereby reduced to comparative insignificance. The United Provinces could no longer look to England, for the same protection which they had derived from Elizabeth. Neither her successor, nor the nation continued to regard them with so favourable an eye; and the English already beheld in their republican neighbours, a commercial rival of the most enterprising kind. Even France might become weary of contributing towards the support of a war, from which she

Motives of
the Dutch,
for making
peace.

Jealousy of
the English.

(7) Abregé Chron. d'Espagne, vol. ii. p. 463, 464. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 653—656. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 124, 125.

(8) Abregé Chron.

vol. ii. p. 461—464.

C H A P.
VIII.

1607.

Exploits of
Spinola.

derived no apparent profit; and might sacrifice Holland to greater interests of state. To these foreign considerations, were added domestic apprehensions of a serious nature. Spinola, not content with repelling the enemy from Brabant or Flanders, had adopted a system of hostilities, at once more analogous to his genius, and more distressing to the States. Supplying from his own fortune the necessities of the army, and conducted by his superior skill, he led his troops into Zutphen and Overyffel. In defiance of Maurice, he captured various places in those provinces; retained his acquisitions by garrisons, stationed in the conquered towns; and spread a degree of terror to the gates of Utrecht and of Amsterdam (9).

Suspension
of arms.

Mutually impelled by reflexions of such solidity, the two powers appeared to listen with satisfaction to proposals of peace. They were made, on the part of Albert and Isabella, with every external demonstration of sincerity. After a fruitless exhortation, rather than a requisition, to the States, to re-unite themselves to their antient and common sovereign; it was agreed, as the basis of the negotiation, to regard the seven United Provinces as a free and independent republic. A truce of eight months was likewise concluded, in order to allow time for a similar declaration on the part of Spain, and to adjust the many important points requisite to be conceded on either side. Henry, deeply interested in the progress and termination of the treaty, instantly dispatched Jeannin, one of the most able statesmen of his time, in quality of ambassador extraordinary, to the Hague. He was received with distinguished honours, and consulted on every article of the projected pacification. James the First, equally desirous to participate in so important a transaction, and invited by the States

14th May.

28th May.
Henry sends
ambassadors
to the
Hague.

July.

(9) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 528—538. Mezeray, liv. x. p. 375—377. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 131.

to take an active part in their concerns, sent two of C H A P. VIII.
his ministers to assist at the conferences (10).

They were, nevertheless, suspended almost at their commencement, by the defects, or omissions discovered in the act of ratification transmitted on the part of Philip the Third. Neither the form, tenor, nor expressions, adopted by the Catholic king, appeared to contain a clear and unequivocal declaration of the independence of the Dutch. The States refused therefore, to treat either of a truce, or a peace, till a more satisfactory assurance was given upon so essential a point. It became requisite to consult the court of Madrid anew; and some months elapsed before a second instrument arrived from thence. Even in this amended piece, though free from some of the objections made to the former, there still remained such ambiguities or reservations, as to induce the States to refer it to the consideration of the respective provinces, composing the republic. After mature deliberation, their deputies, assembled at the Hague, determined, though not unanimously, that it might be admitted as the groundwork and basis of a treaty; provided that in every stage of the negotiation, care was taken to obtain the recognition of their sovereignty. Thus authorized, a favourable answer was returned to the court of Brussels; and a prolongation of the suspension of hostilities was mutually agreed on, as the time limited for the expiration of the subsisting truce, had nearly elapsed. The king of Denmark, and various Protestant princes of the empire, impelled by their friendship for the Dutch, sent ambassadors to Holland, which country became the centre of political intrigue, and the theatre of universal expectation (11).

1607.
Interruption
of the treaty.

14th Oct.

Obstacles,

3d Nov.

surmounted.

December.

(10) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 661—666. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 377—380.

(11) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 667—675, Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 116, 117, and p. 143—146. and p. 152—155.

While

C H A P.
VIII.1608.
January,
Treaty of
guarantee,
made by
France and
England.

23d Jan.

June.

Disputes
respecting
commerce,and tolera-
tion:Opposition
of the prince
of Orange.

While the ministers of the various powers prepared to commence their deliberations; the Dutch, uncertain of the final issue, and anxious to secure such a guarantee, as might compel Spain to the strict observance of the conditions, to afford them protection against the arms of Philip; besought of the two kings of France and England to enter into a new treaty for their defence. Henry acceded immediately to the proposition, notwithstanding the open and violent opposition made by the bigotted members of his counsel, to an alliance with heretics. From England greater difficulties were experienced, on account of the sums due by Holland to that crown: but they were at length surmounted; and James contracted engagements of the closest nature with the United Provinces (12). Fortified by such powerful allies, they contested with vigour, not only for independence; but, for the uncontrolled freedom of commerce in every part of the globe. It was in vain that the embassadors of Spain represented the exclusive grant of the two Indies, made by the Romish pontiffs to the Spanish and Portuguese princes; and refused to admit of any participation in that valuable commerce. The Dutch opposed to the Papal donation, the inalienable right of every people to navigate the seas, by which nature has connected the most distant regions of the earth; and they declared their resolution, rather to have recourse anew to the decision of arms, than ever to renounce so animating an incitement to industry, and so vast a source of wealth. They were not less divided on another article, the public toleration of the Catholic religion; on which Philip insisted, and to which the States seemed determined never to accede. Maurice, prince of Orange, sustained by the army, by all the enterprising spirits who found occupation in war, and even

(12) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 389. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 32—34.

by many of the mercantile class who were alarmed at the idea of being precluded from the trade to the Indies, by a treaty; fomented the quarrel, and continually retarded any accommodation. His high rank in the republic, the eminent services which he had rendered, and the number of his adherents, particularly in Zealand, enabled him to oppose almost insurmountable barriers to the accomplishment of peace (13).

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1608.

In this embarrassing situation, the Spanish cabinet, reluctant to concede a point of such consequence as the Indian commerce, and unable to persuade, or to compel the Dutch to relinquish it; embraced a measure, calculated, if successful, at once to enable them to dictate terms to the States. A splendid embassy was sent by Philip, to the court of France, at the head of which was placed Peter de Toledo, a nobleman nearly allied by blood, to Mary of Medecis. He was empowered to propose the marriage of the eldest princess of Spain with the Dauphin, and to offer as the portion of the bride, a complete cession to France, of all the rights of the house of Austria on the Low Countries (14). A proposition, at once so specious and so dazzling, might have eluded a prince of inferior penetration. But, Henry easily perceived its fallacy, which was designed to secure immediate and solid advantages to Spain, in return for contingent and uncertain benefits. He was well aware, how many natural, and artificial impediments might arise, to prevent the accomplishment of the projected nuptials, or to set aside the stipulations. Personal, as well as public reasons, rendered him averse to forming any alliance with a house, which throughout his whole life, had given him marks of its enmity, and which he meditated to reduce within narrower limits. His plans for attacking the Spanish monarchy in every

Embassy of
Philip, to
Paris.

September.

Object of it.

Motives of
Henry, for
rejecting the
proposal.

(13) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 234—238, and p. 241, 245. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 34—42.
(14) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 24. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 402—403.

C H A P. VIII. } part of Europe, were already considerably advanced, and only demanded a favourable occasion, to appear in their full force. Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, dissatisfied with the treatment which he received from the court of Madrid, and impatient to retrieve the losses sustained in the late war with France; eagerly invited Henry to form an offensive treaty, for the reduction of the Milanese. The king had listened to his proposal, and though he did not instantly proceed to carry it into execution, he only deferred it for a short period (15). In addition to so many political motives, he was bound by the ties of faith and treaty, to support the United States against their ancient masters. He declined, therefore, the offers of Toledo, and rejected every solicitation of the queen, to enter into connexions with the Austrian family (16).

He declines its acceptance.

30th Sept. Rupture of the conferences, at the Hague.

Motives of Henry, for refusing them.

During these transactions, the deputies of Spain and of the arch-duke, unable to regulate the many points contested, had finally withdrawn from the Hague, and returned to Brussels. The conferences terminated: the party of the house of Orange was triumphant; and hostilities were expected to recommence. But Henry, though fully determined not to accept any overtures from Philip, yet was impelled by weighty reasons, to conclude an accommodation between that monarch and the Dutch. He wished to disarm Flanders, through which country he might speedily have occasion to pass, in the prosecution of his views against the imperial house, and in favour of the Protestant princes of the empire (17). Nor was he ignorant, that while the arms and exertions of the Spaniards were employed against Holland, the apprehensions entertained by the German and Italian states, relative to the ambitious designs of

(15) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 790, 791, and p. 793. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 20—24. (16) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 25. (17) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 393.

the cabinet of Madrid, would be considerably diminished; and that they would be in consequence, less disposed to enter with warmth, into his projects for the humiliation of the Spanish monarchy (42). Actuated by considerations of such moment, he ordered Jeannin to repair anew to the scene which he had quitted, and to endeavour by every possible exhortation, or even menace, to effect a truce of considerable length, if a definitive peace should be found impracticable. That minister exerted himself with such energy, that the delegates of the respective powers re-assembled at Antwerp; and after violent debates, a truce of twelve years was finally settled, under the guarantee of France and England (19).

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VIII.
1608.

1609.
25th March.
Conclusion
of a truce.
9th April.

By this celebrated agreement, which suspended, though it did not terminate the hostilities, that had so long desolated some of the richest and most commercial countries of Europe; the independence of the United Provinces was admitted by Philip. Nevertheless, it was rather implied, than formally recognized in the explicit terms which the jealousy and pride of the States had wished to dictate. Nor was the permission to navigate the Indian seas, and to traffic in those remote possessions, more distinctly and specifically granted. It required the utmost efforts of the French and English ministers, to induce the Dutch to acquiesce in the ambiguous declarations extorted on the point, from the Spanish crown. On the other hand, all the endeavours of the Catholic king were ineffectual, to obtain a toleration of the Romish religion; and it was only in compliance with the entreaties of Henry, to whose friendship they were so much indebted, that the deputies of the Seven Provinces soon afterwards consented to relax the severity of the penal laws against the Catholics. Even the

Conditions
of it.

(28) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 23.
x. p. 392—394.

(19) Ibid. p. 43, 44. Mezeray, vol.

relaxation

C H A P. relaxation granted, was simply a permission to perform
 VIII. the exercises of devotion in private houses, without
 1609. molestation. Each power continued in possession of
 the cities and fortresses respectively occupied by them,
 at the time of signing the truce; which was pro-
 claimed with demonstrations of universal joy (20).

Expulsion of
 the Moors
 from Spain.

Philip, who had thus compulsively and reluctantly
 consented to the emancipation of Holland, commit-
 ted almost immediately afterwards, a voluntary fault
 of far greater consequence to the prosperity of Spain.
 At the instigation of the tribunal of the inquisition,
 he ordered the expulsion of more than a million of
 his most laborious and industrious subjects. The
 Moreiscoes, unable to defend themselves, proscribed
 by the incapacity and bigotry of their sovereign, and
 abandoned by every power either Christian or Maho-
 metan; were driven from their native homes and
 possessions, to seek a precarious asylum on the in-
 hospitable shore of Barbary. The southern provinces,
 depopulated and uncultivated, long reproached the
 pernicious intolerance of the government, which
 vainly endeavoured to remedy the evil that it had
 produced. It must be confessed, that the animosity
 of Henry towards the house of Austria, however
 great, could scarcely have inflicted on Spain a more
 deep and incurable wound (21).

Its effects.

Death of the
 duke of
 Cleves.

The occasion which he had so ardently desired, of
 attacking a family, which in both its branches, had
 long impressed Europe with terror; by a singular
 coincidence of circumstances, presented itself, nearly at
 the precise time of the signature of the truce between
 Philip and the Dutch. John William, duke of
 Cleves, expired after an illness of short duration,
 leaving no issue. His dominions, consisting of the
 three duchies of Cleves, Juliers, and Berg, the coun-

25th March.

(20) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 332—334. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 43—49.
 Mezeray, vol. x. p. 394, 395. Bentivoglio, p. 378—387. (40) Abregé
 Chron. vol. ii. p. 465. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 395—397.

ties of La Mark and Ravensberg, and the lordship of Ravenstein, rendered him one of the most powerful princes of the German empire. Those fertile provinces, watered in their whole extent, by the Rhine, and the Meuse, and stretching from the gates of Nimeguen, nearly to the walls of Coblentz; were contiguous, on the western frontier, to the duchy of Limburg, and to the territories of the United States in Gelderland. It necessarily became therefore, an object of the most serious nature, to the king of Spain and to the archduke on one hand, as well as to the Dutch republic on the other, to provide that so rich a succession should not fall into the hands of an enemy. Various pretenders laid claim to the vacant succession, on opposite grounds or principles. The deceased duke had left four sisters, three of whom had issue; and the husbands, or sons of which princesses seemed to have the most incontestable title. But Christian the Second, elector of Saxony, opposed to their rights of consanguinity a donation, or expectative, conferred on one of his ancestors by Frederic the Third, in virtue of a recognized prerogative of the emperors; that of disposing of all fiefs even before their vacancy. He maintained likewise, that those in question, were masculine and indivisible (22).

C H A P.
VIII.

1609.
Extent of his dominions.

Claims of the various princes.

A question of such magnitude, and involved in such perplexity, ought, according to the fundamental maxims of the German jurisprudence, to have been tried before the Aulic council; the only competent tribunal for discussing matters, arising out of the feudal system of the empire. But in order to enforce the sentence, it demanded an emperor of another description from Rodolph. That feeble prince, it is true, endeavoured to become umpire

Rodolph the Second evokes the cause to himself.

(22) Pfeffel, vol. ii. p. 247, 248. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 362—396. L'Art de Verif. tome iii. p. 187. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 413, 414. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 68—70.

and

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1609.

and judge of the contest, by evoking it to himself; and the elector of Saxony, secure of receiving the eventual possession of the fiefs, submitted instantly to the imperial requisition. Rodolph did not even hesitate to confer on him the investiture, though by a second edict, he enjoined the sequestration of the litigated countries; and authorized his cousin, the archduke Leopold, bishop of Passau, to take possession of them, till the final decision. Meanwhile, the elector of Brandenburg, and the duke of Neuburg, who in virtue of their descent from the two eldest sisters of John William, seemed to have the fairest claims on his dominions, and who well knew that they would be ejected by the emperor; did not manifest any deference for his injunctions. Entering the provinces to the east of the Rhine, at the head of their forces, they advanced to Duffeldorf, capital of the duchy of Berg, into which city they were immediately received. They had previously agreed, at the town of Dortmund, where they held a conference, to govern the countries in common, under the title of princes possessors; and the States, who were assembled at Duffeldorf, readily acknowledged them as provisional sovereigns (23).

Electors of
Brandenburg,
and
duke of
Neuburg,

31st May.
enter Duffeldorf.
16th June.

Leopold
seizes on Juliers.

During these transactions, Leopold, commissioned by the emperor, rendered himself master of the city and citadel of Juliers; while Rodolph published a new decree, by which he declared all who should afford assistance to the princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg, guilty of treason, and put to the ban of the empire. As it was nevertheless evident, that France would take an interest, and even an active concern in the dispute; Albert and Isabella instantly dispatched an ambassador, to acquaint Henry with the motives for Leopold's seizure of Juliers. He was speedily followed by the count of Hohenzollern,

Various embassadors
sent to Henry.

(23) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 70. Pfeffel, vol. ii. p. 249. Heiss, vol. ii. p. 440—442.

on the part of Rodolph himself, who endeavoured to justify the act, on the principles of the German constitution, and professed the intentions of his imperial majesty to relinquish the territories sequestered, as soon as the right to them could be decided. Nor did the two Protestant princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg omit to plead their cause before the same tribunal; and they earnestly solicited the king to aid them in ejecting the house of Austria, from any interference in the succession to the dominions of Cleves. It was not difficult to foresee, on which side Henry's inclinations, as well as his policy would induce him to fix; and he did not leave the contending parties long in uncertainty relative to his ultimate resolution. Secure of the strenuous co-operation of the United Provinces, who, terrified at so formidable a neighbour as Leopold, offered the king to break the truce recently concluded with Spain; urged by the greater part of the Protestant states of the empire, who dreaded the further aggrandizement of the house of Austria; and assured of the assistance of the duke of Savoy, on the side of Italy; he did not hesitate to promise effectual aid to the confederate princes. His troops began immediately to assemble in Champagne, and preparations were made for commencing active hostilities (24).

C H A P.
VIII.
1609.

He promises
aid to the
Protestant
princes.

Notwithstanding the apparent decision and celerity of these movements, neither tranquillity nor unanimity were found in the court of France. Mary of Medecis, actuated by jealousy and detestation of the marchioness of Verneuil, continued to render the palace a scene of perpetual strife. Instead of attempting to reclaim her faithless husband, by the arts of gentleness and conciliation, she lent all her confidence to Conchini and Leonora, who abused their ascendancy over her, and excited her to venge-

State of the
court of
France.

(24) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 71, 72.

CHAP. VIII. ^{1609.} Influence, and power of Conchini, and Leonora. ^{ance} It is scarcely credible that two Florentine adventurers, obscure in their origin, and endowed with no pre-eminent talents; should impress with a degree of apprehension, the greatest monarch in Europe, in the midst of his capital and courtiers. It is not less certain, that Henry, whose facility and indecision in private life equalled his valour in the field, could never be induced by any remonstrances, to order the seizure and removal of two insolent incendiaries, who indirectly menaced to take revenge, if he proceeded to acts of violence against their persons. Nor could the queen be persuaded voluntarily to dismiss them, though every effort was made for that purpose by the king's command, and through the medium of those, whose attachment to her was unquestionable. It was already apparent, that if any unexpected accident should deprive France of its sovereign, the influence of Conchini and his wife over their mistress would be unbounded, and might not improbably involve the kingdom, as well as themselves, in the greatest calamities (25).

Attachment of the king,

An event which took place at this period, increased the misunderstanding between Henry and the queen, filled the court with confusion, and greatly inflamed the other causes of quarrel with the house of Austria. It originated in the same unrestrained indulgence of his passion for the sex, which on so many other occasions, had obscured his glory, or embittered his repose. Neither the charms of the marchioness of Verneuil, of the countess of Moret, nor of the lady of Effarts, with all of whom he lived in an avowed commerce of gallantry, could prevent him from becoming sensible to the attractions of Henrietta de Montmorency, daughter to the constable. Her high birth and quality formed no impediment to his designs; which though veiled for some

Henrietta de Montmorency.

(25) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 400—402. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 185—194.

time,

time, even from himself, were unquestionably levelled at her honour. She was in the first bloom of youth and beauty; nor did the disparity of age prevent her from receiving with complacency, the attentions of so great a monarch (26). Her father had destined her hand for Bassompierre, a young and accomplished courtier. But Henry, apprehensive that her seduction might be more difficult, if she married a man to whom her affections were engaged, contrived to set aside the match, and to substitute in the place of Bassompierre, the prince of Condé. It was not without some hesitation, that the prince consented to espouse her, after having received from the king's own mouth, every assurance which could satisfy him, relative to the virtue and chastity of his future bride (27).

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1609.

Her marriage with the prince of Condé.

Henry prince of Condé, first prince of the blood, was at this time, scarcely twenty-one years old; and though destitute of shining parts, betrayed more sensibility, as well as resentment, at the manifest intentions of the king to dishonour his bed, than it is probable, were expected by the monarch. After the celebration of the nuptials, finding that Henry's conduct afforded an unequivocal testimony of the same design, he began by removing the princess from court. Her absence, far from extinguishing, increased the violence of the king's desires. Unrestrained by decorum, by reflexions on his own age, station, and example, or by any respect for the sanctity of a marriage to which he had eminently contributed; Henry the Fourth did not blush to attempt the gratification of his passion, by descending to steps the most unbecoming. In a disguise, accompanied by some companions and instruments of his pleasures, he repeatedly endeavoured, under shelter of the night, to visit the young princess, at the castles of Chantilly, and of Verteuil, to which she had been successively

He removes her from court.

Attempts of Henry, to seduce the princess.

(26) Amours d'Hen. IV., p. 92. (27) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 135—149. Cabin. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 227—230. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 47—409.

C H A P. transferred by her husband's apprehension (28). Justly
VIII. alarmed at such a conduct, the prince remonstrated
 1609. with a warmth proportionate to the injury. The
August. king, incensed at his temerity, withdrew the ap-
Menaces of pointments issuing out of the royal treasury, which
Sully. constituted the principal part of Condé's subsistence; and Sully ventured indirectly to menace him with exile or imprisonment, if he did not instantly, in compliance with Henry's orders, bring back his wife to court (29).

29th Aug.
 Flight of
 Condé

After so peremptory a declaration of Henry's will, the prince conceived, not without reason, that his only safety lay in flight. Having therefore, mounted the princess on horseback behind him, he took the road to Flanders, and reached Landrecy, beyond the frontiers of the French dominions, the same night. Albert and Isabella, unacquainted with the motives for his retreat, and anxious to preserve the Netherlands in repose, no sooner received the intelligence of his arrival, than they dispatched to him the duke of Arschot, with injunctions to Condé to quit their territories in three days. He obeyed, and retired to Cologne, after having previously sent his wife to Brussels, where she was entrusted to the care of Philip, prince of Orange, his brother-in-law. But, at the suggestion of Spinola, and in compliance with the directions of the court of Madrid, Condé was afterwards permitted to repair to Brussels in person. He was received with the greatest honours by the arch-duke and Isabella; entertained magnificently by Spinola; and assured of meeting, both for himself, and for the princess, with the protection due to their rank and misfortune (30).

His recep-
 tion, at
 Brussels.

(28) Memor. recon. tome ii. p. 87. Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 230, 231.
 (29) Cab. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 232, 233. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 343.
 (30) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 80, 81. Bassompierre, vol. i. tome i. p. 175, and p. 178, 179. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 344. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 410.

Henry did not attempt to conceal the agitations of his mind, on the reception of so unpleasing an event. In a hasty and disorderly council, composed of his principal ministers; after many opposite opinions, it was finally determined to demand of the court of Bruffels, the immediate delivery of the prince and princess. Praslin was ordered to repair thither, and to spare neither menaces, promises, nor presents, in order to effect the object. Albert, apprehensive of the king's indignation; and dreading an invasion of Flanders, seemed to incline towards a compliance with Praslin's requisitions. But the dishonour, attached to abandoning two persons of the highest quality, who had fled to him for an asylum; joined to the sentiments of female modesty and virtue in the bosom of the arch-duchess, prevented their listening to any inducements of an interested nature. They replied therefore, in terms of the utmost deference and respect, that they could not violate the laws of hospitality by surrendering a prince who had taken refuge in their dominions: but, that the king might be assured he would never depart in the slightest degree, from the duty and allegiance due to his sovereign. On neither side was any express mention made of the princess; though it was well understood in the two courts, that her detention constituted the principal object of Henry's anxiety (31).

C. H. A. P.
VIII.

1609.

Henry demands the
prince, from
Albert.October.
Answer of
the court of
Bruffels.Resentment
of Henry.

Increased at the presumption of Albert and Isabella, in sheltering a prince of the blood, who might become a dangerous instrument in the hands of the Spaniards; and driven almost to a state of distraction, by the absence and loss of the princess of Condé; Henry resolved to inflict vengeance on the authors of this double misfortune and affront. His

(31) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 176—178. Cab. d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 235—241. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 345—352. Mézeray, vol. x. p. 410, 411. De Thou, vol. xv. x. p. 81, 82.

C H A P. VIII. passions coinciding on the occasion with his policy, accelerated every movement and operation of the cabinet. Bassompierre had been already dispatched to the court of Nancy, to commence a negotiation with Henry, who had recently succeeded to his father Charles the Third, in the dukedom of Lorraine. He was instructed to demand the daughter of the duke in marriage for the Dauphin; and as that prince was destitute of male issue, such an alliance would, it was probable, at a future time unite Lorraine to the French crown. The proposal, after some irresolution, was accepted; and the king secured at once a valuable ally, while he opened to his posterity the prospect of so considerable an augmentation of dominion (32). Bassompierre was ordered to proceed into Germany, and to attach to Henry's interests the elector Palatine, the duke of Wirtemberg, and other princes of the empire; a commission which he executed with equal dexterity and success (33). With the duke of Savoy, the king entered into the closest ties of union, political and personal. A treaty was concluded between them, by which it was stipulated to attack the Milanese with their joint forces. That duchy, if conquered, was to remain to Charles Emanuel; whole territories thus augmented, were to be constituted a kingdom, and the title of king of Lombardy revived in his person. As the strongest proof of their mutual sincerity, the eldest of Henry's daughters was contracted to the prince of Piedmont; pensions of very considerable value were conferred by him, on the younger sons of the duke of Savoy; and Philibert, the second, was created duke of Chartres. The commencement of hostilities was only delayed till the ensuing spring; at which time it was fixed that Lesdiguières should join his troops to

1609.
 Negotiation
 with Lor-
 rain,

and with the
 German
 princes.

Treaty with
 Savoy.
 3d Novem.

Conditions.

28th Dec.

(32) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 152—156, and p. 161—172. (33) Ibid, p. 156—160.

those of Charles Emanuel, in order to penetrate into Italy (34). C H A P.
VIII.

Already that vast political confederation, which Henry had laboured during so many years to complete, and which appeared to be on the point of giving to Europe a new aspect, prepared to enter on action. We cannot contemplate without a degree of amazement approaching to incredulity, the magnitude and extent of its powers. James the First, king of Great Britain, was neither from character, nor from inclination, disposed to take any active part: but his eldest son, Henry prince of Wales, a youth of martial and enterprizing talents, eager to signalize himself under so great a commander as Henry the Fourth; had repeatedly and recently engaged to conduct six thousand infantry, and five hundred horse, to his assistance (35). Maurice prince of Orange, was authorized by the republic of Holland, to promise fifteen thousand foot, besides three thousand cavalry; and the confederate princes of the German empire furnished a similar number (36). The united forces of Savoy, and Venice amounted to twenty-nine thousand men, independent of eleven thousand under Lesdiguières (37). The king himself was to assume the command of the grand army, consisting of twenty-five thousand foot, and five thousand horse, accompanied with twenty cannon (38). All the internal regulations of police or of finance, which could give energy to the operations of war, and accelerate the expected success, were made by Henry. The kingdom was tranquil, accustomed to obey, and administered with vigour. Sully had laid up in the Bastile

1610.
Confederation, formed
by Henry.

England.

Holland, and
Germany.

Savoy, and
Venice.

Military
force of
France.

Funds for
carrying on
the war.

(34) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 76—79. Guichenon, vol. i. p. 793—795. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 404, 405. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 403, 404, and p. 417, 418. Bassompierre, vol. i. tome i. p. 180—183. (35) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 457, 463. (36) Idem, *ibid.* D'Aub. *Hist. Univ.* vol. iii. p. 542. (37) Sully, *ibid.* D'Aub. *ibid.* (38) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 446. Mezeray, ol. x. p. 422, 423.

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VIII.
1610.

a sum in specie, amounting nearly to a million of pounds sterling; and he possessed effects, or letters of exchange, capable of being immediately converted into money, for half a million more (39). Such was his œconomy, his intimate knowledge of the pecuniary capacity and resources of France, as well as his ability in discovering modes of supplying the treasury, that he had engaged to furnish all the demands for so many armies, during four or five years (40).

Plan for dividing the Austrian and Spanish provinces.

The partition and distribution of the provinces, projected to be dismembered from the two branches of the house of Austria, were framed with equal judgment, and attention to the respective pretensions of the confederates. France alone was not to receive, at least immediately, any ostensible territorial augmentation; Henry aiming rather at the diminution of the power of Philip and Rodolph, than at the increase of his own dominions (41). This moderation was highly useful in conciliating the various states of Europe, who had been long accustomed to dread the ambition of Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second. The seven United Provinces were to be rewarded by the permanent acquisition of some parts of the Austrian Netherlands (42). To Venice was to be given the island of Sicily, and a portion of the Milanese on the banks of the Adda (43). The dignity of king of the Romans, and the reversion of the imperial crown, were offered to the duke of Bavaria; and it was intended to restore the Hungarians and Bohemians to their antient right of electing a sovereign on every vacancy of the throne (44). Sweden and Denmark were to be admitted as allies, to share in the spoils of Germany. The Helvetic confederacy was to be enlarged, by the addition of the Tyrol, Alsace,

(39) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 472, 473. (40) Ibid. p. 468—471.
(41) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 543. (42) Sully, vol. i. tome iii. p. 460. (43) Ibid. p. 462. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 406. (44) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 461, 462. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 542, 543.

and

and the county of Burgundy (45). Even Paul the Fifth, who filled the chair of St. Peter, seems to have tacitly, if not formally, acceded to this vast league; although aimed at the demolition of the very power, from which the holy see had always received the most steady support. The donation of the kingdom of Naples, on which the Romish pontiffs had pretensions, overcame his scruples, and vanquished his repugnance. It would be difficult to credit this fact, if it did not rest on indubitable authority (46). Philip, bereft of all his Flemish, Italian, and other scattered possessions, except Sardinia and the Balearic islands; would have been confined to the continent of Spain between the Pyrenees and the Atlantic, together with his colonies in Asia, Africa, and the new world. The treaty of Utrécht, which actually reduced the Spanish monarchy to those limits, would have been anticipated by near a century; and France would have become under Henry the Fourth, by the voluntary consent of the other powers, as she effectively was at a later period, under Louis the Fourteenth, by force; the arbitress of Europe (47).

C H A P.
VIII.

1610.

Assent of
the court of
Rome, to it.

If

(45) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 381. (46) Ibid. p. 462. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 406, 407. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 88.

(47) That Henry the Fourth had not only projected to divide Europe into fifteen states, and to form from their union a species of commonwealth, or "Republique Chretienne," which should enjoy perpetual peace; but, that he had long revolved, weighed, and perfected the outline of his plan, is incontestable. However gigantic, chimerical, puerile, or impracticable, the design itself may be justly considered; it is not the less true, that he meditated such a system. We may find every minute detail of it in Sully; even to particulars incredibly exact and trifling. Nay, we shall see that as early as 1601, he communicated his ideas and designs to Elizabeth, queen of England; who professed at least, to admire them, as some of the most sublime conceptions of the human mind. But she was too wise and too experienced, not to express at the same time, her doubts of their practicability; chiefly on account of the difference of religion. She even undertook to make known Henry's plan to the kings of Sweden and Denmark, and to obtain their co-operation. On her death in 1603, it seems that the king was for some time, in despair of ever achieving so arduous a work; and that he so expressed himself to Rosny, with marks of the most lively concern. But, with the elasticity natural to an ardent mind bent on a favourite point, he soon resumed its prosecution. Rosny was ordered to sound James the First upon it, only four months after his accession to the crown of

Great

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VIII.
1610.

Inability of
Spain to re-
sist the con-
federacy.

Weakness of
Albert,

If we reflect on the condition of the two branches of the Austrian family at this period, we shall be still more inclined to admit that Henry's plan for their humiliation, was neither ideal, nor subject to any obvious disarrangement of its parts. It is, in fact, difficult to say how so formidable a coalition, led on by the first prince in Europe, cemented by mutual interest, and supported with adequate military, as well as pecuniary resources, could have been opposed with success. Philip the Third and the duke of Lerma, were equally destitute of talents for meeting, as for turning aside the shock; nor do they seem to have made any exertions for the purpose. Spain, depopulated by the recent expulsion of the Moors, was in want of every sinew for active hostility; and the finances were in a deplorable state of exhaustion, and confusion (48). Albert and Isabella, hopeless of issue, exposed to the immediate attack of the French arms, and having only just extricated themselves

Great Britain. He did so; and though James appears, from his timidity, or his good sense, to have started many objections, and to have wished to temporize, and wait for a more proper juncture in which to reduce it to practice; yet, he agreed to the plan itself. Fourteen articles, comprehending the material points of the confederation of the "Republique Chretienne," were drawn up, and finally settled between James and Rofny.

Far from renouncing the project as impracticable, upon longer reflexion, Henry in 1609 seriously intended to undertake its completion. We may read in Sully, the instructions drawn up for Boissese, Fresne Canaye, Baugt, Ancel, and Bongars, who were sent as envoys from France, to the different courts of Germany, Italy, and the North. They are very ample, and leave no room to doubt of the king's intention to effect it, if possible. The two grand objects of it seem to have been, first, to maintain peace and preponderance between all the Christian states; and secondly, to carry on a perpetual war against the Infidels. Voltaire, in his zeal for the memory and character of Henry the Fourth, has thought proper to treat this plan as a chimera, which never existed. But, his assertion certainly cannot be put in competition with Sully's authority. Mezeray admits the reality of the project, though he very rationally doubts, whether a king of fifty-six years old, and frequently troubled with the gout, could well flatter himself with bringing it to a conclusion. Henry would, it is probable, have agreed on that point with the historian; while he might still have exerted himself to overcome the impediments. It is unnecessary to say more on a subject, which can only amuse the imagination, and which expired, like all his other vast intentions, with the life of its projector. See Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 378—385, and p. 390 400, and p. 401—426. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 407. Voltaire, Œuvres Complètes, vol. x. p. 221. (48) Abregé, Chron. d'Espagne, vol. ii. p. 464.

from

from a war with the Dutch; beheld with natural apprehension, the approach of a new and more powerful enemy. Rodolph the Second, oppressed by bodily infirmities; unskilled in all the arts becoming a prince destined to reign over so many kingdoms and provinces; odious to his successor Mathias, and despised by his subjects, could only be a spectator of the contest. Even the German branch of the house of Austria, was divided into two great and rival factions. Mathias, who already hoped to obtain the Imperial crown, as well as the hereditary possessions of his brother Rodolph, found a competitor in the arch-duke Ferdinand, son of Charles, who founded the Styrian line. Spain warmly espoused the pretensions of Ferdinand, which were on the point of arming the two princes against each other, and which it was highly probable, could only be decided by the sword (49). Every circumstance leads us to suppose, that a vast revolution in the state and system of Europe, was on the point of taking place, and that it was only prevented by Henry's death.

CHAP.
VIII.
1610.
and of the
emperor.

Division in
the Imperial
family.

January.
Assembly at
Hall.

Resolutions
embraced
in it.

Meanwhile, the Protestant princes of the empire, and deputies from a number of the free imperial cities, alarmed at the seizure of Juliers by Leopold, met at the city of Hall in Swabia. Boissise, dispatched by the king of France, appeared in the assembly, and gave assurances in his master's name, of vigorous support, as soon as the season would admit of putting himself at the head of his forces. Encouraged by the promise of so powerful an ally, the princes adopted resolutions of energy, fixed the respective proportions of soldiers to be levied, and assigned funds for their subsistence. The elector Palatine Frederic the Fourth, was declared chief of the "Union," and the supreme command of the troops

(49) Pffeffel, vol. ii. p. 247—253. Heifs, vol. i. p. 435—439, and p. 445, 446.

C H A P. VIII. was conferred upon the prince of Anhalt. On the other hand, the three ecclesiastical electors, apprehensive that the antient religion might be endangered, set on foot a counter association, for the maintenance of the Catholic faith, the German constitution, the possessions of the church, and their own liberties.

1610. The members met at the city of Wurtzburg in Franconia, assumed the name of "the League," and placed at its head the duke of Bavaria. They appear nevertheless, to have acted with far less decision than their antagonists, though they were openly supported by the emperor, and secretly aided by the cabinet of Spain (50).

Meeting at Wurtzburg. During the course of the winter, the negotiations between the two courts of Paris and Bruffels, relative to the prince of Condé, were never suspended. D'Estrées, who had been dispatched by Henry for that purpose, exerted all the arts of persuasion to dispel his apprehensions, and to induce him voluntarily to return into France. Albert and Isabella professed to leave him perfectly at liberty to follow the dictates of his own judgment and inclination. They even affected to advise his compliance with the king's wishes: but they still refused to compel him to abandon the asylum which he had embraced (51). Unable to accomplish by eloquence or address, the object of his mission, d'Estrées had the audacity to project a scheme for carrying off the princess. She appears, herself, to have lent to it more than a negative approbation, and to have engaged to facilitate her own flight, or escape from the palace of the prince of Orange, in which she resided. The plan was discovered only a few hours previous to its intended execution; and the government, apprized of the enter-

Negotiations at Bruffels.

Unsuccessful attempt of d'Estrées.

February.

(50) Pfeffel, vol. ii. p. 249—251. Heifs, vol. i. p. 442, 443. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 418—421. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 72—76. Journal d'Hen. IV. vol. ii. p. 209—211. (51) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 81, 82.

prize, took efficacious measures for rendering it abortive. In order to prevent the repetition of similar attempts, the young princess was removed to the archducal palace, and placed under the immediate protection of the infant herself (52). D'Estrées, frustrated in all his efforts, no longer observed any measures with the prince, whom he enjoined, in Henry's name, to repair to his presence without delay, on pain of being treated as guilty of treason. Condé declined obedience to the order; but apprehensive that a longer stay at Brussels might be dangerous to his safety, he quitted the city with a few attendants, passed through Germany in disguise, and arrived safely at Milan. His wife remained in the safe-guard of Albert and Isabella (53).

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VIII.

1610.

Condé re-
pairs to
Milan.
31st March.

The count de Fuentes, governor of the Milanese, received the fugitive prince with demonstrations of extraordinary respect; though he in fact took every precaution to secure the possession of a person, who from his near alliance to the crown of France, might be made eminently subservient to the purposes, or policy of the court of Madrid. Under pretence that the king had set a price of one hundred thousand crowns upon Condé's head, Fuentes gave him a guard of horse and foot; nor was he permitted to continue his journey to Rome, where he had designed to invoke the paternal interposition and mediation of Paul the Fifth. Previous to his departure from Flanders, he had ventured to disperse a manifesto, highly reflecting on Henry's government, and peculiarly levelled at Sully, as the inventor of a number of oppressive and intolerable taxes. The indignation which it excited in the breast of the king, was augmented by the consideration that Condé had sought protection from the count de Fuentes, the implacable enemy

Conduct of
Fuentes to-
wards him.

April.

Manifesto of
the prince.

(52) Memor. second. tome ii. p. 113. Cabinet d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 248. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 411, 412.

(53) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 82.

C H A P. VIII. of the French nation, and in particular, of the house of Bourbon. A secret negotiation was, nevertheless, begun through more than one channel, with the prince, the object of which was to effect his return and the oblivion of all past transactions. His situation at Milan necessarily imposed obstacles to its progress; and the assassination of Henry, which took place immediately afterwards, left its final event uncertain (54).

Preparations
of Henry,
for war.

During these transactions, the preparations for opening the campaign advanced with the utmost expedition. A part of the troops were already on their march towards the frontiers of Champagne, where the general point of union was fixed at Mouson. A vast train of artillery followed the army; and the king wrote to the arch-duke Albert, to demand a passage for his forces through the Netherlands. It was determined to form a council of regency to administer affairs, at the head of which should be placed the queen. The magnitude of the military levies and equipments, left no room to doubt that an object more extensive than the attack of Juliers, was in contemplation. The eyes of Europe were fixed with anxiety and interest on the issue of the enterprize; while Spain alone, against whom it was directed, remained in a state of torpid security, or of inexplicable lethargy (55). No measures were embraced, either in Flanders, or in Italy, for sustaining the shock; and Albert, by a letter couched in terms of submission, addressed to Henry, but which did not arrive till after that monarch's decease, allowed him to pass without molestation, through his territories (56).

Fermenta-
tion in Paris,

Notwithstanding these prosperous appearances, a degree of silent fermentation pervaded the capital and the nation. The credulous and superstitious multi-

(54) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 82—86. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 412, 413:
(55) Sully, vol. i. tome iii. p. 446, 480. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 424. (56) Sully,
vol. i. tome iii. p. 401. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 426.

tude had imbibed an impression of the king's motives for commencing war, highly inimical to its success. Reports were industriously circulated, that he was about to attack the pope; and the Papal nuncio at Paris, not acquainted with the secret views and intentions of his court, gave some countenance to the rumour (57). The adherents of the "League" and of Spain, were busy in defaming the conduct of Henry; and did not hesitate to assert, that the princess of Condé was another Helen, who would involve Europe in a general conflagration.

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VIII.
1610.
and through
France.

But, the most painful opposition to his designs, and interruption to his repose, originated in his own household. Mary of Medecis. could not behold without the natural sensations of an injured, or slighted woman, his continual acts of inconstancy. She was content, indeed, to suffer his amours; but she refused to aid, or in any measure to facilitate their gratification (58). Her adherence to the Catholic religion, and to the house of Austria, induced her to regard with disapprobation and concern, the approaching rupture, as well as the king's alliance with heretics. Conchini and his wife, by malignant and artful insinuations, alienated the queen's affections from her husband. They even carried their presumption so far, as to infuse into her mind apprehensions, that he might be capable, from the extravagance of his passion for the princess of Condé, of repudiating Mary, and raising to the throne the object of his fondness (59). Impelled by these suggestions, the queen ardently solicited of Henry, to permit that her coronation might be solemnly performed at St. Denis; and she represented, that the public effect of such a ceremony would render her person more sacred, and her authority as regent, during his absence from the king-

Disatisfaction
of the
queen.

Causes of it.

4th April.
She demands
to be
crowned.

(57) Cab. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 253. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 421, 422.

(58) Memor. recond. tome ii. p. 260. (59) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 425.

Cab. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 258, 259.

dom,

C H A P. VIII. 1610. dom, more venerable in the opinions of the people. The king objected with warmth to the proposition, for a double reason; the delay, which must be unavoidably incident to the preparations for such a solemnity; and the expence occasioned by it at a time, when all his treasures might be inadequate to the public demands. Vanquished nevertheless by Mary's importunities, which he knew not how to resist, he gave orders for its execution, and even hastened all the requisite decorations made for its celebration. It took place, with extraordinary pomp, in the abbey of St. Denis, amidst an immense concourse of people; Henry himself assisting as a spectator, and issuing the necessary directions during the ceremony. The public entry of the queen into Paris, was fixed for the fifteenth of the month; and almost immediately afterwards the king intended to mount on horseback, in order to join his forces (60).

13th May.
Her coronation.

Agitation of Henry.

The French writers of that period, deeply impressed themselves, at the atrocious nature, as well as at the lamentable effects of Henry's death, have described him previous to it, as haunted by continual apprehensions of some imminent and invisible danger. If we could credit their assertions, nature seemed to participate in the impending calamity; and even inanimate objects, trees, and rivers, foretold in mystic language, his approaching fate. Mankind, in every age, has been prone to read the history of the great, through the medium of fancy, terror, and superstition; nor is it difficult with such assistance, to transform the most common occurrences or accidents, into omens and prodigies. There is nevertheless a degree of scepticism, beyond that of reason, in refusing altogether to believe, that Henry felt himself in a state

(60) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 86—88. Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 260, 261. Journal d'Henry IV. vol. ii. p. 215—217, and p. 218—224. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 476, 481. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 426, 427. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 186, 187.

of unusual agitation during several days preceding his C H A P. VIII.
 affassination. It would seem; that he even burst at
 times into querulous lamentations, or expressed him-
 self in doubtful language; relative to his departure on
 the expedition to Germany (61). But, these marks
 of a distempered, or uneasy mind, may be naturally
 explained, without having recourse to supernatural
 causes. The enterprize which he was on the point
 of commencing; however admirably planned, and
 however secure of apparent success, was yet so vast;
 so complicated, and dependant on so many springs;
 that no human wisdom could ascertain its result.

Nor was he ignorant; that malevolence and bigotry
 had traduced his motives for taking up arms. In the
 interior of his family, the jealousy of the queen, the
 insolence of Conchini, and the dangerous ascendancy
 which he and his wife Leonora had gained over Mary
 of Medecis, embittered his present happiness, and
 filled him with anxious apprehensions for futurity.
 The first prince of the blood was in the hands of
 Fuentes, the mortal enemy of Henry; and the prin-
 cess, whose attractions had been so injurious to his
 repose, was detained at Bruffels. Above all, he knew
 that the genius of the time was prone to acts of vio-
 lence and ferocity: he had even received intimation
 of attempts against his person, from various quar-
 ters; and horoscopes, to which a considerable degree
 of involuntary belief was then given by the most en-
 lightened men, had fixed his death in the fifty-seventh
 year of his age (62). We must not imagine that
 Henry the Fourth was free from human infirmity,
 credulity, and weakness. Brave in the field; even to
 intrepidity, and accustomed to regard death in the
 ranks of war, with perfect composure; he was equally
 accessible to fear, with other men. Even Sully ad-

Reasons of it.

Domestic dissensions.

Credulity of the age.

(61) Bassomp. vol. i. tome ii. p. 185—188. Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 476—479. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 427—431. (62) Ibid. p. 430. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 544. Tavannes, p. 279.

C H A P. VIII. 1610. mits, that a prince so dauntless in battle, was less than a woman when in a coach; that he cried out, whenever it appeared likely to overturn, and betrayed the utmost timidity. Henry himself avowed the fact; and accounted for it by informing his minister, that it had been predicted he should die in a coach (63). When we reflect on all these circumstances, it cannot excite our wonder, that he exhibited symptoms of a mind oppressed, irresolute, and struggling with depression.

A beautiful, and celebrated writer of the present century, has justly observed, that "in the death of Henry the Fourth, the fatality or force of destiny seems to be more felt, than in any other event of history (64)." That his predecessor, occupied in besieging Paris, in a time of rebellion, when the minds of the French people were heated to a degree of delirium, should be immolated by a fanatic monk, in order to rescue his party from impending destruction; appears natural, however execrable. But, after a lapse of more than a hundred and eighty years, we have every reason to believe, that the design of assassinating Henry the Fourth, was conceived in silence by an ignorant enthusiast of the lowest description, confirmed by reflexion, and executed without an accomplice of any kind (65). Francis Ravailiac, a native of Angouleme, and the perpetrator of so detestable a deed, had served his noviciate in a monastic order, and afterwards procured a scanty subsistence, by following the profession of a schoolmaster, in his native city. His abhorrence of the professors of the reformed religion rose to fury, and inspired him with ideas of the most sanguinary kind, against heretics. Imbued with an opinion that the king gave, at least

Ravailiac.
His origin.

Motives,
which in-
duced him
to stab the
king.

(63) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 477.

Mézeray, vol. x. p. 434.

(64) Voltaire, Œuvr. compl. vol. x. p. 227.

(65) Tavannes, p. 279.

a secret and indirect protection to that class of his subjects, and that he was about to make war on the pope, Ravailiac formed the resolution of reasoning with him; and if he should find Henry incorrigible in error, of assassinating him as the enemy of God (66). Repulsed with blows by the guards, in an attempt to approach the king when in his coach, he returned to Angouleme; but while performing his devotions before an image of Christ suffering flagellation, in the suburbs of the town of Estampes, he felt the purpose regenerate in his bosom. Pursued by the desire of perpetrating it, he whetted his knife anew, the point of which he had previously broken; took the road again to Paris, and waited for an occasion to accomplish the deed (67).

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1610.

On the morning of the day when Henry perished, he had been engaged in giving directions respecting his expedition, and in accelerating all the necessary preparations for his departure. After having dined, he lay down, with intent to take some repose: but unable to sleep, he rose, passed some moments in fervent prayer, and walked for a considerable time in his apartment, uneasy and melancholy. To divert his chagrin, he determined to visit Sully, at the arsenal; and for that purpose commanded his coach to be prepared. When it was ready, he dispatched Vitry, captain of his guards, to hasten the workmen employed in decorating the courts of law, for the queen's entry; and ordered the guards themselves to remain at the Louvre. No less a number than seven noblemen were in the carriage with him, among whom were the dukes of Epernon and Montbazou. The curtains of the coach were drawn up, not only on ac-

14th May.
Circumstances of
Henry's assassination.

(66) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 102, 103. Procès de Ravailiac, cited by Voltaire, vol. x. p. 227, 228. (67) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 104, 105. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 239. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 431—433. Voltaire, *ibid.* p. 221—229.

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 1610. —

count of the beauty and warmth of the weather; but, in order to enable the king to see the preparations making for the approaching ceremony. Two carts, one laden with wine, and the other with hay, having impeded the passage in a narrow street, the greater number of the domestics in attendance quitted the royal coach, with intent to rejoin it beyond the carts. Two only remained, one of whom advanced forwards, to clear the way; and the other was busied in adjusting a part of his dress. At this precise moment, Ravaillac, who during the embarrassment, had been able, unnoticed, to remark in what part of the carriage Henry was seated, mounted on one of the hind wheels, and drawing his knife, struck the king on the left breast. The instrument glanced on one of his ribs, without entering his body; but the assassin, perfectly collected in himself, repeated the blow. At the second stroke, the knife entered his heart; and intersected it with such violence, that the blood rushing impetuously upwards, suffocated him on the instant, before he could utter a single word (68).

He is carried
back to the
Louvre.

No sooner had the fatal accident taken place, than the noblemen present having quitted the carriage with precipitation, caused the curtains to be lowered, and ordered it to return to the Louvre. A cloak was thrown over the king, to conceal him from sight; and more effectually to deceive the people, a surgeon and wine were demanded, as if he had been only wounded; though such was the violent effusion of blood, that the whole street was stained with it, as he was carried back to the palace (69). Epernon, nevertheless, whose presence of mind seems never to have forsaken him,

(68) Hist. d'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 319—321. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 225, 226. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 88, 89. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 544, 545. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 433, 434. Tavannes, p. 279. (69) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 227. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 545.

having

having perceived among the attendants, the marquis ^{C H A P.} of Montferrand, dispatched him instantly forward, to ^{VIII.} order the troops on guard at the Louvre, to stand to ^{1610.} their arms, for the protection of the queen and Dauphin (70). A few moments afterwards, the body of the unfortunate Henry arriving, was taken out, carried up stairs, and laid, all bloody, on the same bed, where he had so recently sought in vain for repose. It remained in that situation during several hours, exposed to the view of those, whose curiosity or attachment to their deceased master, induced them to pay him the tribute of a last farewell (71).

Mary of Medecis, after some exclamations of ^{Measures of} grief at the untimely fate of her husband, appears to ^{the queen,} have easily suspended the course of her tears, in order ^{for securing} to take such measures for her own safety and the at- ^{the regency.} tainment of the regency, as the urgency of the occasion demanded. They were at once so able and so rapid, that historians observe, not without reason, they could never have been better concerted or executed, even if the event of the king's assassination had been foreseen (72). All the avenues leading to the convent of the Augustins, where the parliament of Paris then held its meetings, were occupied by various detachments of troops; and as that assembly was actually sitting, at the precise time when the king was assassinated, Mary commanded them by a mes- ^{The par-} sage notifying the catastrophe, instantly to deliberate ^{liament de-} on the question of delegating to her the regency. ^{liberates,} They obeyed; and Epernon, in order to accelerate their resolution, entered the hall where they were met, his sword undrawn in his hand. In the queen's name, he besought the president to notify their deter-

(70) Hist. d'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 322; 323.
tome i. p. 189. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 435.
p. 91.

(71) Bassomp. vol. i.
(72) De. Thou, vol. xv.

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VIII.
1610.
and declares
her regent.

mination, which was expected with the utmost impatience at the Louvre. The parliament, thus invested by an armed force, and propelled by Epernon, did not long hesitate in conferring on Mary the regency. We can never sufficiently wonder at the rapidity of these events. Henry was in perfect health at four o'clock in the afternoon; and by half an hour past six o'clock of the same day, however incredible the fact, his widow was declared regent, by the parliament. History presents no similar instance of so sudden a transfer of the supreme power, in virtue of the deliberations of a legislative body (73).

Seizure of
Ravaillac.

If any other fact of that extraordinary day can excite our equal astonishment, it is that not one of seven individuals who were in the coach with the king, should either have seen Ravaillac mount on the wheel, or have been able to interpose in time to save their sovereign. That cool and intrepid assassin continued to repeat his blows, even after he had given the mortal wound. In the tumult and consternation which ensued, it is believed that he might easily have effected his escape: but incapable of flight, and glorying in his crime, he remained motionless on the spot, holding in his hand the bloody instrument with which he had perpetrated the deed. On being questioned, he readily avowed the act, as meritorious. The fury of the attendants would have immediately sacrificed him, and swords were already drawn for the purpose: but Epernon, and the other noblemen present, mindful of the reflections cast upon those who had hastily put to death Clement, the assassin of Henry the Third, arrested the rage of the spectators, and of the popu-

(73) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 91—94. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 227—231. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 191, 192. Hist. d'Epernon, vol. ii. p. 320—345.

lace. Ravallac was conducted by some of the guards, to the palace of Retz, near the Louvre, where he remained during two days; and was from thence transferred to the "Conciergerie," previous to his interrogatory and trial (74).

C H A P.
VIII.

1610.

His imprisonment.

The province of the historian may be said in some measure to stop, with the narration of the circumstances attending the death of Henry the Fourth. His character stands little in need of elucidation, and less of panegyric. Whether we consider him as the conqueror of France, or whether we contemplate him in the more amiable light of the legislator and benefactor of his people, he equally excites our admiration. All the great qualities, which during many years of adversity, were exhibited by the king of Navarre, acquired new lustre, and attained to full maturity, on the throne of France. It may be reasonably doubted, whether in any age of the world, a prince has appeared among men, who united in himself more sublime endowments of every kind. We must necessarily regret, but we cannot deny, that they were obscured by material faults and weaknesses. His licentious amours subverted his private felicity, produced public calamity, and were equally contrary to decency, morality, and religion. Nor was his passion for play less violent, though its effects, as confined to himself, were less injurious. We may see in Sully, and in Bassompierre, how much the rage of gaming, encouraged by his example, pervaded the capital and the court. His desire of amassing treasures, though it did not originate in avarice, yet induced him to encourage his ministers, particularly Sully, in exacting from his subjects, contributions beyond their strength.

Character of
Henry the
Fourth.

His defects,
and faults.

(74) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. p. 238. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 89, 90. Hist. d'Épernon, vol. ii. p. 321, 322. Mezeray, vol. x.p. 434, 435.

C H A P. VIII. The institution of the "Paulette," which was a tax on the vacancy, or resignation of all legal employments, excited general murmurs, and was productive of the most scandalous venality in the department of the law (75).

1670.
Oppressive taxes.

His facility.

Accusations of ingratitude,

and of injustice.

It excites astonishment to reflect, that in the space of only nine years, from the peace with Savoy to his death, he was able to extinguish almost all the domestic and foreign incumbrances of the crown, which were immense; and to lay up in the Bastile above a million sterling. So large a sum in specie, could not have been taken out of the national circulation, without great injury to commercial transactions. He was accused, probably with reason, of yielding from his facility, to importunity, the rewards which ought only to have been extended to merit, talents, and virtue. Like all princes who have been extricated by the efforts of a party, from a state of adversity and depression, the imputation of ingratitude was laid to his charge. It was said that he forgot, and neglected his antient adherents, in order to enrich and elevate his enemies. But it must be remembered, that he was compelled to purchase the submission of the heads of the League; and we may doubt whether either his courage, his clemency, or his abjuration of the reformed religion would have extinguished that powerful faction, without the aid of money. Those who severely scrutinized his actions, asserted, that he winked and connived at acts of injustice in the tribunals of law; where the judges found complete impunity, provided that in return, they manifested a blind and implicit obedience to his edicts. There is, nevertheless, at least as much malignity as truth, in the accusation.

(75) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 310—314.

If from his defects, we turn our eyes to his virtues, we shall love and venerate his memory. His very name is almost become proverbial, to express the union of all that is elevated, amiable, and good in human nature. Such was his disdain of injuries, that it reached to heroism. The duke of Mayenne became his friend; and the young duke of Guise professed, and felt for him, the warmest degree of affectionate devotion (76). We know, that he expressly ordered Vitry to receive into the company of body guards, the soldier who had wounded him with a ball, at the combat of Aumale. Henry pointed him out to marshal D'Étrées, as the man mounted guard at the door of his coach (77). In the single instance of Biron, he remained inexorable; but it ought not to be forgotten, that Biron was at once guilty and obdurate. Henry neither put him to death from personal resentment, nor from mere considerations of state policy. The last necessity alone induced him to refuse pardon to a man, who aspired to independence; and whose projects were levelled at the succession in the house of Bourbon, as well as at the safety of the monarchy of France itself. Nothing can more strongly attest the fact, nor prove the repugnance with which he abandoned Biron to the sword of the law, than his answer to the noblemen who sued for the forgiveness of that criminal (78).

C H A P.
VIII.

1610.

His virtues.

Magnanimity, and forgiveness of injuries.

Love for his subjects.

His affection towards the inferior classes of his subjects, and in particular towards the peasants, whom he cherished and protected, as the most necessary, but the most oppressed and injured description of his people; drew upon him the benediction of the age in which he lived, and endears him to posterity. He was neither ignorant, nor did he affect so to be, that

(76) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 187, 188.

(77) Amours d'Henry IV.,

Recueil, p. 7, 8.

(78) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 70, 71.

C H A P. VII. he merited universal esteem. The sentiment involuntarily burst from him on various occasions. Only a few hours before he was assassinated, upon the morning of that day, as if by a secret warning of his destiny, he said to the duke of Guise, and to Bassompierre; "You do not know me now; but I shall die one of these days; and when you have lost me, you will know my worth, and the difference between me and other men (79)." "The kings, my predecessors," said he on another occasion, addressing himself to the deputies of the clergy, "have given you splendid words; but, I, with my grey jacket, will give you effects. I am all grey with out; but, all gold within (80)."

Expressions of his self-esteem.

Protection of letters.

Love of glory.

Moderation.

Educated in the field, and accustomed to fatigue, he delighted little in pursuits of literature; but he was neither unacquainted with polite letters, nor deficient in extending a liberal protection to men of genius. Du Perron, Matthieu, Scaliger, Casaubon, Sponde, and a number of other eminent writers, received pensions from the treasury, or were raised by Henry to eminent honours and dignities (81). The love of glory, and the desire of honourable fame, as distinct from, and as opposed to that passion which we commonly denominate ambition, was the predominant feature of his character. Louis the Fourteenth was perpetually and systematically occupied during his long reign, in acts of wanton and unjust rapacity, in order to extend the frontiers of his dominions. Henry, on the contrary, proposed to become the arbiter of Europe, by his magnanimous moderation. We see in the Memoirs of Sully, that he did not reserve a foot of land to augment France, from the conquests

(79) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 187, 188.

vol. i. p. 198.

(81) Amours d'Henry IV.,

(80) Journ. d'Hen. IV., Recueil, p. 24—26.

Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 395.

to be made by that vast confederacy, which he was on the point of putting into action, when assassinated. Artois, and French Flanders were to have been distributed in fiefs, to various individuals. Alsace, and the county of Burgundy, were destined for the Switzers. Roussillon and Cerdagne were left to Spain (82). All these provinces were gained by Richlieu, or by Louis the Fourteenth. It is true that he projected to acquire Lorrain, and the duchy of Savoy; but the former was in virtue of the marriage of the Dauphin to a princess of Lorrain: the latter was only contingent, and in the event of Charles Emanuel remaining peaceable possessor of the Milanese (83).

C H A P.
VIII.
1610.

If we would behold the portrait of Henry drawn by himself, we may see it in one of his letters to the same minister, Sully. It cannot be perused without emotions of pleasure. "Whenever," writes he, "the occasion shall present itself for executing those glorious designs, which you well know that I have long projected, you shall find that I will rather quit my mistresses, hounds, gaming, buildings, banquets, and every other recreation, than let pass the opportunity of acquiring honour; the principal sources of which, after my duty to God, my wife, my children, my servants, and my people, whom I love as my children, are, to attain the reputation of a prince tenacious of his faith and word; and to perform actions at the end of my days, which shall immortalize and crown them with glory and honour (84)." It is nevertheless, an incontrovertible, though a melancholy fact, that he was neither known nor beloved during his life, as he deserved. The intimate acquaintance which his contemporaries had with his infirmities and defects; to-

Portrait of
the king,
drawn by
himself.

He was not
beloved du-
ring his life.

(82) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 460, 461. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 407.
(83) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 79. (84) Sully, vol. ii. tome iii. p. 138,
139, letter of the "8th April, 1607."

C H A P.
VIII.

1610.

gether with the implacable animosity of the inveterate adherents of Spain and of the "League," traduced his character, and aggravated all his faults. But time, the test of truth, has fully unveiled him to mankind; and after the lapse of near two centuries, posterity has justly assigned him one of the highest places among those, whom Providence in its bounty sometimes raises up, for the felicity and ornament of the human race.

THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
F R A N C E.

The AGE of HENRY the FOURTH.

C H A P. I.

Nature and extent of the royal authority.—Powers, and privileges of the parliaments.—Finances.—Administration of Sully.—Revenues.—Taxes.—Oppression of the inferior orders.—Funds.—Coin.—Nature of military service.—Change, introduced under Henry the Fourth.—Improvements, made in the art of war.—Superiority of the Spanish troops.—Commerce.—Colonization.—Canals.—Manufactures.—Enlargement of Henry's views.—Condition of the peasants.—State of Paris.—Augmentation, and embellishment of the capital.—Police.—Effect of the civil wars, in enriching France.

THE genius of the French government under C H A P. I. Henry the Fourth, was not the less absolute, because, like that of Trajan in antiquity, it was directed by wisdom, and tempered by benignity. Absolute power, exercised by Henry the Fourth.

CHAP. I. Henry, in succeeding to the throne of his predecessors, manifested throughout his whole life, that he had likewise inherited all their claims and prerogatives. Instructed by the experience of the preceding reign, and attentive to the example set him by Francis the First; he never once assembled the States General, in the course of near twenty-one years. Tenacious of his authority, he carefully avoided every experiment, which might subject it to a discussion, or compromise its independence. If, pressed by necessity, surrounded by enemies, and destitute of resources for maintaining his troops, he ever had recourse to other means than the powers inherent in the crown; he well knew how to limit, direct, and extinguish such temporary interference. When, towards the close of the year 1596, he convoked an assembly at Rouen, for the purpose of imposing new taxes on the people; we may see in every step, that he only considered it as the agent of his will, and as the instrument of his pleasure. He took care, by the materials of its formation, by the limitation of its numbers, and by every precaution of a vigilant policy, to secure himself from those encroachments, to which Henry the Third had been compelled to submit, when he assembled the States General of France. That of the "Notables" in 1596, was of a much more harmless and tractable nature. Neither the nobility, nor the general mass of the nation, were in fact either present in, or represented by the delegates selected. We may see in Sully, that the members composing it, were principally taken out of the church, the magistracy, or the finance; and consequently, that they were as little open to the intrigues of faction, as they were likely to hazard the royal displeasure, by any uncourtly or inflexible adherence to the exclusive interests of the people (1).

Assembly,
 at Rouen.

(1) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 339. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 582.

It is curious to consider the principal features of Henry's conduct, on the only occasion when he may be said to have met the shadow of a popular assembly. He opened the meeting by a speech, calculated to make the deepest impression on his audience, from the affectionate sentiments of paternal solicitude for the welfare of his subjects, with which it was replete. In some of his expressions, he seemed to renounce every prerogative inimical to freedom of debate, or to general liberty. "I have not called you together," said he, "as my predecessors were used, merely to approve of my orders; but on the contrary, to receive your advice, to believe it, and to follow it: in a word, to put myself, as a ward, into your hands; a disposition not customary in kings, in grey beards, and in conquerors(2)." How little real meaning, nevertheless, was contained under these splendid professions, we learn from a contemporary writer. Henry having demanded of Gabrielle d'Etrées, his mistress, who had been present, concealed behind a piece of tapestry, at the ceremony, what she thought of his harangue; Gabrielle answered, that it appeared to her perfect, except in one passage, where he had talked of putting himself in wardship. "Ventre saint gris," exclaimed the king, "it is true; but I mean, with my sword by my side(3)."

C H A P.
I.
Henry's
conduct to-
wards them.

His speech.

Tractability
of the
"Notables."

Such was the spirit of acquiescence and submission which animated the "Notables," that Henry expressed no repugnance at their presuming to touch one of the most sacred branches of executive government, the expenditure of the public money. He even allowed them to amuse themselves, and to delude the people, by fabricating speculative plans of finance; and by forming a division of the revenue be-

(2) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 629.
tome ii. p. 145, 146.

(3) Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i.

C H A P. I. } tween the wants of the sovereign, and those of the state: or, in modern language, instituting a fund for the king's civil list and household. Instructed by Rosny, he soon entangled these ignorant financiers in the web of their own machinations; and compelled them to renounce any attempts of a similar kind, in future. When the assembly had fulfilled its intention, by imposing a new contribution of a sous, or half-penny in the livre, upon all articles of consumption or merchandize, without exception, the king transferred the meeting to Paris; where they may be said to have dissolved in their own weakness. So total was the oblivion into which they sunk, that the precise time of their extinction or dissolution, is not marked in any of the contemporary writers (4).

Dissolution
of the as-
sembly.

Henry's
treatment
of the parli-
ament of
Paris,

on the edict
of Nantes.

Towards the parliaments, and peculiarly towards that of Paris, the first in dignity and consideration, Henry manifested on numerous occasions, how much he considered them as only the organ of his commands. He mitigated, it is true, the severity of his orders, by adopting the language of request; but if any remonstrance or delay was interposed, he speedily assumed a tone of authority. In 1599, when an opposition arose in the parliament of Paris, to verifying the celebrated edict of Nantes given in the preceding year, and under which the Protestants for near a century, enjoyed toleration; the king commanded the attendance of the members, in his closet. "You see me here in my cabinet," said he to them, "where I address myself to you, not as the kings my predecessors were used, in royal robes, and in a habit of ceremony; nor as a prince who gives audience to ambassadors; but dressed in my ordinary cloaths, as a father of a family, who would converse with his children." He then conjured them to register,

(4) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 338—342. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 18—25.

and publish the edict: he even condescended to prove ^{C H A P. I.} its utility, justice, and necessity, by many cogent arguments. Changing nevertheless his language, when he saw occasion to mingle threats with his persuasions; "I know," added he, "that there have been parties ^{His men-} "in the parliament, and that seditious preachers have ^{ces.} "been excited: I will put good order to those people, without waiting for it from you."—"I will shorten by the head all such as venture to foment faction: I have leaped over the walls of cities: I shall not be terrified by barricades."—"I have made the edict: let it be observed. My will should stand in the place of reason: it ought to be executed, not interpreted. I am king; as such I now speak, and will be obeyed (5)." It must be owned, that if this be not the tone of despotism, it is difficult to say what can be so denominated. The parliament retired; obeyed, and verified the edict.

Nor was the power of the crown less arbitrary over ^{His power in imposing taxes.} the property of the people, than in enacting regulations of civil, or religious policy. When Henry undertook to retake Amiens from the Spaniards in 1597, he issued several edicts, imposing taxes of so severe a nature, that the parliament of Paris refused to register them; and they waited on the king in a body, to offer him their reasons for such a conduct. He received them in his bed; but far from yielding to their remonstrances, he treated them with injurious language; and even so far forgot his own dignity, and the respect due to the president whom he addressed, as to give the lye to that magistrate. On their persisting for near four weeks, in their opposition, he repaired in person to the hall where they held their deliberations; harangued them with brevity; and ordered them instantly to register the pecuniary edicts in ques-

(5) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 375—379. Jour. d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 206, 207. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 210—213.

C H A P. I. tion. His presence, and the public necessity of the time, extinguished all further resistance, and procured their publication (6).

Compulsory modes of exacting money. Every violent and oppressive mode of taxing, or rather, of plundering the people, practised under the reign of Henry the Third, was repeated by his successor; but the difference of the circumstances in which the two princes exerted the same acts of power, totally altered their effect. Minions, courtiers, and all the vermin of a profligate and licentious palace, devoured by anticipation, the produce of the accumulated taxes, under the last king of the house of Valois. Henry the Fourth expended with frugality, in defence of the nation, the sums which he, reluctantly, exacted. In both cases, the prerogative stood in the place of law, and surmounted every attempt made for its limitation. Compulsory loans were enforced in 1597, during the siege of Amiens. The king sent to all the principal members of the parliament, as well as to the individuals reputed most wealthy, throughout the capital; and demanded of them sums, proportioned to their supposed ability. They complied; but we do not precisely know what was the amount of the money thus borrowed, or extorted (7). Even the rents, or annuities issuing out of the town-hall, from which many of the wealthy Parisians derived their principal means of subsistence, and which had always been considered as a sort of sacred property; were not exempted. In December, 1596, we find the king coming expressly to Paris, for the purpose of seizing on so inconsiderable a sum as four thousand crowns. He went in person to the town-house, made a short speech, ordered a citizen, named Carel, who had only presumed to draw up a petition in favour of the proprietors or annuitants, to

Loans:

Rents of the town-hall,

seized by the king.

(6) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 162—165. p. 166.

(7) *Ibid.*

be sent prisoner to St. Germain; and menaced with the Bastille, the first man who should presume to hold seditious language on the subject (8). Nothing can more forcibly display, at once the necessities, and the power of the crown. The people murmured; but did not venture to resist the royal will. Enquiries into the malversations of the financiers; and the creation of new, or supernumerary and useless offices in the courts of justice, or in the collection of the revenues; were, as in the preceding reign, two common and ruinous modes, of replenishing the treasury (9).

Notwithstanding these severe and oppressive acts of prerogative, the parliaments, and in an especial manner, that of Paris; independent of their jurisdiction, as courts of civil and criminal law, enjoyed and exercised no inconsiderable portion of legislative, or political power. In every period when the royal authority was either suspended by rebellion, or extinguished by death, they arrogated, and their title was recognized, the legitimate right of naming regents, or lieutenants of the crown. The declaration of the council of union, in 1589, constituting the cardinal of Bourbon king, by the name of Charles the Tenth, and appointing the duke of Mayenne his vice regent, as head of the League; was not stamped with authenticity, till published by the parliament (10). In like manner, cardinal Cajetan, the legate of Sixtus the Fifth, in 1590, presented his credentials to the same body, on his arrival at Paris, as to the only constitutional representatives of the French nation (11). To their magnanimous and patriotic exertions in 1593, was in a great degree, due the preservation of

C H A P.

I.

Power, arrogated by the parliaments.

Extending over the succession to the crown.

(8) Jour. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 147. (9) Villeroy, vol. iii. p. 216. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 137, 138. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. p. 165, 166: and vol. ii. p. 200, 201. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 324, and p. 553, 554. (10) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 6. (11) Ibid. p. 10.

C. H. A. P. I. the crown in the family of Bourbon, and the final extinction of every project for transferring it to the infant of Spain. We cannot peruse without emotions of pleasure and admiration, the remonstrance, presented on the occasion to the duke of Mayenne; which breathes the generous spirit of the best ages of the Roman senate. Unsubdued by the threats of the duke, who prepared to annul their decree for preserving the inviolability of the Salic law, and the succession in a native, Catholic prince; the members swore to obtain its observance, at the hazard of their lives (12). In the following year, they ventured even on measures still more decisive, and peremptorily enjoined the Spanish garrison to quit the capital (13).

Titles, assumed by the parliament.

The parliament of Paris assumed, as a collective body, the titles of "tutors of the kingdom, and fathers of the people, interposed between the crown and the subject (14)." Nor were these epithets merely nominal, or destitute of solid foundation and efficacy. If on some occasions, they were unable to extend protection, they appear rarely to have been deficient in endeavours for the purpose. Against the insolent encroachments of the ecclesiastical order, all the parliaments seem to have exerted equal vigilance and resistance. It would be easy to cite numerous examples under the reign of Henry the Fourth, in which they opposed at once the prejudices of a superstitious age, and the immunities of a privileged class of men (15). When the bishop of Senlis, in 1598, unrestrained by gratitude for the pardon of his past rebellion, presumed to hold language subversive of all obedience to the sovereign, the parliament compelled him to appear in the hall appropriated to their

Their opposition to the clergy.

(12) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 780—787. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 268—271. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 173—175. (13) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 298—301. (14) Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 546. (15) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 480—490; and vol. xiii. p. 29, 30.

meetings;

meetings; there, bareheaded, to retract his tenets, C H A P.
 as detestable and impious. He was moreover, fined I.
 in the sum of fifty crowns; and interdicted from Instances
 preaching during a limited time. The bishop, from of it.
 a reliance on the sanctity of his episcopal character,
 having presumed to present himself in the sacerdotal
 dress and ornaments; the parliament, indignant at
 his conduct, caused him to be ignominiously stripped
 by one of the ushers (16). In 1602, they acted
 with equal firmness towards the bishop of Angers,
 who had infringed the established rights of the eccle-
 siastics of his diocese, and attempted innovations of a
 dangerous nature (17). The parliament of Bour-
 deaux, nearly at the same period, maintained no less
 vigorously, their own rights, and those of the peo-
 ple, against the cardinal of Sourdis, archbishop of
 that city (18).

Such was the jealous vigilance of the parliament of Jealousy,
 Paris, to prevent any defalcation of its just authority, and vigi-
 that it seems never to have relaxed; even on the most lance of
 unimportant articles. Henry having, in 1602, in that body.
 order to stop the rage of duelling, instituted a tribu-
 nal; to which contests between gentlemen might be
 referred, and which court was composed of the con-
 stable and marshals of France; it only obtained the
 sanction of the parliament, with a specific reserva-
 tion; that the causes amenable to its jurisdiction,
 should be limited rigorously to matters of honour
 and punctilio (19). In many of the decrees, or re-
 gulations issued by the parliament, it is not easy to
 discriminate accurately its legislative, from its judicial
 functions. They are even sometimes mingled in so
 intricate a manner, as to leave it doubtful, whether
 they should be considered as the decisions of a court Confusion of
 their legisla-
 tive, and
 judicial
 functions.

(16) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tom. ii. p. 196.
 vol. xiv. p. 119—123.
 p. 110.

(18) Ibid. p. 113—116.

(17) De Thou;
 (19) Ibid.

C H A P. I. of civil and criminal law, or as the institutions of a deliberative political assembly.

Finances.

Their ruined state.

Poverty of the king!

The finances of France under Henry the Fourth, form one of the most interesting and instructive objects of historical attention and discussion. In the annals of modern nations, there have been few, if any examples, of a country rescued by a systematic pursuit of wise and economical measures, from so profound an abyss of debt. At his accession, the king might be said to possess neither domain, nor revenues: both were anticipated and mortgaged by the thoughtless facility, or profusion of his predecessor. The army was retained under the standard, avowedly by the hope of plunder, and neither received, nor expected pay. Bread alone was distributed among the French soldiery, every day; and the foreign troops were defrayed by pecuniary contributions, levied expressly for their subsistence, from the captured towns (20). The personal necessities of the king himself were such, as to reduce him to adopt the most humiliating measures, in order to satisfy his wants. D'Aubigné declares, that in September 1590, Henry, at the head of his forces, and opposed to the duke of Parma, "having been without bread for his own table, went to beg a dinner at that of the superintendent of his finances, the marquis D'O; where he found three dishes delicately dressed. The company reluctantly made room for him, and his attendants (21)." Four years afterwards, during the siege of Laon, his necessities were, if possible, still greater (22).

It was not till after the treaty of Vervins in 1598, that he began to taste any of the enjoyments commonly annexed to his station. If we would peruse the most eloquent, though simple narration of his

(20) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 69. Davila, p. 121. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 335.

(21) Ibid. p. 241.

(22) Journal d'Henry IV.,

vol. i. tome ii. p. 37.

distress

distress in 1596, we have it under his own hand. C H A P. I.
 In a letter to Rosny, dated on the fifteenth of April His letter to Rosny.
 in that year, when he was ready to open the campaign
 with the Spaniards; he says, "I wish to acquaint you
 with the state to which I am reduced: it is such,
 that though almost in presence of the enemy, I
 have neither a horse on which I can engage, nor a
 coat of armour that I can wear. My shirts are all
 torn, my doublets in holes at the elbow; and even
 my very kitchen-utensils are overturned. For
 these last two days, I dine and sup with one and
 another; my stewards assuring me that they have
 no longer the means of providing my table, as
 they have not received any money for above six
 months. Judge, if I deserve to be thus treated,
 and if I ought any longer to suffer that my finan-
 ciers and treasurers make me die of hunger, while
 their own tables are served with every delicacy(23)."
 Charles the Second, after his flight from Worcester,
 scarcely was reduced to greater extremities during
 his exile, when soliciting the bounty of Mazarin,
 and of Don Louis de Haro. From the camp be-
 fore Amiens, in the subsequent year, Henry writes Other letters to the same minister.
 again to the same minister. "The officers will no
 longer serve, for want of money: give some di-
 rections likewise, about my stables, and as to what
 is necessary for my cloaths; for I am absolutely
 naked(24)." In another of his letters to Rosny,
 he beseeches of him to repay to his mistress Ga-
 brielle, the sum of two thousand crowns, which his
 urgent necessities had compelled him to borrow of
 her(25). We can hardly conceive any state more
 destitute; and we feel a degree of involuntary admi-
 ration for a prince, whose courage and magnanimity
 sustained him under circumstances of such depres-
 sion.

(23) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 309.

(24) Ibid. p. 395.

(25) Ibid. p. 366.

C H A P.

I.

Superin-
tendence
of D'O.

His death.

Council of
revenue.Rosny, made
superin-
tendent.Effects of
that mea-
sure.

During the first five years of his reign, necessity and respect for the memory of his predecessor Henry the Third, induced him to leave the exclusive management of the finances, in the hands of the marquis D'O; one of the most profligate, rapacious, and extravagant courtiers of the age. His decease in 1594, liberated the king from the servitude and poverty in which D'O had held him. Sancy, who had rendered the most eminent services to the crown, and whose talents embraced the science of finance as well as arms; flattered himself with succeeding to the vacant post. But the enmity of Gabrielle d'Estreés, frustrated his hopes; and Henry, disgusted with a single superintendent, entrusted the care of the revenue to a board, or council, at the head of which was nominally placed the prince of Conti. Finding nevertheless, after some years, that the incapacity, venality, and tardiness of the commissioners, left him in equal, or greater embarrassments than before; he determined to delegate to Rosny the sole, and exclusive management of the finances (26). It was not till the year 1597, a short time previous to the memorable siege of Amiens, that he finally executed a resolution so beneficial to himself, and to the state. It produced a total alteration in the French revenue, and forms an epocha in its history. We never can sufficiently admire the discernment, firmness, and wisdom of Henry, in selecting such a minister, and in maintaining him against all the cabals of powerful and discontented men, with whom the court abounded. On the other hand, we are not less deeply impressed with veneration for Rosny's integrity, incorruptibility, and inflexible severity, in so exposed a situation. It required the rare combination of such a prince, and such a statesman, in order to extricate the crown and

(26) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 190—193. and p. 325—327, and p. 352:

the kingdom, from a state of complicated and intricate ruin. C H A P.
I.

How numerous, and of what description were the obstacles to every operation of finance, we may see in the writings, or memoirs of that illustrious minister. Princes, ladies, ecclesiastics, both Catholic and Hugonot; men of all ranks, attacked him, and endeavoured to circumvent, to intimidate, or to corrupt him. But his principles of honour and loyalty, the exhortations of his master, and his consciousness that Henry would reward his labours by every donation in the power of a grateful sovereign to bestow; supported him under exertions of body and of mind, almost above the force of human nature. In the course of near twelve years, that he may be said to have enjoyed the supreme and uncontroled management of the finances, that chaos gradually assumed a regular, and a beautiful appearance; emancipated itself from the incumbrances, with which it was oppressed; and became the most solid support of the throne. Impedi-
ments,

to his ope-
rations.

In 1597, every part of the domain, as well as the receipts arising from the ordinary revenue, were either engaged to foreign princes, in payment of sums borrowed during the civil wars; or mortgaged to the great nobility, and adherents of the League, as the purchase of their fidelity and submission; or made over to military officers, as the reward of past services; or lastly, retained by the receivers and treasurers, who made out of their produce, advances of money to the crown (27). If all the debts, contracted by Henry the Fourth before the treaty of Vervins, within and without the kingdom, had been immediately discharged in full; his neat annual revenue remaining, would not have exceeded seventy-five State of the
finances in
1597.

(27) Chron. Noven. vol. ii. p. 457, — 458. Tavannes, p. 312, 313. Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 403.

thousand

C H A P. I. thousand pounds sterling (28). Such were the enormous abuses practised, that we find almost all the members of the council of finance, were in their own persons, the purchasers and the holders of the various branches of revenue. If they allowed others to participate in the spoils, it was not till their consent was bought; and the highest officers of state, even the chancellor himself, did not blush to accept pecuniary considerations, for selling, or rather for plundering the treasury (29).

First steps of Rosny. Rosny began by ascertaining the frauds committed in the value affixed to the taxes farmed of the crown, which he found to produce double the sum at which they were rated in the reports made by the council. Having remitted all arrears of every kind, due from the subject to the Exchequer, up to the preceding year; he issued a peremptory injunction to the inferior receivers and collectors throughout France, to bring to the treasury the sums respectively paid into their hands. They were previously accustomed to carry those receipts to the great farmers general, who retained, or alienated a considerable part (30).

Resumption of mortgaged taxes. In defiance of obloquy and clamour, he next resumed the assignments of eleven, or twelve principal taxes, mortgaged to various sovereigns, and to some of the nobility; giving to each creditor, in place of the tax so taken away, an order on the treasury for the sum, at which the imposition had been originally rated. By this single alteration, he instantly augmented the annual revenue near three hundred thousand crowns, without doing injury or injustice to any of the individuals (31).

We may judge how great were the frauds committed, by the instance of the constable Montmo-

(28) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 428.

(29) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 328; and 331—333, and p. 335—337, and p. 353, 354, and p. 403; and tome ii. p. 425.

(30) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 402.

(31) Ibid.

p. 403.

rency,

rency, who owned that he only received four thousand, C H A P.
I.
 five hundred crowns a year, from an imposition in Languedoc, of which he was possessed previous to the resumption made by Rosny. That minister farmed it for twenty-five thousand crowns, immediately afterwards (32). In 1603, the count of Soissons obtained from Henry, whose ignorance upon matters of trade and finance rendered him easily the dupe of artifice and importunity; a donation of the profits to arise from a duty of seven-pence half-penny, upon every bale of linen coming into, or going out of the kingdom. The count estimated the annual value of the present, at no more than four, to five thousand crowns: but Rosny having shewn the king by accurate calculations, that, besides the detriment to commerce from such an imposition, it would raise near a hundred and fifty thousand crowns a year, Henry revoked the grant (33).

Augmentation produced by it.

Monopolies, exclusive patents, and taxes, were solicited by the nobility and ladies of the court, for their private emolument, under Henry the Fourth, with at least as much importunity, as they had been during the reign of his predecessor: but happily for the people, not with equal success. Rosny, by his remonstrances, prevented a list of more than twenty from being published at one time. The marchioness of Verneuil was one of the suitors, and sixth in priority among the names inscribed (34). The queen herself did not disdain to accept bribes, in order to facilitate the registering and passing taxes. She received a sum in 1604, considerably exceeding three thousand pounds sterling, with the privity of Rosny, to obtain the publication of an edict for augmenting the salt tax in Languedoc (35).

Taxes, solicited by the courtiers.

Bribes.

(32) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 403.
 Ibid. p. 178.

(33) Ibid. p. 177, 178.

(34)

(35) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 231.

Such

C H A P.

I.

Resources,
called out by
Rofny.

Debts of the
crown, li-
quidated,

to foreign
states,

and to the
League.

Such was the rapid and incredible effect of a system of enlightened œconomy, rigidly prosecuted during a few years, that it dispelled all the darkness which covered the finances. France, well administered, soon recovered from the confusion and oppression caused by civil war, added to dissipation and relaxation of government. It is not without a degree of incredulity and astonishment, that we contemplate the vast resources called out by Rofny. In the space of only eight years from his appointment to the superintendance of the finances, he informs us, that he had liquidated the sum of three hundred and seven millions of livres, due either to foreign states, or to the principal members of the League, or to various individuals within the kingdom. We cannot estimate it at less than thirteen millions of pounds sterling (36). The debt owing to Elizabeth, queen of England, exceeded two hundred and eighty thousand pounds; and that due to the Swiss cantons, was five times greater (37). Henry was necessitated, in order to disarm the numerous chiefs of the League, to pay them not less than the aggregate sum of one million, three hundred thousand pounds (38). Villars alone demanded and obtained, besides a long list of employments and gratifications, the incredible sum of fifty thousand pounds for the payment of his debts, and full two thousand, five hundred pounds, annual pension (39). If the relative value of money in that age, as compared with the present, be considered, we shall be lost in contemplating the magnitude of these sums. Yet as early as 1604, Rofny had already laid up above a million sterling in specie, and lodged it in the Bastile (40).

(36) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 348.
348, 349.
ii. p. 203.

(37) Ibid. tome i. p. 134.

(38) Ibid. p.
(40) Sully, vol. i. tome

The "Gabelle," or tax upon salt, in the same ^{C H A P. I.} year, was farmed at no less than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds (41). In January, 1610, a ^{Treasure, amassed by Roisny.} few months before the king's assassination, he possessed in ready money, near thirty-seven millions of livrés, which we may estimate at more than a million, five hundred thousand pounds (42). No European prince of that age, could boast of a similar treasure; and it is difficult to say, what limits could have been opposed to the power of Henry, aided by such a minister, if he had not imposed a restraint on his own ambition, and manifested a desire to extend his empire by moderation, rather than by force. Philip the Third succeeded to an exhausted, disjointed, and impoverished monarchy, overwhelmed with a vast debt, and from which he possessed neither talents, nor exertion, to extricate Spain. Elizabeth, queen of England, effected all the enterprizes of her reign; by frugality: but, the paucity of her revenues incapacitated her for accumulating treasures. James, her successor, with more extended dominions, found himself involved in augmented embarrassments; which the profusion of his character was calculated to encrease. Rodolph the Second was, it is true, rich; but the inaptitude of that emperor, for all public business; the dissensions in the imperial family; and the contempt into which he was personally fallen; rendered him unable to make effectual opposition to the attack on the house of Austria, meditated by Henry the Fourth. Europe was unquestionably, at the eve of a vast revolution, when his assassination took place.

It was not possible for human wisdom or ingenuity ^{Severity of the taxes.} to produce, in the limited space of only twelve years, alterations at once so radical and so beneficial, in the revenue and finances of France, without im-

(41) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 276.

(42) Ibid. p. 471—473.

C H A P. I. posing severe burthens on the people. Rosny, however meritorious in his general conduct, seems always to have had for his primary object, to elevate and enrich his master: the protection and alleviation of the subject, though uppermost in his professions, were subordinate to the aggrandizement of the crown. He admits himself, in some measure, the justice of the accusation (43). Among the most unpopular taxes, invented and levied, was that denominated the

The "Pancarte."
"carte."

"Pancarte." It had been granted for only three years, by the "Notables," assembled in 1596, at Rouen; and it consisted in an imposition of a sou, or halfpenny in the livre, on every commodity, at its entrance into a town. Lists of the duties to be taken, were affixed at the gates of cities, and excited universal discontent. The tax was arbitrarily continued, after the expiration of the term for which it had been originally given, though the urgent necessity no longer existed. Exasperated by a treatment so severe, the inhabitants of Guienne and Languedoc, in 1602, refused to pay the "Pancarte;" and at Limoges, as well as at Rochelle, open insurrections took place. The presence of the king, accompanied by a tribunal of justice, which made some examples of the most mutinous, quelled indeed, the sedition; while Rosny induced the people of Rochelle to submit ostensibly, to the imposition. But Henry found it expedient to abolish the tax, before the close of the same year. (44).

Its effects,

and abolished.

The "Paulette."
"lette."

If the "Pancarte" gave rise to such dangerous commotions, the "Paulette" was not less pernicious, by its operation on morals and justice. It originated in 1604, and was attributed exclusively to Rosny. Previous to that time, all officers of civil and criminal judicature throughout France, might resign their

(43) Sully, vol. ii. tome ii. p. 241. (44) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 231, 232. Chron. Septen. p. 284. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 382.

posts, and substitute any other person in their place: C H A P. I.
 but, in order that the resignation should be valid, it Its nature,
 was requisite that the individual quitting, should sur-
 vive his surrender, forty days; otherwise the right of
 nominating to the vacancy reverted to the crown.
 Rosny, with a view to derive a considerable accession
 of wealth to the treasury, issued an order, by which all
 legal offices and employments were assured to the
 widow and heirs at large of the late possessor, on the
 annual payment to the king of the sixtieth part of the
 sum, at which the office was valued. The natural
 and inevitable effect of such a regulation, was to
 render the highest judicial situations at once venal and
 hereditary. The persons occupying them, no longer and pernicious consequences,
 felt any dependance on, or any apprehension of the
 sovereign authority. Neither virtue, talents, nor in-
 dustry could conduct to legal dignities: money alone
 procured them, and perpetuated them in certain fa-
 milies; or transferred them as an object of sale.
 Those who purchased, necessarily conceived them-
 selves free to sell, not only their place; but justice
 itself, in order to recover the sum which it had origi-
 nally cost to acquire possession. De Thou declaims on morals.
 with honest indignation, against an institution, which
 degraded the sanctity and majesty of the laws, per-
 petuated chicane, and prostituted to ignorance the
 honours and rewards, from which genius or merit
 were excluded. It is impossible to justify, and still
 more difficult to approve the motives, which induced
 Rosny to propose, and Henry to promulgate, an
 edict of such a tendency (45).

One of the circumstances characteristic of the
 period under our consideration, and which excites as Inequality of the taxes,
 much amazement as concern, is the notorious in-
 equality with which the pecuniary burthens were

(45) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 324—326. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 310—314.
 Jour. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 93, 94.

imposed.

C H A P.

I.

in Dau-
phinè.Decision on
the appeal of
the people.Wealth of
the farmers
general.

imposed. While the privileged orders, peculiarly the clergy and the nobles, were exempted from almost all personal contributions, except such as held to the feudal system of military vassalage; the wretched peasant was reduced to indigence, trampled on, and loaded with taxes beyond his ability to furnish. In some provinces, this exemption of the upper classes, and oppression of the inferior, was so tyrannical, as to exceed the patience of men, however inured to despotism. The inhabitants of Dauphinè suffered, in an especial degree, from it; and they ventured to appeal to the justice of the crown, against the intolerable hardships of every kind, under which they groaned. The cause, after a delay of many years, was solemnly argued before the council; and sentence was pronounced in the king's presence. It took place in 1602. All the exemptions, enjoyed by the higher orders, were confirmed; and the people, or third estate, were condemned to pay exclusively every contribution levied throughout the province, on goods, cattle, and articles of merchandize. The profession of the law entitled to the same privileges, as the rank of a noble, or as the ecclesiastical character, in virtue of this decree. We can never sufficiently reprobate the spirit of injustice which dictated it; nor enough lament the cruel tyranny exercised on the husbandman, the mechanic, and all the lower class of subjects. It required nevertheless, the exertions of a government, as well established and as vigorous as that of Henry, to enforce obedience to his edict, and to prevent an insurrection in Dauphinè (46).

During his whole reign, the great contractors, receivers, and farmers general, were objects of continual obloquy, and frequent prosecution. Their

(46) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 116—119. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 192—205.

prodigious

prodigious wealth, the luxury in which they lived, and their excesses of every kind, naturally exposed them to popular indignation (47). Zamet, one of the most distinguished, and with whom Henry lived on terms of uncommon familiarity; entitled himself, in the contract of marriage drawn up for his daughter, "lord of eight hundred and fifty thousand crowns (48)." Repeated and almost periodical enquiries were set on foot, between 1597 and 1605, in order to compel these opulent defaulters, to refund their acquisitions. But, the riches which they had amassed, formed their best protection against punishment; and by purchasing the favour of the crown with a small part of their depredations, they quietly retained the remainder. Such was the invariable issue of all the commissions, instituted for bringing them to justice; which might in reality, be considered only as inventions for raising money, in moments of exigency (49).

C H A P.
I.
Zamet.

Enquiries
into their
conduct.

Insecurity
of public
property.

If any species of public property in that age, could be esteemed sacred and protected by the national faith, it was the interest of the sums advanced on the mortgage of the revenues, and paid by the town-hall of Paris. Yet we have seen, that in 1596, Henry seized on four thousand crowns of those funds (50). Philip the second, some years before, as a powerful inducement to the States, to elect him "protector of the kingdom," specifically engaged "to place in Paris, a sum equal to eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, as a security for the future discharge of the arrears payable at the town-hall (51)." It appears, that about fifty-two thousand pounds annually were levied the church, for

(47) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 261, 262. (48) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 144. Confession de Sancy, liv. ii. chap. i. Remarques, 326.
(49) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 324, and p. 443, 449. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 59, and p. 165, 166. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 28. Villeroi, vol. iii. p. 216.
(50) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 147.
(51) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 287.

C H A P. I. the sole and exclusive purpose of paying the creditors
 Taxes, levied on the clergy. In 1596, the ecclesiastics endeavoured to elude so heavy a contribution : but the king, far from excusing them, obliged the assembly of the clergy to engage for the continuance of it during ten years, in order to pacify the inhabitants of the metropolis (52).
 Enquiry, projected by Rosny, Rosny, in 1604, made some regulations, with a view to facilitate the payments ; and at his suggestion, Henry attempted not long afterwards, to institute an enquiry into the origin and validity of the respective annuities, or debts. It was intended to reimburse such as were proved to be fair and legally contracted ; to suppress the defective, or unjust ones ; and to reduce the interest of all the annuitants, from ten per cent. to six and a quarter ; the rate at which interest for money had been fixed by an edict, issued in 1601. A court composed of magistrates, or persons of eminence in the law, was appointed for the purpose. The king was compelled nevertheless, to abandon a project, which, whatever advantages it might promise to the crown and to the nation, must have been obtained by the injury of a number of individuals, and a breach of public faith. A sedition was on the point of breaking out in Paris, if the government had not appeased it, by assurances of stopping all further proceedings against the owners, or possessors of money, issuing out of the town-hall (53). No similar attempt was renewed under Henry the Fourth.

and dropped.

Coin.

The current coin appears throughout his whole reign, to have been in a state of great debasement ; and the evil was too inveterate, to be easily redressed. During the anarchy of the civil wars, governors of castles and towns arrogated with impunity, the right of striking copper pieces, with which the kingdom

(52) Chron. Nov. iii. p. 598.

205. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 444—446.

(53) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. 23, and p. 333—335.

Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 141, 142.

was inundated (54). Mendoza, the Spanish embassador, during the siege of Paris in 1590, caused vast quantities of half sous or farthings, to be coined, which he distributed by handfuls to the populace. They bore the impress of the arms of Philip the Second, and continued long in circulation (55). Almost all the gold, seems to have been that of Spain; pistoles, ducats, and doubloons. We scarcely find mention made of any other (56). In 1595, such was the deficiency of gold and silver coin, that Villeroi informs us, he was obliged to employ seventeen carts or waggons, in order to transport a sum of about twelve thousand pounds, from Lyons to Dijon, for the payment of the royal forces. The whole remittance was in copper (57). During the siege of Amiens, two years afterwards, Rosny employed seventy waggons, to carry about sixty thousand pounds, from Paris to the royal camp; the far greater part of the money being of the same metal (58).

C H A P.

I.

Spanish money.

Want of gold, or silver coin.

It was an object of that minister's incessant and vigilant attention, during his whole administration, to prevent the transport of specie, particularly gold, out of the kingdom. He made some seizures of considerable magnitude, before he could check the practice (59). In 1602, more effectually to counteract it, he raised the value of the coin. The half-crown was increased from thirty pence, to thirty-two pence halfpenny, and the other inferior coin, in proportion. No foreign money, except that of Spain, was admitted in circulation (60). At the same time he induced the king to adopt another financial measure, the effect of which appears to have been very disputable. The edict of Henry the Third, pro-

Augmentation of the value of money.

Change in the mode of accounts.

(54) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 24. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. v. p. 384.

(55) Satyre Menip. vol. ii. Remarques, p. 362. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 166.

(56) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 120; and tome ii. p. 19, and p. 23. (57) Villeroi, vol. iii. p. 193.

(58) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 331. (59) Ibid:

tome ii. p. 19. (60) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 383. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 19, and p. 54.

mulgated

CHAPTER
I.

mulgated in 1577, enjoining that all accounts should be kept, and all pecuniary transactions made by "ecus," or half-crowns, was abrogated; and the "livre," an imaginary money, of about ten-pence halfpenny value, was substituted in its stead. De Thou, whose testimony must be regarded as much more impartial than Rosny's, arraigns the solidity of the principles, upon which so essential a change was introduced; and attributes to it a number of very pernicious consequences. It is difficult to determine on the respective validity of the arguments, or assertions (61). The mode of reckoning by livres, has subsisted invariably during the course of near two centuries, which have already elapsed. Even the present convention, an assembly which has systematically torn up all the institutions of antiquity; which has given new names to towns and cities; divided France by new geographical denominations; and renounced the Christian era, in order to date from the commencement of the republic: yet hitherto, either has not ventured, or has not chosen to make any alteration in the received practice of keeping accounts, or in the name and impression of the current coin.

Reflexions
on the mea-
sure.

Nature of
military ser-
vice.

The nature of military service underwent an efficient and radical, though a silent and progressive change, under Henry the Fourth. During the period of the civil wars, and of those carried on against Philip the Second; it held to the principles of the feudal system. The king was followed to the field by his nobility; who served from loyalty, and quitted the camp at discretion; or retired, when domestic avocations demanded their presence. Their vassals and retainers constituted the strength of the armies. Stipendiaries from Switzerland and Germany; and auxiliary troops from England or Holland, aug-

(61) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 55. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 111, 112. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 383, 384. Journal d'Hén. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 201, 202.

mented

mented the national forces, and might be, with more propriety, considered as depending on the sovereign. C H A P.
I.
 The wants, disorders, insubordination, and mortality, among these undisciplined and heterogeneous masses, impeded their operations, and incapacitated them for enterprizes of duration. They were neither paid, clothed, or subsisted, except as the accidents of war, and the opportunities of plunder afforded means. We find them frequently described as nearly in a state of nudity, wanting common food or necessaries, and only prolonging a precarious existence, by pillage and violence (62). De Thou expressly declares, that the king was principally compelled to withdraw his forces before Paris in 1590, on the approach of the duke of Parma, "because his infantry was almost naked, without hats, shoes, or shirts; and their necessities of every kind such, that for a little money, they would not only permit convoys of provisions to enter the place, but even privately aid, and facilitate their introduction." Similar, or greater distress existed among the troops of Lefdiguieres, in 1594, and 1596. Contagious distempers, famine, and wounds, soon diminished the most flourishing armies. Distempers. No hospitals, and few medical aids were known. The first regular hospital, properly so denominated, seen in France as attached to an army, and maintained by the crown, owed its establishment to the humanity and precautions of Rosny in 1597, when Henry besieged Amiens (63).

Previous to the treaty of Vervins in 1598, no large bodies of men were ever retained under the standard. Difficulty of retaining them. It was impracticable to prevent their disbanding, when assailed by hunger, nakedness, and the incle-

(62) Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 437—439. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 381. Sully, i. tome i. p. 359, and p. 362. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 69, and p. 147, and p. 186-7; and vol. xii. p. 327, and p. 612. Davila, p. 1088. (63) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 353; and tome ii. p. 429. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 400.

C H A P. I. mency of the elements. The nobility, impelled by honour, hurried to participate in the glory and danger of an action; and abandoned the camp with the same precipitation, when the occasion was past. Every year furnishes examples of this fact. Even on the stay of the foreign and mercenary forces, no reliance could be placed; though they were usually better paid, and indulged in many excesses, in order to attach them to the service. Yet they frequently quitted the prince in whose employ they had enlisted, plundered the sutlers, imprisoned their commanding officers, and either marched back into their own country, or entered into the opposite party (64). During the wars of the League, between 1589, and 1595 when every effort was made on both sides, and when Spain, Germany, England, Flanders, and Italy, sent assistance to one or the other; the numbers were few, compared with those brought into the field by Louis the Fourteenth, or in the present century. The largest army of which we find mention, was conducted by Mayenne against Henry, before Arques, in 1589. It exceeded twenty-eight thousand infantry and cavalry. The king had not above seven thousand troops of all descriptions, under his command (65).

Foreign troops, numerous.

Armies, small.

Examples.

At the memorable battle of Ivry, in the following year, Henry could only collect about eight thousand foot, and three thousand horse: his antagonist was at the head of four thousand, five hundred cavalry, and near twenty thousand foot. About a fifth part consisted of Germans, or Walloons and Spaniards (66). The most considerable army which Henry was ever able to assemble, seems to have been in September, 1590, when he marched to meet the dukes of Parma and Mayenne. He had near twelve thousand French,

(64) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 437, 438, and p. 41. 841, and p. 845.

(66) Ibid. p. 390, and p. 392.

(65) Davila, p.

and

and six thousand foreign foot; besides five, to six ^{C H A P.}
 thousand cavalry, of which more than two-thirds ^{I.}
 were gentlemen. But it dissolved in a few days, and
 left him almost without protection for his person (67).
 Carabineers first appeared in France at Ivry, where ^{Carabineers!}
 count Egmont brought four hundred to the aid of
 the League. They were Walloons, well armed and
 mounted, commanded by the viscount de Tavannes.
 Their novelty, and the promptitude of their move-
 ments, rendered them formidable to the royalists (68).
 Two years later, at the combat of Aumale, we find ^{Dragoons.}
 that Henry had dragoons in his army (69). It ap-
 pears that they had been known under the preceding
 reign, as early as 1585 (70).

How great an alteration had taken place in the ^{Change of}
 composition of armies, before 1610, we may see in ^{system.}
 Sully. When the king projected to march towards
 Juliers in that year, he no longer relied either on the
 courage, or the adherence of his nobility, for success.
 He knew that only regular troops, constantly paid
 by the crown, could enable him to contend with the
 house of Austria. The different bodies, actually
 raised and fit for action, amounted to forty-four
 thousand foot, a thousand volunteer horse, and four
 thousand, five hundred cavalry in pay (71). We ^{Pay of}
 find that in February, 1610, the daily pay of a com- ^{troops.}
 mon foot soldier was eight sots, or four-pence; that
 of a serjeant, five-pence (72). If we consider the
 relative value of money, we shall admit that it was
 ample. Henry in a letter to Sully, expressly enjoins
 him to give that sum to all the recruits, "in order,"
 says he, "that they may not commit any violence
 " upon my people (73)."

(67) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 378—382. (68) Davila, p. 390. Chron.
 Nov. vol. i. p. 332. (69) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 19. (70) Me-
 moires de la Ligue, tome iii. p. 39, 40. Satyre Men. vol. i. p. 90. (71)
 Sully, vols. ii. tome i. p. 496. (72) Ibid. p. 474. (73) Idem,
 ibid.

C H A P.

I.

Tactics.

Artillery.

Condition of
it in 1597.Efforts of
Rosny.

The science of tactics, and in particular, the use and practice of artillery, kept pace with the other improvements of the military art. The number of cannon in the armies of the crown and of the League, during the civil wars, was very small. At the battle of Ivry, in which the whole strength of the two parties was drawn out, the king had only four cannon, and two field-pieces. Mayenne, though greatly superior in force, was inferior in artillery to Henry (74). When Paris was besieged in 1590, the utmost exertions of the duke of Nemours, aided by the contributions of the citizens, who voluntarily gave up all their culinary vessels of copper, which were cast into cannon; could only furnish sixty-five pieces of ordnance, of various sizes and descriptions. They were disposed along the ramparts, and over the gates, in the places most liable to attack (75). In 1597, the whole artillery of France fit for use, was below forty cannon, which the king had sent to Amiens, together with a hundred thousand pounds weight of gunpowder. Villeroy, then secretary of state, declares that when Porto-carrero surprized Amiens, and rendered himself master of these cannon, there was not a single piece mounted, in the king's possession (76).

Such was the deplorable condition of the ordnance, when Rosny was placed at the head of that department. His first care was to provide twenty pieces of artillery, which were sent to the royal camp before Amiens, with the requisite apparatus for conducting them, and sufficient powder and ball for three thousand discharges (77). As early as the month of July in the same year, four cannons were cast at the foundery in the arsenal, of which three were forwarded to the king; and we may see the anxiety expressed

(74) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 327, and p. 330.
Cliverny, vol. i. p. 166.

(76) Villeroy, vol. iii. p. 290.

(75) Ibid. p. 355.

(77) Sully,

vol. i. tome i. p. 335.

by him, and his vexation at finding that the fourth ^{C H A P.} had been sent elsewhere (78). The arsenal, even in ^{I.} 1599, was in such a state of disorder, and so totally destitute of artillery, stores, or ammunition; that Rosny was ashamed and unwilling to permit Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, then at Paris, to see the wretched condition of so important a branch of the national defence. He broke, as he informs us in his Memoirs, near five hundred officers and clerks, when he entered on his functions as master general; the greater part of whom were only servants of financiers, and of persons in legal employments (79).

State of the
arsenal, in
1599,

How rapidly the department assumed a new face, is evident from the short war with Savoy, in the autumn of the same year. Notwithstanding all the ^{in 1604,} impediments necessarily arising from an advanced season, and a mountainous country, covered with snow; Rosny found means to transport above forty battering cannon over the Alps, and to compel Montmelian, the fort St. Catherine, and many other fortresses, to surrender (80). As early as 1604, there were in the arsenal two hundred cannon; arms for fifteen thousand infantry, and three thousand horse; two millions of pounds of gunpowder, and a hundred thousand bullets (81). In 1606, when Henry marched against Sedan, he was accompanied by fifty pieces of artillery, admirably furnished and served (82). At ^{and in 1610,} the time of his death, the royal arsenal abounded in every species of military weapon, ordnance, and ammunition (83). We could scarcely believe, on less authority than that of Sully himself, that he had provided four hundred cannon of the first size, all mounted, equipped, and ready for action; with two hundred thousand ball of the same dimensions. Four

(78) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 359. (79) Ibid. p. 433. (80) Ibid. p. 443, and p. 447—454. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 473, and p. 476. (81) Ibid. tome ii. p. 230. (82) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i. p. 35. (83) Ibid. p. 446, and p. 466, and p. 469.

C H A P.

I.

millions of pounds of powder were laid up in casks. Arms for thirty thousand infantry, and for eight thousand cavalry, together with the requisite pistols, accompanied them. Europe might justly tremble at a prince, who possessed such means of offence (84).

Military im-
provements.

Field pieces.

Many changes and improvements were made in the science of war, between the accession and death of Henry the Fourth. Field pieces, or culverins as they were called, owed their invention to Charles Brise, a Norman. Two of them which accompanied the royal cavalry at the combat of Arques in 1589, excited such surprize and terror among the enemy's horse, by the celerity with which they made their discharge, and the ease with which they wheeled off; that they contributed in an eminent degree, to the advantage obtained over the troops of the League (85). Pistols, which had long been gaining ground, were altogether substituted for lances, among the cavalry, early in Henry's reign: but this innovation, far from being considered salutary or useful, was de-
plored and condemned by the ablest commanders (86). In 1590, bombs are described by Cayet, as thrown into Nimeguen by Maurice, prince of Orange: we find no mention of them in France (87). The art of mining made considerable advances. At the siege of Dreux in 1593, an Englishman in the royal army contrived, with a very small quantity of powder, to shatter and open the great tower, which formed the principal defence of the place. The science which he displayed, and the astonishing effect of his skill, drew applauses from the troops, while it compelled the besieged to surrender (88).

Bombs.

Mines.

Engineer-
ing.

Tactics and engineering, as founded on mathematical principles, began to be studied by the French nobility. Chatillon, son to the admiral Coligny, and

(84) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 431. (85) Davila, p. 852. (86) Ibid. p. 893. (87) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 392. (88) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iiii. p. 276, 277, and p. 390.

who displayed at an early period of life, uncommon talents for war, led the way to the scientific researches, in which he distinguished himself (89). The capture of Chartres in 1591, was principally, if not entirely due to a machine of his invention, which facilitated the approach of the soldiers to the very foot or entrance of the breach under cover (90).

Notwithstanding so many progressive steps in the art of war, the French, not only at the close of the sixteenth century, but during the whole reign of Henry, were far inferior in this respect to the Spaniards. No general of that period under our review, could emulate the fame of the duke of Parma, who equalled in celebrity the greatest captains of antiquity. His two expeditions, for the relief of Paris and of Rouen, which he achieved under infinite disadvantages, arising from the incompatibility of the nations and commanders, covered him with glory. His passage of the Seine at Caudebec, in sight of a victorious army led on by Henry himself, seemed to partake of prodigy; and eclipses every thing which can be placed in competition with it, from the earliest times. The siege of Antwerp may vie with that of Tyre, by Alexander; and was a far more arduous undertaking than that of Rochelle, by Richlieu. Spinola succeeded to a considerable portion of Farnese's genius, and maintained the same discipline among the Spanish bands.

The infantry of Philip the Second and Third, which for more than half a century had spread terror over Europe; and which under Henry the Second, as well as under Henry the Fourth, had nearly accomplished the destruction of France; was composed of all the various nations subject to Spain, from the extremities of Calabria and Sicily, to the banks of

(89) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 417. (90) Ibid. p. 416. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 208. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 62.

C H A P. the Scheld and the Rhine. They partook in no degree of the inherent defects and vices, attached to military service on the feudal principles. Constantly retained under the standard, and employed uninterruptedly, during more than forty years, from 1567 to 1609, against the Dutch; they became superior to the infantry of every other nation. The poverty of the Spanish kings, exhausted by the gigantic and ruinous ambition of Philip the Second, left them nevertheless frequently unpaid; and compelled them, sword in hand, to extort by menaces, insurrection, and devastation, their hard-earned arrears. These frequent mutinies aided the common enemy in no small degree, and were highly instrumental towards the emancipation of the Dutch republic.

Mutinies.

Conduct of
the duke of
Parma,

in his expe-
ditions.

The duke of Parma studied and conducted war as a science, to which mathematical, geographical, and even historical aid was indispensable. When he entered France on his two successive expeditions, he advanced by regular marches, encamping after the manner of the Romans, reconnoitring carefully his ground, and with the chart constantly in his hand (91). He carried with him a train of twenty pieces of cannon, pontoons for constructing two bridges, and fifteen hundred carts of ammunition (92). His troops neither quitted their ranks to straggle, nor to plunder; and severe discipline prevented any excesses. So great was the veneration of the soldiery for his person and talents, that even the want of pay could not shake their obedience (93). The French were defective in all these particulars. In every operation which demanded skill, subordination, and science, Farnese invariably succeeded. The admirable order of his infantry was such, that the elder Biron thought no advantage of ground or position could justify, or

(91) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 464; (92) Davila, p. 948. (93) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 488.

enable Henry the Fourth to attack them (94). When the younger Biron, impelled by his courage, ventured to charge the Spaniards on their retreat into Flanders in 1590, he had nearly expiated his temerity with his life; and it required the utmost exertions of the king himself, at the head of the choicest of the French cavalry, to effect his extrication (95).

Seven years afterwards, the army which under the arch-duke Albert, had unsuccessfully attempted to throw supplies into Amiens, retired in open day, and in presence of the whole royal horse, commanded by Henry in person. They were repulsed in every charge, by the superior firmness and order of the Spanish foot; which appeared so impossible to be broken or disordered, that the king burst into involuntary expressions of astonishment and admiration. Davila says, that he openly protested, "no other soldiers in the world could do so much; and that if he had their infantry, joined to his own cavalry, he would not fear to make war against the whole earth (96)." They long continued during the seventeenth century, to support the same reputation, and to preserve the same military pre-eminence.

It excites some degree of surprize, to find that even at the close of Henry's reign, France was still totally destitute of any navy. Sully had re-established the finances, and the ordnance. The king personally superintended the military department; but the marine sunk into complete oblivion. He seems to have maintained some galleys in the Levant, for the protection of commerce (97): but neither at Toulon, nor at Brest, in the Mediterranean, nor on the Atlantic, could he be said to possess a naval force (98). When Mary of Medecis embarked from Leghorn

C H A P.
I.

Encomiums
of Henry,
on the Span-
ish infantry.

Decay of
the French
navy.

(94) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 238. (95) Davila, p. 967.
(96) Ibid. p. 1471. (97) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 336. (98) Ibid.
vol. ii. tome i. p. 259.

CHAPTER. for Marfeilles, ſhe was eſcorted ſolely by Tuſcan and Malteſe gallies (99).

Commerce.

The French commerce and navigation, in common with all the other arts of peace, were in a ſtate of the loweſt depression, at the concluſion of the ſixteenth century. Scarcely any revenue was derived from the cuſtoms or duties on articles of merchandize; nor can we wonder at it, when we reflect that the crown was unable to extend even the ſmalleſt protection to the trading part of its ſubjects (100).

Piracies.

Piracies were committed with impunity in the narrow ſeas. Commercial treaties, it is true, ſubſiſted between France and England; but they were ſo advantageous to the latter, and ſo onerous or injurious to the former nation, that Henry, in the inſtructions delivered to Roſny, when ſent as ambaffador in 1603 to James the Firſt; enjoins him to remonſtrate ſtrongly on that point, with the Engliſh court (101). He

Depredations of the Engliſh.

even aſſerts, however incredible the fact may appear, that the depredations ſuſtained by his ſubjects from thoſe of Elizabeth, ſince his acceſſion, and particularly ſince the peace of Vervins, for which not the ſlighteſt compensation had been made, exceeded in value a hundred and twenty-five thouſand pounds ſterling (102). He adds, that the queen promiſed indemnification and redreſs, but that it was never obtained; the neceſſary conſequence of which, was the entire ruin and extinction of the French trade with England. It appears, that before 1601, the ſhips of Elizabeth had not only emancipated themſelves from the antient practice and neceſſity of trafficking in all the ports of the Levant, under the flag of France; but that they extended their protection to Flemiſh and Dutch veſſels, which navigated the Archipelago under Engliſh colours. Henry made warm, though as it

Levant trade.

(99) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 667, 668.

(100) Davila, p. 1434.

(101) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 93.

(102) Ibid. p. 93.

would

would seem, ineffectual complaints of it, to Mahomet the Third, sultan of the Turks (103). C H A P.
I.

That the English arrogated, and maintained the right of compelling ships of every nation and description, to lower their colours in the British channel, is incontestable. Perhaps it is not quite as clear, that the French acquiesced in the validity of the pretension; though motives of policy or of necessity might induce them to submit to it on certain occasions. In 1603, when Rosny came over as ambassador to James the First, every testimony of affection and respect was exhibited towards him, by the English admiral commanding in the straits of Dover. Rosny embarked on board his vessels, and the most cordial amity seemed to subsist on both sides. But no sooner did de Vic, as vice-admiral of France, approach with the French flag at his main-top-gallant-mast-head, than the Englishman instantly pointed near fifty cannon at him, and prepared to sink him. It required all the exertions of Rosny, to prevent hostilities. De Vic, at his desire, pulled down the French colours, though not without reluctance and menaces. We are ignorant whether James avowed, or disavowed the proceedings (104). Right, claimed by England,

in the British channel.

Philip the Second, among the other lures which he held out, to amuse the States and people of France in 1589, with a view to procure a recognition of the title of protector of the kingdom; expressly engaged to admit all French subjects without exception, to carry on trade with Peru, and the other countries on the Pacific Ocean, as well as in the East Indies. It was further stipulated, that they might either enter into partnership with Spanish and Portuguese merchants, or engage in separate adventures, as they might judge most profitable (105). His successor, Promise, made to the French, by Philip the Second.

Duty, laid by Philip the Third,

(103) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 85. (104) Sally, vol. i. tome ii. p. 105, 106, and p. 109. Chron. Septen. p. 411. (105) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 288.

C H A P. I. Philip the Third, in 1601 laid a duty of thirty per cent. on all commodities imported into Spain, of the growth or produce of France. The same measure was embraced by Albert and Isabella, in the Netherlands. Irritated at a proceeding so detrimental to the interests of the people, Henry by proclamation prohibited all intercourse whatever between his subjects, and those of the Catholic king, or the archduke (106). Such nevertheless were the profits annexed to the exportation of grain from France, that no penalties could repress it; and vast quantities were clandestinely shipped on board English and other vessels, from the post of Les Sables d'Olonne on the coast of Poitou, to St. Sebastian, in Biscay (107). After this interruption of commerce had subsisted above three years, to the infinite loss and injury of both nations, an accommodation took place, and trade was resumed (108). Duties on the entrance of foreign vessels into the French ports, denominated anchorage money, began to be levied by the king's order, about the year 1602, in imitation of England and Spain, where they had been earlier established (109). Little improvement seems to have been made by the French, in the art of navigation. The Dutch alone, before the conclusion of the sixteenth century, were acquainted with the secret of sheathing ships. As early as 1598, they used lead for that purpose, with which they covered their largest East Indiamen (110).

on French goods.

Accommodation.

Colonization.

Voyages.

Colonization made some feeble attempts to discover, and to plant the American continent, after the termination of the civil, and foreign wars. As early as 1598, the marquis de la Roche, a Breton nobleman, set sail for, and arrived at Cape Sable, the

(106) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 218, 223. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 281. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 297, 298. (107) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 245, 255. (108) Ibid. p. 275—281. (109) Ibid. p. 71. (110) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 446.

southern point of Acadia: but receiving no support ^{C H A P.} from the crown, he abandoned to their fate, a colony ^{I.} which he had left on that coast (111). Early in the ensuing century, de Mons, a gentleman of Sain-
 tonge, having obtained from the government an exclusive privilege of importing and vending furs, as a compensation for the risk and expence of his projected voyage; embarked anew for the island of Cape ^{to Canada.} Breton, near the entrance of the river St. Lawrence. He had a prosperous navigation across the Atlantic. His little squadron consisted only of two vessels, the largest of which was about a hundred and fifty tons burthen. De Mons entered the St. Lawrence, ascended it near eighty leagues, and constructed a fort on its banks. But, occupied more in search of mines, than in quest of furs, his crew and the adventurers who had accompanied him, perished, the far greater part, of scorbutic distempers. Little national benefit resulted from the attempt (112). Sully discouraged, and disapproved all expeditions of colonization, to the north of the fortieth degree of latitude; esteeming the rigour of the climate insupportable, or the productions of little value (113). Yet ^{Little ad-} in 1606, Poutrincour, who had accompanied de Mons ^{vantage de-} in his voyage, again returned to Canada, passed the ^{rived from} winter there, entered into connexions with the ^{them.} Indians, and made farther discoveries relative to the surrounding country. He returned from Cape Canso to St. Malo, in the autumn of 1607 (114).

If Sully was adverse to foreign expeditions of discovery, he extended the warmest patronage to ^{Canals.} projects for internal navigation. At his suggestion, and under his immediate superintendence, a canal was begun for joining the Seine and the Loire. It was

(111) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 330, 331.

(112) Ibid. p. 331—336.

(113) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 182.

(114) De Thou, vol. xv. p.

14—17.

C H A P. I. continued during several years, and near forty thousand pounds were expended on it: but the king's death interrupted its completion, and Mary of Medecis was occupied more in measures to preserve her own authority, than in enterprizes of general utility. The work was abandoned, and resumed at a subsequent period (115). Even the celebrated junction of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, executed by Riquet under Louis the Fourteenth, and which contributed to immortalize his reign, was sketched and proposed as early as 1604. Cayet, a contemporary writer, assures us that an engineer undertook, on payment of a penalty in case of failure, to complete the communication from sea to sea, and to open it for boats of a certain size, within the space of a year, for only five thousand pounds sterling. He does not specify the reasons which delayed, or prevented the accomplishment of so beneficial an undertaking (116).

Manufac-
tures.

Prohibition
of silks.

Repeal of
the edict.

Manufactures of every kind, whether of necessity, or of refinement, appear to have made the most vigorous efforts, and a rapid progress, during the auspicious period of tranquillity, which intervened from the beginning of the seventeenth century, to the close of the reign under our review. So destitute was France of fabrics ministering to luxury in 1599, that Henry issued an edict, prohibiting the importation of foreign silks, on account of the prodigious sums annually sent out of the kingdom for their purchase. The inhabitants of the city of Tours, who had extorted from him this prohibition by importunity, undertook to supply all the national demand for silk, as well as for gold and silver stuffs: but experience proved how much they had mistaken their own powers. Early in the following year, 1600, the king was obliged to rescind the edict, and to permit

(115) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 291; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 277, and 278.
Chron. Sept. p. 449. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 317. (116) Chron. Sept. p. 449.

the entry of the interdicted articles (117). Henry, and his minister, had embraced very opposite opinions and modes of thinking, on the subject of the arts and manufactures connected with luxury. Sully, content with preventing by vigilance, the exportation of specie, proposed no measures for attracting to France, the superfluous money of the surrounding countries. The king desired, by every mode, to draw into his dominions the gold of Spain, Italy, Germany, and England. Sully wished to banish expence and refinement, to restrain the inordinate profusion in dress and tables, and to bring back the nation to the simplicity and frugality of the times of Charles the Eighth, and Louis the Twelfth. Henry, more enlarged in his views, and conscious of the impracticability of such attempts, limited his ambition to enriching his subjects by the fabrication of those commodities, the use of which it was in vain to prohibit. Sully, vanquished, but not convinced, slowly and reluctantly complied with the injunctions of his master (118). We may see, with what importunity the king was obliged to solicit him to issue even the smallest sums from the treasury, to foreign artists, who on the faith of the royal word, had quitted their native countries, in order to commence manufactures in France (119).

C H A P.
I.

Difference
of Henry's,
and of Sul-
ly's views.

relative to
the arts of
luxury.

On the article of silk, Sully appears to have adopted or imbibed, the most insurmountable prejudices. He conceived, that the climate of France would not permit the rearing an insect, so delicate as the silk-worm; and he dreaded, lest an occupation so sedentary and inactive, should gradually impair the courage, or enervate the martial disposition of his countrymen. Henry derided these imaginary appre-

Prejudices
of Sully,
respecting
silk.

(117) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 427. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 330—332, De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 334.
(118) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 180, 181.
(119) Ibid. p. 328; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 88, 121.

hensions,

C H A P. I. **hensions, and persisted in his resolution (120). As**
 early as 1603, temporary buildings were constructed
 at Fontainebleau, at the castle of Madrid, and at the
 palace of the Thuilleries, for the reception and pro-
 tection of the silk worms. Mulberry trees for their
 nourishment, were planted in various provinces;
 particularly in the vicinity of Paris, Orleans, Tours,
 and Lyons. The government caused pamphlets,
 written upon the art of cultivating the mulberry tree,
 and upon the nature of the means to be used for pre-
 serving the silk-worm, to be printed and distributed
 among the people. A board, or council for the af-
 fairs of commerce, was instituted; and every means
 adopted, to give energy to the undertaking (121).
 In 1605, we find the king procuring silk-worms from
 Valentia in Spain (121). He had the satisfaction to
 see before his death, the compleat success of his en-
 deavours, and the progress made by his subjects in so
 lucrative a branch of art. Vast sums were retained
 in the kingdom; and foreigners began to repair to
 Lyons, which city was soon enriched by the manu-
 facture. The southern provinces of Languedoc,
 Dauphiné, and Provence, derived from it, in the
 course of only seven years from its establishment,
 greater profits annually, than from the joint produce
 of their oil, wines, and sweetmeats, the antient and
 natural productions of the country (123).

Introduction
of that ma-
nufacture.

Its beneficial
effects.

Various fa-
bricks, com-
menced.

Tissues.

Nor did Henry limit his attention to a single branch
 of commerce. His munificence, aided by the in-
 dustry of the nation, repaired the calamities of the
 three preceding reigns. Gold and silver tissues, of
 different kinds, and of exquisite beauty, were manu-
 factured at Paris by Milanese workmen, whom he
 had induced to settle in the capital, under his imme-

(120) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 181. (121) De Thou, vol. xiv.
 p. 140, 141. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 455, 456. Sully, vol. ii. tome i.
 p. 278. Chron. Sep. p. 410. (122) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 324.
 (123) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 456.

diate protection(124). The Gobelins tapestry, of ^{C H A P. I.} such unequalled delicacy, and so admired over all Europe, was begun in one of the suburbs of the metropolis, under the direction of artists from Flanders(125). Looking-glasses, in imitation of those cast at Venice, and which had been formerly made under the reign of Henry the Second, at St. Germain; were again undertaken with success at Paris, and at Nevers(126). Earthen-ware, white and painted, was fabricated with the same beauty as in Italy(127). We may infer from a passage in Sully, that the art of enamelling had attained before 1603, to a very considerable degree of perfection(128). In the castle of Mantes upon the Seine, crapes, equal to those of Bologna, were woven; and Dutch linen was begun(129). The inferior classes of people in Paris, found employment in the great manufactories of the suburbs St. Honoré and St. James, where gilt leather for the furniture of houses was made(130). Mills for cutting and splitting iron, which had always been done by the hand, were set up on the river of Estampes; and steel, which was antecedently procured from Piedmont, at two-pence halfpenny, or three-pence a pound, began to be manufactured in the suburb of St. Victor in Paris. Serrès, a native of Provence, discovered a method of making ropes, and even a kind of coarse linen, with the bark of the white mulberry-tree. Ferrier, an inhabitant of the suburb St. Germain, carried to a perfection previously unknown, the art of making leaden pipes and spouts for conducting water. White lead, always imported before the reign of Henry the Fourth, at a great expence, was prepared and sold at a very mo-

(124) Chron. Sept. p. 409. (125) Ibid. p. 409, 410. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 142. Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 88, 104. (126) De Thou, ibid. Chron. Sept. ibid. (127) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 142. (128) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 190. (129) Chron. Sept. p. 450. Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 121. (130) Idem, ibid.

C H A P.
I.

Restoring
pearls.

derate price (131). Tontouchio, a Siennese gentleman, acquired a rapid fortune, by the possession of a secret for restoring to pearls their original beauty and transparency, however injured by time or accident. Such were the profits derived by him from it, that he refused a sum of above twelve hundred pounds sterling, to divulge his invention (132).

State of the
peasantry.

While the middle order of citizens, employed in commerce and mechanical pursuits, advanced thus progressively in industry, wealth, and refinement; the wretched peasantry alone, chained to the soil, remained at the mercy of their superiors. During the period of the civil wars, when the authority of the crown was in a great degree subverted; the barbarities, practised by the petty tyrants, who from the battlements of their castles, pillaged and desolated the surrounding country, exceeded belief. We know that they seized, imprisoned, ransomed, and even tortured the objects of their resentment or rapacity, without dread of punishment (133). In addition to these acts of lawless violence, the husbandman was plundered by the soldiery of both parties; while the tax-gatherer completed his ruin, and exacted the last scanty earnings of his labour. Henry, touched with compassion for the sufferings of so oppressed a class of his subjects, endeavoured as early as the beginning of 1591, to adduce some remedy, and to procure some alleviation for their misery. By an edict published in that year, he forbade on pain of death, to enroll the peasants without his permission; to take their cattle, provisions, or money; to ransom their persons, or to compel them to work on the fortifications, unless in virtue of an order signed by one of the secretaries of state, and addressed to the trea-

Their op-
pression.

Edicts, if-
fued in their
favour.

(131) Chron. Sept. p. 450. Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 121. (132) Idem, p. 452. (133) Satyre Menip. vol. i. p. 98. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 354.

furers of France (134). Four years afterwards, in ^{C H A P. I.} 1595, the king issued a second prohibition, of the same nature and tendency: but neither of them could eradicate a disease, inherent in the essence of the feudal system, and grown to maturity by a long series of war and anarchy (135). The peasants derived little, if any benefit, from these nominal regulations.

Rendered desperate by oppression, about the middle of the year 1593, they rose in great numbers ^{Revolt or} along the banks of the Dordogne, in Guienne, and all the adjoining provinces. The name of "Cro-^{the "Cro-} quans" was first given them, the derivation of ^{"quans."} which is disputable: but afterwards they were called "Tard-avisez," in derision of their taking up arms too late, when the rest of the nation, weary with civil dissension, desired only peace (136). Henry, conscious that their complaints were just, observed with a degree of humour, that "if he had not been a king, and that he possessed a little more leisure, he would have turned "Croquant" himself (137)." Unfortunately they began, as they have uniformly done in almost all insurrections, by committing equal, ^{Their ex- cesses.} or greater excesses, than those of which they complained. As they amounted to between thirty and forty thousand, and were furnished with arms, it became requisite to disperse them: but the enterprize was difficult, at a time when the crown could spare little or no assistance for the purpose. During a period of more than two years, they maintained themselves in the provinces between the Loire and the Garonne. The disunion which spread among ^{Disunion;} them from the difference of religion, and an attack made on them by some cavalry, diminished their

(134) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 353, 354.

(135) Journal d'Henry

IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 109.

(136) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 352. D'Aub.

Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 382.

De Thou, vol. xii. p. 72.

(137) Journal

d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 33.

C H A P. numbers. Henry, for whom they appear to have
 I
 and extinc- professed and felt the warmest loyalty, completed
 tion. their subjection by listening to their complaints, and
 by remitting the arrears of taxes which they were
 unable to discharge. More fortunate than their
 countrymen the "Gautiers," exterminated a few
 years earlier, by the duke of Montpensier, they
 insensibly sunk into oblivion, and resumed their
 original occupations (138). The wisdom and vigour
 of the government, and the paternal attention man-
 ifested by the king for the inferior classes of his
 people, rendered their condition, during the last ten
 years of his reign, comparatively and progressively
 happy. We may see innumerable instances of it
 in Sully, and in all the writers of the period.

Ruinous
 state of
 Paris.

Paris, at the time when it was delivered up to
 Henry by Brissac, in 1594, presented in every quar-
 ter, the most hideous proofs of the ruin and devasta-
 tion produced by the preceding troubles. Scarcely
 can that metropolis, at the present moment, exhibit
 a scene of greater alteration; and it is matter of
 curious remark, that these awful convulsions seem to
 visit France almost periodically, at the distance of
 two centuries. A review of the French history for
 many ages, would tend to confirm the observation.
 At the end of the siege in 1590, all the monuments
 of learning, piety, and magnificence which had existed
 in the capital, were either destroyed, or polluted and
 defaced. The royal ornaments and regalia, preserv-
 ed in the treasury of the abbey of St. Denis, were
 seized on by the duke of Nemours, and melted
 down to supply the wants of the League (139).
 Even the jewels of the crown were stolen, or secret-
 ed, or sold to various individuals. The gold crown

Sale of the
 regalia of
 the crown.

(138) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 382—384. Nov. vol. iii. p. 351—
 356. (139) Satyre Men. vol. i. p. 48, and p. 154. De Thou, vol.
 xii. p. 72, 73. Chron.

of Charles the Bald, guarded as a valuable remain of ^{C H A P.} the Carlovingian dynasty of kings, was involved in ^{I.} the common wreck (140). So complete was the annihilation of all the paraphernalia of the regal dignity, that Cayet informs us, no part of it escaped; and at the coronation of Henry the Fourth, a new crown, sceptre, and other necessary ornaments, were made, in place of those which had been alienated or removed (141). The Louvre, which during the troubles was entrusted to the care of one Olivier, an obscure partizan of the house of Guise, was destitute of furniture, and entirely dismantled (142). It had been defiled by the execution of four members of the "council of sixteen," hanged in the great hall of the palace, by order of the duke of Mayenne (143).

The fury of rebellion did not respect even the ^{and of the church or-} vessels and shrines which served for sacred uses, ^{naments.} or which contained the relics of saints and martyrs. Superstition itself could afford no protection; and they were carried to the Mint, on a promise, never accomplished, of restoring them in three months (144). The Papal legate advised and exhorted to commit this sacrilegious act. In the course of the siege, above fifty thousand persons perished by diseases, which may be estimated at a fourth part of the population. Such was the extremity of the ^{Expedients} famine, that a species of paste, composed of human ^{to nourish} bones mixed with water, was greedily devoured, ^{the people.} after every other species of nourishment had been exhausted. The people denominated it "Madame de Montpensier's Bread," from its having been originally recommended by her, and by Mendoza,

(140) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 367. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 608. (141) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 324. (142) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 152. (143) Conf. de Sancy, p. 277, and p. 299. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 503. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 83, 84. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 234. (144) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 367. Sat. Men. vol. i. p. 110. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 162, 163.

C H A P. I. the Spanish ambassador (145). In consequence of the mortality and putrefaction, added to the intense heats of summer, snakes of a prodigious size, and other reptiles, generated in the houses, and preyed upon the carcasses in the streets. It is impossible to doubt this fact, which is related by l'Etoile, who was himself in Paris, at the time, and who particularizes all the circumstances. He adds another, scarcely less extraordinary; that Panigarole, a Franciscan monk devoted to Spain, who accompanied the legate, being consulted by the duke of Nemours, on the signification of these venomous animals; replied, "that it was an effect of magic, and an illusion of the infernal spirit, to discourage the zealous Catholics (146)."

Effects of the famine, and putrefaction.

Destruction of the suburbs.

The suburbs, which, if we may believe Villeroy, exceeded in the beauty of the buildings, and nearly equalled in size, the capital within the walls, were abandoned, pillaged, and destroyed (147). Peasants and cattle sheltered themselves in the university, which became a desert (148). The courts of law, as well as the shops, were shut; and the principal streets were covered with grass (149). It is said, that the duke of Parma having visited Paris, in September 1590, was deeply affected at the view of so depopulated and melancholy a metropolis (150).

Blockade of Paris.

Nor did the horrors of famine terminate with the siege. During several years, from 1590 to its reduction in 1594, the royal forces continued to blockade the city, to occupy the rivers by which it is supplied with provisions, and to levy contributi-

(145) Sat. Menip. vol. ii. p. 109, 110. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 175—177, and p. 190. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 37. (146) Journal d'Henry. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 38. (147) Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 422. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 24. (148) Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 446. (149) Idem, ibid. and p. 107—110, and p. 155. (150) Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 467.

ons to the very gates (151). All the environs were ^{C H A P.} defolated; and the villages, for many leagues on ^{I.} every side, were so destroyed, that in 1593, when ^{Villages} the commissioners on the part of the Crown and the ^{ruined.} League were desirous of fixing on a place in the vicinity of Paris for their projected conference, it was not till after a long search, that they could discover any village sufficiently habitable for their reception (152). Even subsequent to the truce agreed on in the month of August of the same year, between the king and Mayenne, Henry persisted to exact such severe duties upon all commodities, particularly corn, wine and cattle, entering the metropolis, that the Parisians were reduced to great distress (153). That it did not immediately recover ^{Depopulation.} from its ruined condition, is evident; since in August 1595, l'Etoile assures us, that a wolf swam across the Seine from the southern bank, and devoured a child in the "Greve," one of the most central and frequented places of Paris (154). This fact, from inferior authority, might be thought incredible. How insecure a residence it was at that time, may be ^{Insecurity.} inferred from the incursions made by the garrison of Soissons. The Spanish soldiery continually advanced up to the walls; and they even had the audacity to enter the riding-house of the Tuilleries, from which they carried off prisoners several gentlemen of quality, who, unsuspecting of danger, were amusing themselves in the exercises of the Manege (155).

During the space of about twelve years, between the treaty of Vervins and the close of Henry's reign, Paris rose more beautiful out of its ruins. Tranquillity and peace, aided by the munificence of the

(151) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 229. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 116, and p. 127, 128. Sat. Men. vol. i. p. 155. (152) Villeroy, vol. iv. p. 79. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 719. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 140. (153) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 229. (154) Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 104. (155) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 483.

C H A P. I. sovereign, and the industry of the inhabitants, embellished the capital. Under Henry the Third, there was only one bridge across the Seine, over which carriages of any kind could pass (156). That, denominated the "Pont neuf," had, it is true, been begun: but the calamities of the kingdom had interrupted its completion, and only two arches were finished. Henry the Fourth resumed the work, and in 1604 it was opened for passengers of every description (157). Another of the bridges, the "Pont aux meuniers," was so ruinous, that in December 1596 it tumbled to pieces, and near a hundred and sixty persons were suffocated, or drowned, by its fall (158). The generosity of a private citizen, Marchand, commander of the archers of the city guard, rebuilt it, on condition that it should in future bear his name (159). A quay was constructed along the northern bank of the river, from the arsenal to the "Greve (160)." The southern side of the Seine began to be inhabited, and covered with buildings. Margaret of Valois resided, and held her little court, in that quarter (161). A short time before his death, Henry undertook to build a handsome street, from the end of the "Pont neuf," and he had previously executed a far more splendid work, the gallery, which joins the two palaces of the Louvre and the Tuilleries. It had been planned, and the foundation laid, by Charles the Ninth. On the ground-floor, it was intended to lodge and to employ, at the expence of the crown, artists in every branch, from the various nations of Europe (162). Miron, the first municipal magistrate of the metropolis, re-edified the

Other embellishments.

Gallery of the Louvre.

(156) Chron. Sept. p. 447. (157) Chron. Sept. p. 447. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 244; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 143. (158) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 147. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 31. (159) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 206, 207. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 31. (160) Chron. Sept. p. 448. (161) Vie de Marg. p. 397. (162) Chron. Sept. p. 448. Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 217.

town-hall;

town-hall, adorned the streets with fountains, and rendered the city more commodious (163). In this enumeration, it may not be unworthy of remark, that the "Temple," which served for the prison of the late unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth and his queen, was, in 1594, a fortress garrisoned by Spaniards; and before 1610, seems to have been converted by Sully, into a magazine for gunpowder (164).

The police of Paris was exceedingly defective, during the whole period which we are reviewing. It is, nevertheless, clear, that precautions were adopted, and a regular assessment made upon the inhabitants, before 1609, for the purpose of cleaning and paving the streets (165). But no measures of energy or efficacy were pursued, to render the city salubrious, to clear it of vagabonds and beggars, or even to secure personal safety. Robberies, murders, and assassinations, were so frequent, and committed with such impunity, that L'Etoile says, in 1605, "they could not have been perpetrated more openly in a forest (166)." The "Pont neuf," for many years during the time of its construction, was the scene of nightly depredation and crimes. It was common for passengers to be plundered, stripped, and precipitated into the river (167). Ruffians, at noon day, frequently entered houses, and extorted money, with the dagger in their hand (168). In the single month of January 1606, above twenty dead bodies were found in the streets, having on them marks of recent violence; and in some, the poniard still remaining plunged (169).

(163) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 335, 336. (164) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 140; and vol. ii. tome ii. p. 4. Satyre Men. vol. i. p. 158. (165) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. p. 202. Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 196, and p. 278. (166) Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 91, 92. (167) Confess. de Sancy, p. 488. (168) Journal d'Henry. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 139; and vol. ii. p. 91, 92. (169) Ibid. vol. ii. p. 102.

C H A P. I. The utmost severity of punishment imposed no restraint upon these enormities. In the hospitals of the metropolis, the sick and diseased appear to have been heaped together, without order or number, and to have perished from want of common care. Between the first day of January 1596, and the tenth of the ensuing month, four hundred and sixteen persons expired in the "Hotel Dieu," the largest hospital of Paris; the greater part, of hunger, and absolute necessity (170). In the following month of April, more than six hundred died in the same receptacle of misery and disease (171). Even those patients who were discharged, were frequently turned loose upon the town, with the plague, or other infectious distempers on them, which they communicated to their fellow-citizens. Two hundred at once were thus dismissed, in August 1596 (172).

Bad administration of the hospitals.

Poor laws.

Neither greater wisdom nor humanity seem to have been manifested, in the provision made for subsisting the poor, who were usually very numerous. In May 1595, they flocked in such multitudes to Paris, on account of the scarcity and high price of grain, as to alarm the magistrates, who assembled repeatedly, to concert proper measures for alleviating their necessities. By the public registers it was shewn, that in fifteen days, above fourteen thousand beggars had entered the capital (173). A considerable rate or tax was levied for their maintenance, on the citizens; but they returned in such crowds, some months afterwards, that they were at length ordered, by sound of trumpet, to quit Paris without delay (174). The motive for this harsh decree, was the apprehension of their introducing and spreading pestilential distempers. We find in 1606, that the Irish vagabonds

Numbers of poor.

and of beggars.

(170) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 120.
117, 118, and p. 128.

(172) Ibid. p. 139.

d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 97, and p. 99.

(173) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 97, and p. 99.

(174) Ibid. 125, and p. 127, 128; and vol. ii. p. 98.

and

and beggars, who were very numerous, became so ^{C H A P. I.} troublesome, as to give rise to a still more severe measure. They were all seized, put into boats on the Seine, guarded by archers, and transported to Rouen, there to be shipped for their own country. L'Etoile says, that they were far more expert in the profession of begging, than their companions, the French; and highly renowned for taking away from families, the reproach of sterility (175). The troops ^{City guards} of the city of Paris, composed of citizens, formed a body of about six thousand infantry, independent of the archers, cross-bowmen and horse, who were under the immediate direction of the municipal magistrates (176).

It was an enquiry which naturally awakened the curiosity, and occupied the researches of speculative ^{Effect of the civil wars.} men in the sixteenth century, to decide whether the civil wars, which desolated France during five and thirty years, did, or did not enrich the kingdom. Problematical as it may appear, they determined the question in the affirmative, on the most candid and impartial investigation. How prodigious were the sums of Spanish money, poured into France by Philip the Second, we may judge from the testimony of his own ambassador, the duke of Feria; who declared in 1593, to the States convoked at Paris, that his master had already expended above six millions of ecus, or more than seven hundred, and fifty thousand pounds sterling, within the last seven years (177). Under Charles the Ninth, he had previously disbursed not less than five hundred thousand pounds (178). A very inconsiderable part of this wealth found its way out of the country, in the payments made to the Swiss and German stipendiaries: the rest remained in

Immense sums expended by Philip the Second.

(175) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. p. 115, 116.
vol. iii. p. 698.

(177) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 705.

(176) Chron. Nov.

Journal d'Henry

(178) Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 560.

CHAP. I. circulation. Such was the rapid and astonishing increase of gold and silver, between 1560 and 1595, the period of the civil wars, that Brantome declares in many parts of his Memoirs, pistoles and doubloons were more common in the end of Henry the Fourth's reign, than the smallest pieces of silver coin had been at the beginning of that of Charles the Ninth (179). His testimony is confirmed by other writers of the same time.

Internal sources of wealth.

Regalia.

Sacred ornaments.

Wealth of individuals.

Besides the influx of foreign riches, many internal causes contributed to swell the mass of national specie. We have seen, that the duke of Nemours converted into coin, the regalia of the crown, and all the jewels or decorations of the kings of France: Brantome says, that they were already so precious, as to strike the emperor Charles the Fifth with amazement at their value, when he viewed them at St. Denis, in 1539. He declared, that "they were sufficient to pay the ransom of two kings (180)." All the shrines, relics, and votive offerings in the churches throughout the kingdom, were either plundered, and appropriated to their own use, by the Hugonots; or secreted and sold by the ecclesiastics themselves (181). We may judge how universal was the pillage, when we reflect, that, except Limoges, hardly a single town or city of any consideration escaped being sacked, and that the greater number were subjected repeatedly to that calamity (182). An immense mass of concealed, or dormant property, was set at liberty by the civil wars. The numerous description of men, living on their own fortunes; bankers, merchants, usurers, and priests, were all plundered by one or other party,

(179) Brantome, Cap. Fran. vol. iii. p. 199, and p. 201, 202; and Cap. Etr. tome i. p. 34. Tavannes, p. 371. (180) Brant. Cap. Fran. tome iii. p. 204. (181) Ibid. 204, 205. (182) Vie d'Epemon, vol. i. p. 339.

and usually compelled to purchase their lives, by a ^{C H A P.} surrender of their hoarded gold (183): The nobility _{I.} and soldiery squandered with profusion, the spoils thus acquired; and a vast transfer, as well as diffusion of property, took place.

Tavannes asserts, that the province of Burgundy, ^{Condition of} which during six years, from 1589 to 1595, was the _{Burgundy.} theatre of unintermitted hostilities between the crown and the League, and which was regularly laid under contribution by both sides; yet, far from being exhausted, abounded in money, and would have continued so to do, if the war had lasted thirty years. He explains his paradox, by acquainting us, that although not less than a hundred thousand pounds sterling were annually exacted by the contending parties, from the inhabitants of the province, the money only changed hands, and returned through the same channels, to its first possessors. "The soldier, says he, pays to the merchant and artizan, for various commodities: they return the money to the husbandman for wine, bread, and forage; and it is again extorted from him by the Gendarmes, or troops (184)." But when Henry the Fourth entered Burgundy in 1595, he impoverished the country more in three months, than it had been by many years of preceding war; because he carried off the money and cattle.

The principal injury, sustained by France, from ^{Vast resources of} the long dissensions under four reigns, was in _{France.} population, not in riches. But such were in that age, and such must ever remain, its innate resources; so advantageous is its local position; so fertile its soil; so happy its climate; so various are its productions; and such the energy, industry, and ingenuity of its inhabitants; that no political changes or revolutions can

(183) Brant. Cap. Fran. tome iii. p. 199, 200.
p. 271.

(184) Tavannes,

permanently

C H A P. I. permanently depress its genius (185). "I remember," says Brantome, "in the first civil wars, Rouen was carried by storm, pillaged, and sacked during several days. Yet when Charles the Ninth and his mother passed through it, about fifteen or sixteen months afterwards, to their astonishment, all traces of that calamity had disappeared, and only opulence was visible (186)." Angouleme and Perigueux, he adds, which were inhumanly destroyed by the Hugonots, and several times plundered, had recovered with equal rapidity, and even become more rich than before their misfortunes (187).

Reflexions. It is apparent from these facts, that, however lamentable and destructive were the immediate effects of the civil and religious wars of France in the sixteenth century, their remote consequences were, in many points of view, beneficial. It will be the province of future historians to determine, whether the present sanguinary race of republicans, who have effected the entire change of landed, and almost of monied property; who have spilt more blood than all the tyrants of antiquity; and who seem to emulate only the crimes of Greece and Rome; may not, like tempests and hurricanes, purge the moral and civil atmosphere of France: and whether from the bosom of anarchy, infidelity, and carnage, a new and more beautiful order of events may not arise, as it did precisely two centuries ago, under Henry the Fourth, in that distracted and depopulated country.

(185) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 181.
iii. p. 202, 203.

(187) Idem, *ibid.*

(186) Brant. Cap. Fran. tome

C H A P. II.

State of the Gallican church.—Abuses.—Seditious spirit of the ecclesiastics.—Sermons.—Jubilees.—Institution of new monastic orders.—Exile, and recall of the Jesuits.—Influence and power of that order.—State of the Hugonots.—Policy and measures of Henry towards them.—Decline of the spirit of persecution.—State of the parliaments, and of jurisprudence.—Venality of legal employments.—Ineffectual attempts to reform the abuses of the law.—Formation, proceedings, and general conduct of the parliament of Paris.

THE Gallican church, in common with all the C H A P:
II. other institutions of civil and religious policy among the French, was plunged, during the period of the civil wars, in the lowest state of humiliation and depression. Previous to the king's abjuration of the Protestant, and resumption of the Catholic faith, the ecclesiastics may even be said to have suffered, in an especial degree, from the general anarchy and dissolution of government. It must be ingenuously confessed, that their loyalty was put to a severe trial, when they were called on to pay obedience to a prince, labouring under the censures of the church of Rome, recently excommunicated, and avowedly the chief and protector of heresy. Yet, under circumstances so calculated to shake their allegiance, a very considerable proportion of the clergy adhered invariably to the right of succession, in defiance of the prejudices of a superstitious age. The liberty and expanded maxims by which Henry, from the instant of his accession, conducted himself, relative to the Loyalty of
the ecclesi-
astics. Catholics;

C H A P. Catholics ; and the readiness which he uniformly manifested, to listen with docility to the arguments in favour of their tenets ; eminently conduced to allay the apprehensions of the timid, and to confirm the attachment of the well-disposed.

II.

Difficulties
of their
situation.

During the interval of near four years which elapsed between Henry's accession, and his return to the Romish profession, every calamity incident to rebellion and schism, afflicted the ecclesiastical order. Whether they obeyed the mandates of the sovereign pontiffs, who, from Sixtus the Fifth to Clement the Eighth inclusively, were devoted to the cause of the League ; or whether they complied with the requisitions of the council of state appointed by the crown, they were alike subject to seizure, confiscation, and punishment. Renaud de Beaurie, archbishop of Bourges, who had uniformly adhered to the king ; projected as early as 1592, to terminate the contest between the regal and the Papal power, by entirely withdrawing France from any dependance on the Romish see. He proposed to name a patriarch for the government and discipline of the Gallican church ; and he aspired himself to fill that eminent dignity. It does not seem that Henry was very averse to the plan ; but it was prevented by the exertions and remonstrances of the young cardinal of Bourbon ; who, unable, from a variety of reasons, to occupy the post of patriarch, in his own person, would not allow it to be conferred on another (1).

Abuses in
church.

All the abuses, added to the depravity and dissolution of manners, which had degraded and dishonoured the ecclesiastic order, under the feeble, dissolute, or precarious administration of the three last princes of Valois ; attained their utmost point of enormity,

(1) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 495—497. Davila, p. 1123, 1124.

before

before the year 1595, from which period we may date the submission of the kingdom to Henry the Fourth. The impotence and necessities of the crown, the violence of two contending factions, and the universal relaxation of discipline, seemed to threaten the extinction of religion itself; for the purity and preservation of which, all parties pretended to combat. Cardinal Gondi, bishop of Paris, stated to Clement the Eighth in 1592, among other particulars equally striking, that above forty bishopricks were then vacant; the temporalities of which were held and received by ladies, courtiers, and soldiers (2). In January 1596, the clergy assembled at Paris, made, by the mouth of the bishop of Mans, the strongest remonstrances to the king; and earnestly besought his vigorous-co-operation for the reform of the grievances, or disorders of the church. They declared, that of fourteen archbishopricks, six or seven were destitute of pastors; that from thirty to forty episcopal sees were in the same situation; and that of the remainder, the greater part were occupied by persons who either held them in trust for others, or had obtained them by illicit and prohibited methods (3). The abbies appear to have been in a state of still greater prostitution. In only twenty-five dioceses, about a hundred and twenty abbies were vacant, or in the hands of gentlemen (4). "Even children," say they, "who are still under the rod, and who are scarcely conscious of their own existence, are appointed to the government of religious houses (5)." They conclude by entreating the king, to forbid his military officers of every description, to quarter their troops or horses in the churches; and to abstain from levying contributions on their property (6). Henry, equally affected

Remonstrances of the clergy.

Improper nomination to abbies.

(2) Davila, p. 1135. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 507, 508.

Nov. vol. iii. p. 592. (4) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 593.

p. 595. (6) Ibid. p. 596.

(3) Chron.

(5) Ibid.

C H A P. II. and convinced by their supplication, issued an edict consonant to their desire: but the abuses were too firmly rooted to be redressed or eradicated by any remedies except time, and the gradual confirmation of the royal authority.

Answer of
the king.

Near three years afterwards, when the treaty of Vervins had restored tranquillity to the kingdom, the clergy having again renewed their complaints, the king replied to them in a manner equally conciliating and dignified. "I admit," said he, "the existence of the abuses; but I am not the author of them: they were introduced before I came to the crown. During the war, I have run to extinguish the fire wherever it blazed: now that we are in repose, I will do what peace demands. I know that religion and justice are the pillars and foundations of this kingdom, and if they did not exist, I would re-establish them; but by little and little, as I do in every thing else. With the assistance of God, I will replace the church in the same state that it was a hundred years ago (7)." Henry appears to have partly fulfilled his promise, by nominating to the great ecclesiastical preferments, men eminent for learning, virtue, and talents. But the inferior benefices were, in great measure, abandoned to the nobility, who considered them as a species of hereditary property; or were conferred on military men, who sold, mortgaged, and subsisted on the revenues (8). Far from blushing at these acts of indecent venality, they seem to have considered them as matters of course. "I provided my second son," says the chancellor Chiverny in his Memoirs, "with four abbeys in 1596, by one and the same bull

Benefices,
held by
gentlemen.

(7) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 160—163. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 197, 198. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 220, 221. (8) Satyre, Men. vol. iii. p. 476. Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 171, 172, and p. 394; and tome ii. p. 36; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 198, and p. 201. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 340.

" from

“ from Rome, with a dispensation for his age, as he
 “ was only seventeen years old (9).” After entering
 into some detail relative to each, he adds: “ As to
 “ the abbey of St. Pere at Chartres, it was given
 “ by the king, during the civil wars, on the death of
 “ the chevalier d’Aumale the abbot, to Messieurs
 “ Roquelaure, de Frontenac, and Bele, gentlemen
 “ in the immediate service of his majesty. They
 “ were all three glad to procure, each a separate
 “ gratification; and I was equally so, to recover the
 “ abbey (10).” He tells us in another place, that
 he received from Gabrielle d’Etrées, the bishoprick
 of Chartres, out of the revenues of which, he paid
 a pension, of between three and four hundred pounds
 a year to the celebrated historian De Thou (11).

C H A P.
 II.
 Examples.

Even Hugonots were admitted, by a singular
 infraction of decorum, as well as contempt of religi-
 on, to occupy, and to nominate to Catholic prefer-
 ments (12). If any thing can increase the surprize
 natural at such abuses, it is, to see that the popes
 themselves, instead of repressing, countenanced and
 facilitated their commission. Sully, an obstinate in-
 corrigible heretic, whom neither his sovereign’s ex-
 ample nor entreaties could ever induce to change his
 opinions; yet possessed benefices to the amount of
 above eighteen hundred pounds sterling a year. He
 says, that “ he named the ecclesiastics who held
 “ them, not only with the permission of successive
 “ pontiffs, but that the bulls were gratuitously expe-
 “ dited on his request, from the Roman chancery
 (13).” In the enumeration of his property and
 possessions, he expressly states, that for four abbies,
 publickly sold by him, with valid Papal bulls issued
 for the purpose, he received a sum considerably

Church pre-
 ferments,

occupied by
 Hugonots.

(9) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 377, 378. (10) Ibid. p. 380. (11) Chiver-
 ny, vol. ii. p. 55—57. (12) Confess. de Sancy, p. 401, 402. (13) Sully,
 vol. i. tome ii. p. 415.

C. H. A. P.
II.
Testimony
of Bran-
tome.

exceeding nine thousand pounds sterling (14). Brantome, who is by no means the panegyrist of Henry the Fourth, and who seems, on every occasion, partial to his predecessors of the family of Valois; yet confers on him the warmest encomiums for rewarding so many brave French gentlemen, by the donations of abbeys and ecclesiastical preferments. It is exceedingly entertaining to see the manner in which he appreciates and speaks of the king's conduct on this point. He attributes it to his wisdom, beneficence, and just affection for a nobility who had bled in his cause. "It is possible too," adds Brantome, "that he may have acted thus, from the inspiration of those generous shades and spirits, who, compassionate of their unfortunate descendants, have prompted the king to make them compensation for the riches formerly lavished by themselves on the church (15)." We must admit that Brantome, though a zealous Catholic, had imbibed no superstitious reverence, nor blind veneration, for the ecclesiastical order.

Seditious
declama-
tions,

from the
pulpit.

The spirit of sedition, which had so strongly characterized and pervaded the clergy, regular and secular, during the reign of Henry the Third, continued long to animate them under his successor. The pulpit was made the vehicle of rebellion, and every anathema which rage or malice could dictate, was uttered by the preachers. We can with difficulty conceive the effect of these invectives and declamations, upon an illiterate and superstitious audience, accustomed to insurrection, and animated almost to frenzy against heresy. The grossest epithets, as well as the most indecent scurrility or ribaldry, were not spared; and the populace was on many occasions, openly excited to assassination and regicide. The holy scrip-

(14) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 417, 418.
Cap. Fran. p. 263, 264.

(15) Brantome, vol. i.

tures were ransacked and perverted, in order to furnish arguments and examples of crimes. The names of Holofernes, Moab, and Nero, were applied to Henry the Fourth. Commolet, one of the popular preachers, declaiming in the church of St. Bartholomew, at Christmas 1593, before a numerous audience of Parisians; after exalting with extravagant eulogiums, the murder of Henry the Third by Clement, thus addressed them. "We must have an Aöd! "We must have an Aöd! Let him be a monk, a soldier, a sutler, or a shepherd, no matter which (16)." Even the king's abjuration neither mollified, nor diminished their fury. Boucher, curate of St. Benedict's church at Paris, pronounced nine discourses, on the pretended and false conversion of Henry of Bourbon, in the same year; and he soon afterwards printed them, with a dedication to the papal legate, the cardinal of Placentia (17). Guarin, a Savoyard Cordelier, nearly at that time, exhorted his flock to "address their supplications to God, "that he would not permit the pope, who was always "conducted by the Holy Ghost, and who could never err in the faith, to be touched with Henry's "submissions, or to grant him absolution (18)." We may see in De Thou, every particular of the attempt of Ridicoux, a Dominican friar, to assassinate the king in 1599. He was expressly suborned, employed, and enjoined to penetrate this flagitious act by Malvezzi, the Papal nuntio at Bruffels (19).

The pontifical power itself, which diffused such terror in that age, was nevertheless, incapable of imposing silence on the clergy of the League. Aubry, curate of St. Andrew's at Paris, preaching on the 5th of September 1590, announced the death of Sixtus the Fifth, as a miraculous interposition of

(16) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 383, 385. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 251.
 (17) Ibid. p. 35. (18) Ibid. p. 35. (19) Ibid. vol. xiii p.
 417—423.

C H A P. II. Providence. "God," added he, "has delivered us
 " from a wicked and temporizing pope. If he had
 " lived longer, you would have been much surprized
 " to have heard him preached against in Paris; but it
 " must have been done (20)." It was common to
 exhort, and to compel the audience to lift up their
 hands, in token of approbation and obedience (21).
 Nor did the insolence of the ecclesiastics from the
 pulpit, terminate with the existence of the League,
 and the cause of rebellion. It continued to the end
 of Henry's reign, in defiance of every effort made
 by the crown and the parliaments, to impose a re-
 straint on so dangerous an engine of sedition (22).
 The vices, weakneses, modes, and measures of the
 great, were, by turns, the subject of their reprehension
 or abuse. Paris was divided between contending
 preachers, who strove to gain, and to retain the ascen-
 dant over the populace (23). Dress was a frequent,
 and fertile theme for their comments. Suffren, a
 Jesuit, declaiming in the church of "Notre Dame,"
 on the 9th of March 1610, against the luxury and
 immodesty of females in that article; observed, that
 "there was not a single coquet in Paris, however
 " obscure or insignificant, who did not shew her bo-
 " som, in imitation of Margaret of Valois (24)."
 Gonthieri, another favourite preacher, only a short
 time before Henry's assassination, unrestrained by
 any consideration for his person or dignity, ventured
 to apostrophize him in a manner the most indecorous.
 The king, accompanied by the marchioness of Ver-
 neuil his mistress, having entered the church; "How
 " long, Sire," exclaimed Gonthieri, "will you come
 " here, surrounded with women, as in a seraglio (25)?"

Ineffectual
endeavours
to suppress
it.

Suffren.

Gonthieri.

(20) Maimbourg, Hist. de la Ligue, liv. iv. Satyre Men. vol. ii. p. 207.
 (21) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 458, 459. (22) Journal d'Henry IV.,
 vol. i. tom. ii. p. 9, 10; and vol. ii. p. 133. (23) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i.
 p. 6, and p. 15, 16. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 86. (24) Vie de Marg.
 p. 401. Note. (25) Le Grain, liv. viii. p. 432.

It does not appear that any punishment was inflicted C H A P. II. for so flagrant a breach of respect towards the sovereign.

After the submission of the metropolis to Henry in 1594, many of the priests and monks not only refused to pray for him publicly, but they denied absolution to all such as followed the royal party. The exhortations of the archbishop of Bourges, accompanied by several eminent prelates, were ineffectual to alter their conduct; till the rector and members of the university of Paris concurred in the same sentiment, and threatened the refractory ecclesiastics with exemplary punishment (26). Even as late as 1606, not a breviary or missal in all France, contained the accustomed prayer for the king; and it became necessary for the various parliaments of the kingdom, to enjoin, and compel its insertion, under severe penalties (27).

The nature of oral confession was regarded as so sacred, that it superseded and extinguished all moral obligations, as well as every duty due from the subject to the State. Not even the preservation of the life of the sovereign from the murderous knife of an assassin, was supposed to justify, in the opinions of ecclesiastics, the disclosure of secrets entrusted to them in the confessional chair. It is impossible to prove and exemplify this assertion so forcibly, as in the circumstances attending Barriere's design of killing Henry the Fourth. That fanatic had consulted, on the rectitude of his determination, a priest, and father Seraphin a Dominican monk. The last mentioned person, shocked at the intention of Barriere, and unable to convince him of its detestable tendency, anticipated the crime, and sent intelligence to the court, in consequence of which the criminal was seized, and put to death (28). The king having

Secretly attached to oral confession.

(26) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 149—151.
vol. ii. d. 119, 120.

(27) Journal d'Henry IV.,
(28) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 238, 239.

been

C H A P. II. been informed erroneously, that Barriere, instead of simply consulting Seraphin on the propriety of the act, had communicated it to him in confession; said to the monk, when he was soon afterwards presented to him by Villeroy. "My good father, Barriere had revealed to you his wicked intention in confession, had he not?" The Dominican, somewhat agitated, instantly replied, "Sire, do not imagine it; I would not have divulged it in that case, for any thing in this world! I know of what consequence is the seal of the sacrament of confession, for the glory of God, the good of the church, and the safety of individuals. Barriere only proposed to me his intention, by way of asking my advice and opinion (29)." We must admit that it was impossible to avow more unequivocally his resolution, rather to have permitted Barriere to murder the king, than to have violated the secrecy attached to confession. Such was the ferocious and misguided fanaticism of the period. The civil tribunals, however, entertained very different sentiments on the subject, and would unquestionably have considered Seraphin as an accessory and accomplice of Barriere.

Veneration
for the apostolic
see.

Prodigious
concourse of
French,

How superstitious a veneration was still preserved, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, for the institutions of the apostolic see, and how generally it prevailed throughout all orders among the French, we may judge from the incredible number of devotees, who repaired to Rome in the year of Jubilee 1600. Cayet says, that twenty-four thousand were present at its opening, and that in the course of the year, not less than three hundred thousand of both sexes, made the long and perilous journey over the Alps, to reach the holy city. Clement the Eighth shed tears of joy, and expressed the most fervent satis-

(29) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 241.

faction,

faction, at such proofs of zeal and Catholicism (30). ^{C H A P. II.} This astonishing eagerness of the French to gain indulgences, is the more singular, when we know that ^{to the Jubilee.} Spain, a country proverbially bigotted and obedient to the successors of St. Peter, only furnished about six hundred pilgrims in the same year (31). Henry, who, in order to prove the sincerity of his conversion to the Catholic faith, omitted none of the external ceremonies which it enjoins, accompanied the queen in 1601 to Orleans, where indulgences, by the Papal permission and authority, were accorded to all who should visit the church of the holy cross (32). That the pontifical treasury derived no inconsiderable advantage from the crowds who eagerly flocked to the ancient capital of the world on these occasions, is evident from the frequent renewal of jubilees, upon the most trifling pretexts. In 1608, Paul the fifth instituted and celebrated one, the ostensible object of which was to implore the Divine assistance for uniting the Christian princes, and for extirpating heresy (33). It seems to have totally failed in accomplishing either of those salutary ends.

Advantages derived from them, by the popes.

As if France, at the conclusion of the sixteenth century, was not sufficiently provided with monastic orders of either sex, five new ones were introduced and established in the kingdom, between 1596 and the end of the reign under our review. The "Recollets" led the way, and obtained a footing, not without difficulty, and after many contests with the Cordeliers. They followed the rule of St. Francis, and were mendicants in the strictest sense of the term (34). Mary of Medecis, soon after her arrival from Italy, introduced and settled the "Fratri ignoranti," under her immediate patronage. The

Establishment of new monastic orders.

"Recollets."

"Fratri ignoranti."

(30) Chron. Sept. p. 192.

(31) Idem, *ibid.*

(32) Journal

d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 274, 275.

(33) *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 185.

(34) Chron. Sept. p. 457. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 86—90.

C H A P. II. title assumed by them, originated in their modesty, and did not prevent their attaining to very considerable knowledge, peculiarly in pharmacy. Their institution even promised some active and beneficial exertions for society; as, besides praying for the souls of the departed, they professed to lodge the traveller, to attend the sick, to furnish them with medicines, and to perform the rites of sepulture (35). Toulouse, a city recorded for its superstition, founded the "Feuillantines" within its walls: a female order, into which the young and beautiful marchionesses of Belle Isle soon afterwards entered (36). Touched with so exemplary a renunciation of worldly vanity, her sister the duchess of Longueville, aspired to emulate and to exceed the pattern of mortification exhibited by the marchionesses. Not content with simply immuring herself in a cloister, she desired to become a foundress. Her imagination, heated and disordered by perusing the legend of St. Theresa, a Spanish lady who had instituted the order of the bare-footed "Carmelites," impelled her to effect the introduction of those nuns into France. Her enthusiasm spurned all impediments, and surmounted every obstacle. Five nuns were brought from Castile to Paris, by a solemn delegation appointed for the purpose; and a convent was soon opened for their reception (37).

Louisa of Lorraine, widow of Henry the Third, as some consolation for not having perpetuated the crown in the family of Valois, projected to secure a celestial diadem for herself, by giving birth to a new religious order, of which she meant to become a member. Death anticipated her pious purpose, which devolved on her sister-in-law, the duchess of Mercœur. She procured the Papal permission for founding the "Capucines." As it was, nevertheless, indecent and

(35) Chron. Sept. iii. p. 457, 458.
P. 458, 459.

(36) Idem, *ibid.*

(37) *Ibid.*

improper that females should, in their own persons, solicit eleemosynary donations, the obligation of begging for them was imposed on their brethren the Capuchins. But those holy fathers, justly conceiving that it was an employment sufficient to provide subsistence for themselves from the voluntary benevolence of mankind, refused to take on their shoulders the additional burthen of supporting the new sisterhood. It required the peremptory injunctions and interference of the holy see, to surmount their repugnance, and to procure their submission to so harsh a mandate (38).

All these minor institutions of superstition were swallowed up and lost in the fame of the Jesuits. That celebrated order, which owed its formation to Ignatius Loyola about the middle of the sixteenth century, and which, after attracting the attention of mankind during more than two hundred years, has by a sort of common consent, been suppressed in our own time, had penetrated into France under the reign of Henry the Second. Their Spanish origin; their devotion to Philip the Second; the unqualified obedience professed by them to the commands of the see of Rome; and the genius or spirit of the society itself; had nevertheless awakened the jealous attention of the parliament of Paris towards all their proceedings. During the existence of the League, they had given the most unequivocal proofs of their adherence to the views of the court of Madrid; and they had not submitted to Henry the Fourth till all further resistance was vain (39). Soon after the reduction of Paris in 1594, the university of that capital commenced a prosecution against the order at the bar of the parliament, and demanded their expulsion from France, as emissaries of Spain, and traitors to the

(38) Chron. Sept. p. 459.

(39) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 151.

C H A P. State (40). The clergy, and in particular the curates of the metropolis, irritated at the interference of the Jesuits, who by address had insinuated themselves into a number of families, and supplanted the curates in the lucrative employment of preaching, and of receiving confessions, joined in the accusation. The cause was argued during several days; and the utmost eloquence was exerted by Arnauld and Dolé, as counsel for the university and the clergy. Duret displayed equal talents in defending the Jesuits; and after long debates on the part of the judges, the final decision was postponed (41).

University of Paris demands their expulsion.

Proceedings against the order.

Before the close of the year 1594, Henry was stabbed by Chatel in the mouth; and that assassin, who had received the rudiments of his education under the Jesuits, at the college of Clermont in Paris, having been interrogated, though he discharged the order of all participation in the attempt, yet the parliament involved them in the penalties of his sentence (42).

Guignard's punishment.

By an act of unjustifiable and tyrannical authority, Guignard, one of the society, a man of learning and of eminence in his profession, was executed for only having in his closet some manuscript writings, of a tendency inimical to kingly government, and defamatory of Henry the Third. He suffered not only with constancy, but with heroism, amidst the insults of the populace (43).

Exile of the Jesuits.

The parliament, profiting of the fermentation and animosity excited by the king's recent danger, instantly issued a peremptory order, commanding the Jesuits to quit France in fifteen days, on pain of death. They obeyed, in all the provinces subject to the jurisdiction of the parliament of Paris, as well as in those of

(40) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 378—387. (41) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 241—274. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 337—339. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 33—35. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 378—406. (42) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 67. (43) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 346—348. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 72—74.

Rouen and of Dijon. It appears that at this time, their numbers in the capital amounted to no more than thirty-seven: but the superior talents or industry which they displayed in the education of youth, excited the enmity of the other ecclesiastics, while it rendered their loss regretted by a considerable part of the community (44). Not satisfied with banishing them, the parliament declared them corruptors of youth, disturbers of the public repose, and enemies of the king and of the state. All their property was seized, and sequestered to pious uses. A pyramid, commemorative of Chatel's crime, and on which inscriptions dishonoring to the Jesuits were engraven, erected in the centre of Paris, seemed to immortalize their infamy (45). Throughout the whole of this transaction, which unquestionably carries with it the marks of injustice and precipitation, the king seems to have been passive, and to have taken no part, either in behalf of the persecuted society of Jesuits, or in their proscription and condemnation.

Such nevertheless was the attachment felt for them; and so eminent did the services which they rendered in the education of youth, appear to the parliaments of Bourdeaux and of Toulouse, that they refused to concur in the execution of the sentence issued at Paris. On the contrary, throughout all the provinces between the Garonne and the Rhone, the society was protected, retained possession of their colleges, and suffered none of the penalties or privations contained in the decree of 1594 (46). It was in vain that the parliament of Paris, indignant at so contemptuous an infraction of their orders, published new and reiterated prohibitions to shelter or maintain them in any

C H A P.
II.Pyramid
erected.Attachment
to the Je-
suits,

(44) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 75, 76. (45) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 339—342. Chiverny. vol. i. p. 347—349. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 432—437. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 337. Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 191.

(46) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 350.

C H A P. part of the French monarchy (47). These impotent marks of resentment were treated with disregard; and the parliament of Toulouse opposed to them counter decrees, forbidding any molestation of the persons or effects of the Jesuits. It is not less singular than true, that the crown took no measure to support the one or the other sentence; and by a destiny equally uncommon and capricious, while the order was persecuted in one part of the kingdom, it was honoured and protected in the adjoining provinces (48).

II.
and protection of them,

in the southern provinces.
Their numbers.

In this equivocal state they remained during several years: but even under a partial exile and proscription, so great was the augmentation of their numbers, that at a general assembly of the order, held in May 1603 at Bourdeaux, they exceeded fifteen hundred (49). Many Spaniards were asserted to have mixed among them in disguise: it may however be justly doubted, whether malignity had not a larger share than truth in the accusation. It is unquestionable, that their superior facility in the science of instructing youth, had attracted to their seminaries the sons of all the principal nobility in the provinces of Languedoc and Guienne (50).

Causes of their recall.

Many causes contributed to procure their recall to the metropolis, and their complete re-establishment in all the rights or possessions of which they had been deprived: The intercessions of Clement the Eighth; the services rendered by cardinal Tolet, one of their members, in facilitating and accelerating the king's absolution at Rome; the favour and good offices of various individuals about the court; lastly, the unanimous oblivion of injuries which distinguished Henry the Fourth, or, if we may believe a severe,

(47) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 158—161.
p. 166—169. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 221—223.
and p. 26. Chron. Sept. p. 434. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 195.

(49) Ibid. p. 241.

(48) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i.
Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 5, 6,
Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 242.

though

though penetrating writer, his apprehension of falling a victim to the revenge of so powerful and vndictive a society (51). The remonstrances of the parliament of Paris were over-ruled and silenced; all their confiscated revenues were restored to the order; and the pyramid that eternized their participation in the crime of Chatel, was demolished as a sort of atonement to their innocence (52). How rapidly they advanced in power after their return, and with what perseverance, as well as malice, they ventured to attack the ministers whom they conceived to be inimical to the grandeur of the society, we may see in the Memoirs of Sully (53). Even the circumstances intended to depress and humiliate them, conducted to their elevation. One of their members having been enjoined to attend constantly the person of the sovereign, in order to answer for the obedience and good deportment of his brethren, they were enabled thereby to claim, to acquire, and to retain the employment of confessor to the king. It is needless to state the advantages resulting from the possession of such a post, or the ascendant which it naturally conferred over a weak, a timid, or a superstitious prince.

C H A P.
II.
Restoration
of their
property.

Their pro-
gress.

During the remainder of the reign under our review, their influence was progressive; and Henry, from whatever motive, may be said to have oppressed them with benefits. Colleges, schools, and establishments of every description were lavished on the order (54). The clergy of France, as a collective body, was compelled in 1605, to furnish the Jesuits with no less a sum than fifty thousand crowns, towards the construction of their celebrated church at La

Power of
the order,

(51) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 539. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 298—300.
Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 192—196. (52) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 300.
—312. (53) Sully, vol. i. tome ii, p. 329—332. (54) Journ.
d'Hen. IV., tome ii. p. 204.

C H A P. II. Fleche in Anjou (55). Three years afterwards, by command of the government, they were re-established throughout the principality of Bearn (56). It is not a little curious to reflect, that as the last and greatest proof of their insinuation, they obtained from Henry a promise of his heart to be delivered to them after his decease. The engagement was fulfilled; and fifteen days subsequent to his assassination, that monarch's heart was solemnly consigned to their care, conveyed by a deputation of their order to La Fleche, and there deposited (57). We must at least be compelled to admit the talents, if we do not recognize the virtue, of the society. In 1610 they enjoyed high consideration, increasing reputation, and augmenting revenues. The most distinguished youth of France were their pupils, and became their protectors. Previous to their exile in 1594, during the course of about thirty years which had then elapsed since they first began to open seminaries, more than fifty thousand young men had received their education from the Jesuits (58). It seems impossible to doubt that their mode of instruction was, as they maintained to be the fact, far superior to the system in use among the other ecclesiastics; or that the voluntary preference given them as preceptors, by a whole nation, was a just tribute to their capacity and learning.

Their state
at the close

of this
reign.

Their skill
in educating
youth.

Hugonots.

Policy of
Henry to-
wards them.

The Hugonots, at every period of the reign of Henry the Fourth, from its commencement to its conclusion, were objects of his constant and anxious attention. Their numbers, enthusiasm, and resources, rendered them not only respectable, but formidable. It is indispensable, in order not to leave the picture of France at the beginning of the seventeenth

(55) Conf. de Sancy, p. 123.
163.

(57) Ibid. p. 167, 168.

(56) Journ. de Hen. IV., vol. ii. p.
(58) Villeroj, vol. iv. p. 546.

century incomplete, to trace with accuracy, though ^{C H A P.} with brevity, the leading features of Henry's policy ^{II.} and conduct towards this class of his subjects. As early as 1589, even before the death of his predecessor, he had found it expedient to revoke a concession made by him to the Hugonots in the preceding year; namely, a permission to erect six chambers, or courts of justice, in six of the principal cities of the party. He had only granted them so dangerous a privilege, with a view to avert a greater calamity, their chusing a foreign prince for protector (59). We can scarcely doubt, that the most clear-sighted and discerning among the Protestants, had early foreseen, and were fully prepared for the event of his abjuration, as sooner or later unavoidable. Sully, in his Memoirs, admits its expediency, and seems, at least negatively, to have advised its execution (60). ^{Advice of D'Aubigné to the king.} D'Aubigné alone of all Henry's followers, informs us that he ventured to offer him a very opposite counsel. It was no other than to remain firm in his faith, and to seize on all the property of the monastic orders, in imitation of Henry the Eighth; leaving to the secular clergy their possessions undiminished. He pretended to prove by accurate calculations, that the wealth thus sequestered would enable the crown to diminish one third of the taxes; to maintain three armies of a hundred thousand men, and a hundred cannon each; to provide ample garrisons; to pay the military officers; and to lay up near a hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling annually (61). ^{Reflexions on it.} It is difficult to say, whether we are most inclined to admire so bold and masculine a plan, as one of the most sublime conceptions of a vigorous mind, or to condemn it as visionary and chimerical. A proposi-

(59) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 362. Conf. de Sancy, p. 382.

(60) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 107.

(61) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 292. Conf. de Sancy, p. 372, and p. 374.

C H A P. II. tion nearly similar, as far as it respected the monastic orders, had been made under Henry the Third in 1581, by an anonymous writer (62). The solicitations of Gabrielle d'Etrées, and the conviction which Henry the Fourth felt of its danger and impracticability, induced him to prefer the alternative of embracing the Catholic religion.

Temporary edict in favour of the Hugonots.

From this period, the Hugonots no longer regarded him as other than a concealed enemy, and an apostate; though he strove by caresses, by excuses, and by promises, to retain, or to recover their affections. Early in 1595, while his affairs might still be considered as very critical, he compelled the parliament of Paris to register and to publish a temporary edict in their favour, renewing that of Poitiers granted them by his predecessor in 1577. It was not carried through the parliament without violent debates, extreme repugnance, and only by a small majority of six votes, notwithstanding the personal solicitation and exertions of the king (63). Far from satisfying or conciliating his Protestant subjects, they exhibited marks of discontent, complained of his ingratitude, and began to seek for protectors against the power of the crown. Henry having deprived them of the support of a prince of the blood, by bringing to court, and educating in the Catholic faith the young prince of Condé; the dukes of la Tremouille and of Bouillon successively and separately aspired to that dangerous eminence. Many of their chiefs retired to their castles in the provinces. Synods or assemblies were held for the purpose of deliberating on the measures to be pursued for their common safety; and the party remained in a state of sullen alienation. Even the capture of Amiens by the

Complaints of that body.

They abandon Henry,

(62) Conf. de Sancy, p. 375. (63) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 346—348. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 81—86.

Spaniards,

Spaniards, the danger of the monarchy, and the pressing solicitations of the king himself, who conjured them not to abandon him in a moment of such just apprehension, were ineffectual to induce them to repair to the royal standard. About fifteen hundred Hugonots only obeyed the summons, and rescued their brethren from the imputation of totally deserting their antient master in his greatest distress (64). The far larger number of the reformed continued to arm, more as it was believed with an intent to attack, than to support the crown (65). The valour, constancy, and fortune of Henry, aided by various circumstances, enabled him nevertheless to retake Amiens, and ultimately to give peace to France.

Wearied by the solicitations of the Protestants, and fearful that despair might precipitate them on some violent resolution, the king granted them soon afterwards, at Nantes, that celebrated and permanent edict, under which they enjoyed for near ninety years, protection and tranquillity. Every civil, religious, and political right, consistent with the preservation of the Catholic faith and ecclesiastical establishment, was conceded by it to the Hugonots. They were rendered capable of holding and exercising all employments in the law, the army, or the state. A court, denominated "the chamber of the edict," was created in the parliament of Paris, for the trial of causes in which they were concerned, either as plaintiffs or defendants. Similar regulations were framed in all the provincial parliaments (66). We may see in De Thou, with what difficulty a law of such consequence to the general tranquillity of

C H A P.
II.
at the siege
of Amiens.

Edict of
Nantes.

Privileges
recorded
by it.

(64) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 459. (65) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 703. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 225—236. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 373—375. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 123, 124. Davila, p. 1336, 1337.

C H A P. II. the kingdom was adopted and promulgated at the reiterated and peremptory command of the sovereign (67).

Arts of corruption.

Notwithstanding these proofs of his affection and care, Henry found it requisite to have recourse to the arts of corruption; and to purchase by pecuniary gratifications, the leaders of a party, who were neither to be subdued by violence, nor to be conciliated by caresses. It was with this silent and imperceptible but effectual weapon, that he disarmed their rage, dispersed their assemblies, and rendered ineffectual their cabals. All the eminent reformed clergy and magistrates, as well as many of the principal Hugonot nobility, were pensioners of the court (68). Even the inferior instruments were not forgotten; and Tavannes assures us that the most insignificant individuals among them, who were deemed capable of giving information, received regular stipends (69).

Sums expended by Henry,

to gain the Hugonots:

Above fifty thousand crowns a year were constantly allotted to so important a branch of secret service (70.) Henry did not scruple to own to d'Aubigné in confidence, that a man high in the counsels of the Protestants, and one of the greatest families in France, served him in the capacity of a spy, and revealed to government all their machinations, for so inconsiderable a salary as about sixty pounds sterling a year (71). The duke of la Tremouille alone, appears to have been inaccessible to all the efforts made to corrupt his fidelity and adherence. He rejected with firmness every offer, however lucrative or flattering (72.) His death, which took place in 1604, added to the submission of the duke of Bouillon two years later, seemed to disarm the party of which they were the lea-

(67) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 375—386.

p. 140—142, and p. 148. Confess. de Sancy, p. 559, 560. Davila, p. 1334—1336.

(69) Tavannes, p. 395.

(70) Idem, ibid.

(71) D'Aub. Mémoires, p. 150, 151.

(72) D'Aub. Hist. Univ.

vql. iii. p. 454, 455.

ders, and to lay them at the feet of the crown : yet far ^{C H A P} from relaxing his vigilance, the king's precautions and ^{II.} apprehensions strengthened as he advanced in life.

We may judge how strongly he resented, as well as ^{His conver-} dreaded, the partiality entertained for those chiefs, by ^{sation with} the curious and interesting conversation between Henry and d'Aubigné, which that writer, with his usual freedom, has transmitted to us in his Memoirs. It conveys a beautiful picture of the frankness with which the ancient servants and followers of the king, ventured to disclose to him their thoughts ; and it proves not less the generosity and beneficence of his character, which overbore all considerations of interest or policy. D'Aubigné had irritated his master by the inflexibility of his adherence to the Hugonots, and by his attempts to oppose the influence of government in their assemblies. Henry, as he was hunting in the vicinity of Paris, entered into conversation with him on these points ; and after excusing his past conduct as the result of good intention, endeavoured to attach him to the court by an honourable and advantageous proposal. He then embraced d'Aubigné, leaving him to reflect on what had passed, and pursued his diversion. " I followed him," says the historian, " and having overtaken him, I said to him ; ' Sire, when I look in your countenance, I " resume my former liberties and boldness. Open " three buttons of your waistcoat, and when I see " your heart, do me the favour to tell me what it is " that has moved you to hate me.' The king turn- " ing pale, as he usually did, when he spoke with " emotion, answered me ; ' You have loved the duke " of la Tremouille too well : you knew that I de- " tested him ; and yet you did not cease to continue " to him your affection.'—' Sire,' replied I, ' I " have been brought up at your majesty's feet ; " and I there learnt betimes, not to abandon per- " sons in affliction, overwhelmed by a superior " power."

C H A P.
II.

“ power. Approve in me that apprenticeship of
 “ ‘ virtue which I have passed in your own company.’
 “ My answer was followed by a second embrace
 “ which my master gave me, ordering me at the
 “ same time to retire (73). Notwithstanding, how-
 ever, this ebullition of kindness, the king finding
 d’Aubigné continue his dangerous or seditious efforts
 in favour of the reformed religion and adherents,
 gave orders to Sully to arrest, and confine him in the
 Bastile. The command was on the point of being
 executed, when d’Aubigné averted it by going to
 court and demanding a pension (74).

Sully was made governor of Poitou, in order to
 watch over and to repress any tendency to insurrecti-
 on throughout that extensive province, where the
 reformed religion had numerous adherents (75).
 The slightest symptom of discontent among the
 Hugonots excited more alarm in Henry’s mind,
 than all the menaces or preparations of Philip the
 Third (76). His wisdom and moderation retained
 them within the bounds of obedience, to the termi-
 nation of his reign.

State of the
Hugonots,

At that period, neither their numbers nor resour-
 ces, military and pecuniary, were in any considerable
 degree diminished from the point to which they had
 attained at the death of Henry the Third. Some
 few apostates, induced by the example of their
 prince, had, it is true, embraced the Catholic faith:
 but such instances had rather tended to excite con-
 tempt than emulation, and do not seem to have
 met with great encouragement or reward from the
 king (77). Notwithstanding, however, the appa-
 rent strength and forces of the Protestants, the basis
 of their civil existence as a party, was undermined
 and shaken. A period of twenty years had elapsed,

at Henry’s
death.

(73) D’Aub. Memoires, p. 149—152.

p. 161—63.

(75) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 182—189.

vol. ii. tome i. p. 212—214.

(74) D’Aub. Memoires,

(76) *ibid.*

(77) Journal d’Henry IV., vol. i. tome

ii. p. 111, 112.

since

since the sword had been avowedly drawn between the followers of the two religions. The Hugonots were destitute of any chief among the princes of the blood, and they were divided among each other. The magistrates and people were jealous of the nobility, and gold had found its way to their most secret deliberations. Persecution had subsided; and a most beneficial, though an invisible and gradual change, had softened the rancour of antient animosity. We can scarcely conceive how vast was this alteration in the minds of men, and in the modes of thinking, between 1589 and 1610. Such was the detestation of the Catholics towards the Hugonots who fought under the same banners at the former period, that even the presence of their common master and sovereign could not restrain it within any limit.

C H A P.
II.Change in
the human
mind, on
religious
concerns.

It is difficult to believe, if we did not know it from an eye-witness, that after the memorable combat at Arques, the king having assisted in his own lodgings, together with a number of his officers, at the exercises of religion, the Catholic Switzers of his army, led on by the duke of Montpensier, a prince of the royal family, assembled in order to interrupt their devotions. Those who chanced to arrive late, were outraged and wounded by the soldiery. Several of them entered the apartment, all over blood, and demanded vengeance for so unprovoked an insult. Henry, his eyes suffused with tears, yet repressed his indignation, quitted the room in which he had met to offer up his prayers to Heaven, and followed by all the assistants, repaired to a meadow without the gates of Dieppe, there to resume and finish their interrupted rites (78). It is difficult not to admire so magnanimous a triumph over his just resentment.

Intolerance
at Dieppe,

(78) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 222.

C H A P.
II.

and at
Rouen.

Two years afterwards, during the siege of Rouen, the young cardinal of Bourbon, and the zealous Catholics in the royal army, caused the graves to be opened, in which the corpses of the Hugonots, their fellow soldiers and comrades, had been recently interred. Animated by a savage spirit of detestation towards men of an opposite faith, though engaged in the same cause, they had the barbarity to throw the dead bodies of their brave and meritorious associates, to the ravens and the wolves (79). The king was compelled to be a passive spectator of this violation of the sanctity of the tomb.

Decline of
the spirit of
persecution.

His abjuration in 1594 may be said to have given a mortal wound to the enmity between the two religions; and the Catholics, satisfied with so illustrious a victim, lost much of their preceding antipathy towards heretics. Notwithstanding the positive prohibition contained in the fourteenth article of the edict of Nantes, to "preach or perform any act of the reformed worship, either in the court and royal residence, or within five leagues of Paris;" we find Catherine, princess of Navarre, Henry's sister, openly violating it with perfect impunity. She ventured, not once, but constantly during several years, to cause public worship to be performed in the palace of the Louvre itself, to which all persons were freely admitted (80). Marriages were publicly celebrated after the Protestant ritual; the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered; and meat was served at her table on days when flesh was interdicted by the Romish calendar (81). It is to be observed, that at the precise time when she thus manifested her invincible attachment to heresy, in the midst of the

Conduct of
the princes
of Navarre.

(79) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 93. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 264.
(80) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 54. (81) Idem, tome ii.
p. 22, and p. 43, and p. 58, and p. 88, and p. 132, and p. 155. and p. 164,
and p. 250.

capital and court, L'Etoile acquaints us, "Proclama-^{C H A P.}
 "tion was made in Paris, forbidding any person ^{II.}
 "to eat flesh in Lent without a dispensation, on
 "pain of corporal punishment; and enjoining but-
 "chers neither to sell, nor even to expose meat, on
 "penalty of death (82)." Criminals, condemned
 to die for capital crimes, were publicly visited and
 attended in prison by Hugonot ministers (83).

The Parisians, who, a few years or almost months
 before, would have run with fire-brands and instru-
 ments of destruction to suppress such heretical pro-
 ceedings, scarcely presumed to murmur, and were
 rather impressed with astonishment than resentment.
 Cardinal Gondy, accompanied by some of the clergy,^{Remon-}
 did, indeed, remonstrate with the king on so public ^{strances of}
 and indecent an encouragement of heresy. But the ^{the clergy.}
 answer which he received, was not of a nature to
 encourage him to repeat the experiment (84). When
 Benoist, curate of the parish of St. Eustace, took
 some liberties with his tongue in censuring the prin-
 cess's conduct, she sent for him, and reprimanded
 him with asperity for his insolence (85). It excited
 no complaint among the people. In 1606, the
 Protestants, with Henry's express permission, met at ^{Protestants}
 Charenton, scarcely two leagues from the gates of ^{preach at}
 the metropolis, to exercise their religion. The Pa- ^{Charenton.}
 risians appear to have been incensed at so daring an
 act, which was committed in open contempt of the
 limitations and restrictions contained in the edict of
 Nantes. They shewed a disposition to interrupt and
 to disturb the Hugonots, who were near three
 thousand in number, but the presence of the archers
 of the royal guard restrained the multitude, and
 prevented any riot or outrage, though not without
 considerable difficulty (86).

(82) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 88.
 and p. 162.

(84) Idem, p. 54.

(83) Idem, p. 132,
 (85) Journ. d'Henry IV.,

vol. i. tome ii. p. 82.

(86) Idem, vol. ii. p. 122, 123.

C H A P.
II.

Change in
the court of
Rome.

Clement the
Eighth,

and Paul
the Fifth,

correspond
with Sully.

Spirit of the
people in
the provin-
ces.

Nor was this salutary change in the minds of men, upon religious subjects, confined to Paris or to France. It pervaded Europe, and operated with singular efficacy in the court of Rome itself. Clement the Eighth, a pontiff of a sound and enlightened understanding, exhibited a very different spirit from that by which his predecessors, Pius the Fifth, and Gregory the Fourteenth were animated. He desired to extinguish heresy by persuasion, and not by persecution. Throughout his whole pontificate, he abstained from any act of violence towards the professors of the reformed religion; and he even freely issued passports to them, in virtue of which they could visit or reside in Rome without danger or personal molestation (87). No preceding pope since Luther's appearance, had relaxed so much from the severity against them; and Paul the Fifth, Clement's successor, imitated him in his amiable part of his conduct. Both those pontiffs carried on an epistolary correspondence with Sully; and their letters to him, though tinged with becoming zeal, might from the liberal sentiments with which they abound, have been dictated by Lambertini or Ganganelli, the two most beneficent prelates who have occupied the chair of St. Peter in the present century (88). The answers of the Hugonot superintendent, breathe the utmost veneration for the apostolic see, and respect towards the vicars of Christ.

At the period of Henry's assassination, when the reins of government were necessarily relaxed during the vacancy or minority which took place, the people in the provinces seemed to have buried in his grave all their past animosities. Instead of arming against each other, as they would have done under

(87) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 72, 73. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 203.

(88) Sully, vol. i. tome ii p. 403—425; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 148—151.

Charles the Ninth or Henry the Third, the Catholics and Protestants throughout France, took each other under their mutual protection. They even swore "inviolable fidelity and reciprocal assistance against whomsoever should molest them (89)." So wonderful a union was regarded at the time, as produced by supernatural and divine interposition. Even the clergy of the two religions were animated with the same benevolent spirit, and joined in inculcating obedience to the laws, forgiveness, and toleration. On the 30th of May 1610, sixteen days after the king's death, a Capuchin friar, preaching at St. Andrew's church in Paris, exhorted his audience "to live in peace with each other, notwithstanding the diversity of religion." He advised the people "to leave all theological controversies to the Sorbonne and to the schools, and implicitly to yield obedience to the edicts of their late excellent departed master, that great restorer of the state, who, for wise reasons, and for the repose of his subjects, had enacted them; that in so doing, they could not err (90)." We cannot desire any more convincing proof of the prodigious alteration effected by a few years of vigour and toleration.

C H A P.
II.

and of the
Catholic
clergy.

Example of
it.

All the inherent and inveterate abuses which had dishonoured the administration of justice during the reigns of the princes of Valois, continued to pollute it under Henry the Fourth. Such was the confusion and subversion of the very forms of law, that in the year 1590, for many months the office of chancellor of France was totally suspended. The great seal commonly remained in the possession of Ruzé, secretary of state. Marshal Biron, who though commander in chief under the king, yet aspired to direct legal, as well as military operations, continually

Courts of
justice.

Vacancy of
the post of
chancellor.

(89) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. p. 158, 159.
166, 167.

(90) Idem, p.

disputed

C H A P.
 II. } disputed with the marquis D'O, superintendant of the finances, for the right of sealing and expediting public acts. Their equal ignorance of the common or civil law, led them into perpetual violations of equity and of jurisprudence, highly injurious to their master's affairs. Henry, disgusted at their errors, and wearied by their altercations, recalled the ancient chancellor Chiverny, and delegated to him anew the badges of his office (91). From this period, the external decorum and dignity of the proceedings in courts of law began to re-appear; but the fountain itself was not less corrupt. Importunities, solicitations, and presents, were offered and received with impunity (92). So vile and abject were many of the provincial judges appointed by the crown, that they did not blush to enter into the immediate service of princes, noblemen, governors, and corporate bodies, from whom they received pecuniary stipends, and in whose favour they perverted the course of justice (93).

Venality of
 the provin-
 cial judges.

The calamities of France, and in particular the distress occasioned by the capture of Amiens in 1597, compelled the king to have recourse to very pernicious expedients for raising money with expedition.

Augmenta-
 tion of legal
 employ-
 ments,

Among these, was the augmentation of the number of counsellors in all the parliaments of the kingdom. The imperious necessity which dictated the measure, carried it into effect, notwithstanding the murmurs and opposition experienced in the courts of civil and criminal law (94). Persons, employed in the public service, received their assignments on the profits to be derived from the sale of the newly-created offices; but such was the general consternation at that juncture, and so precarious was the very existence of the monarchy, that no purchasers could be

(91) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 168, 169. Chiverney, vol. i. p. 174—187.

(92) Journal Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 40, and p. 44, and p. 46, 47, and p. 97, and p. 178.

(93) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 23.

(94) Sully,

vol. i. tome i. p. 351, and p. 462.

found for them, while Amiens remained in possession of the Spaniards. We find Henry writing to Rosny in August 1597, to acquaint him, that even for places in the parliament of Paris, there was not an offer made; and beseeching him to assign the payment of garrisons, which were in imminent danger of mutinying for want of their arrears, upon some more efficient fund. (95).

C H A P.
H.
Want of
purchas-
ers
for them.

In 1604, the institution of the "Paulette," which for a small annual consideration made to the crown, enabled the holders of legal employments to transmit or devolve them at death to their heirs general, carried the venality of the law to its utmost height, and rendered it perpetual. It seemed impossible to devise a mode of filling the royal coffers, more injurious to the subject, or more pernicious in its effect on equity and morals. Mezeray, though he wrote under Louis the Fourteenth, when the evil was in full force, yet speaks of it in terms of horror and natural indignation (96). In 1597, the place of a president in the parliament of Paris sold for about two thousand pounds (97). Three years afterwards, the post of a counsellor in the same body seems to have been valued at five hundred (98). Henry, in 1594, in order to enable Gabrielle d'Etrées to defray her journey to Lyons, presented her with one of the latter employments (99). When writing to Sully in 1608, he says, "the lady of Effarts being in want of money, I have given her a mastership of accounts in Normandy. I have spoken to the president Motteville to verify it (100)." It is not to be forgotten that both these ladies, on whom he thus confers legal offices, were his mist-

"Paulette."
Its institu-
tion.

Price of
legal offices.

Donations of
them to la-
dies.

(95) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 366.

(96) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 310—

314.

(97) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 152.

(98) Sully,

vol. i. tome i. p. 463, 464.

(99) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome

ii. p. 61.

(100) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 266.

C H A P. reffes. Such donations excited neither fhame nor
 II. furprize.

Fees of
 lawyers.

Attempt to
 reform
 them.

Its effects.

Conduct of
 the king.

The enormous amount of fees and charges made by attornies in all the courts of law, was an object of general complaint during the period under our review. We may form fome estimate of their magnitude, when we find the duke of Luxembourg complaining to Henry in 1602, that a fum nearly amounting to two hundred pounds sterling had been demanded of him by counfel, to plead a caufe, which was then depending before the parliament of Paris (101). In confequence of this and other notorious instances of extortion or impofition, an order was publifhed, enjoining all advocates to declare in writing the fums received by them in fees, to the end that the court might, on the final decifion of the fuit or caufe, regulate the expence to be defrayed by the lofing parties. The penalty of felony was annexed to refusal. All the old practitioners at the bar fubmitted; but the young lawyers, to the number of three hundred and feven, having met, gave in their unanimous refignation, or rather renunciation. Legal proceedings of every kind being fufpended in the capital by fo extraordinary a circumftance, a fedition was apprehended; and meffengers were difpatched to acquaint the king, who was then abfent at Poitiers. There were wanting minifters, who advifed him to compel the refractory lawyers to refume their profefion within eight days, on pain of being obliged to enter into trade, or to apply to agriculture. The parliament appeared to be difpofed to fupport the meafure, if adopted by government. But Henry, occupied with various matters of moment, and engroffed by the defire of getting Biron into his poffeffion, whole machinations with foreign powers he dreaded, preferred a more temperate alternative.

The order issued relative to fees, was tacitly revoked or suspended; the pleadings recommenced; and the evil, so loudly and justly denounced, rather acquired force by the ineffectual endeavours used for its suppression (102). Another abuse, of which equal complaint was made, consisted in the duration of suits. Sully says, that the one depending between the crown and the duke of Nevers, respecting the estates of the families of Foix and Albret, had already lasted more than sixty years, without coming to a decision (103). It must, however, be admitted, that this grievance has not been confined to France; and that even the English tribunals of civil law are not altogether exempt in the present age from a similar imputation.

C H A P.
II.Duration of
law-suits.

The parliament of Paris, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, notwithstanding the venality with which it was infected, and the improper persons who, by favour or money, found means to intrude themselves into it, yet was a venerable, learned, and majestic assembly. Their decisions and line of conduct on many occasions, were marked by wisdom, public spirit, and patriotism. As a court of criminal judicature, they seem to have been more exempt from censure, more upright, and less biassed by unworthy motives, or by a tame subserviency to the royal will, than in their capacity of civil judges in cases of property. It may be reasonably questioned, whether the English house of lords under Elizabeth, considered as a high court of justice, was equally pure and independent. The jury of twenty-five peers, before whom the earl of Essex was indicted in 1601, betrayed more servile devotion to the crown, and was more disposed to adopt its prejudices or its resentments, than the parliament of Paris, at

Parliament
of Paris.Its spirit
and decisionsin criminal
causes.

(102) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 63. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 184, 185. Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 54. (103) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 123.

whose

C H A P.
II.

whose bar marshal Biron was arraigned in the following year. If we compare the illiberal language and injurious epithets applied by Yelverton and Coke to the unfortunate Effex, with the humanity and indulgences extended towards Biron by his judges, we shall not hesitate to decide, that the French tribunal was at once more dignified and more equitable (104).

Hours of
the courts
of law.

The hours at which the courts of law met for hearing and determining suits or trials under Henry the Fourth, partook of the simplicity of early times. We find, that when the emissaries of the "council of sixteen" seized on and executed Brisson, first president of the parliament of Paris, on the 16th of November 1591, they stopped him as he was on his way to the hall, soon after four o'clock in the morning (105). Before 1602, some relaxation seems to have taken place in this particular. Biron was usually conducted to the "Palais," where the parliament held its sittings, between five and six o'clock; and the chancellor always caused the interrogatories to commence precisely at six in the morning (106). In the trial of a peer, the other

Right of
the peers to
assist.

peers of France had a right to assist, and to opine in the high court of parliament; but the whole order unanimously declined to be present at Biron's arraignment, and could not, either by legal summons, or by the king's express command, be induced to attend, throughout the course of the proceedings (107). The parliament of Paris, when all the

Numbers of
the parlia-
ment.

chambers or courts were assembled, appears in 1595, to have consisted of near one hundred and twenty members (108). Several counsellors and masters of accounts were added by edict, two years after-

(104) Camden's Elizabeth, p. 543, 544. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 302, 303, and p. 313, 314.

(105) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 80.

(106) Ibid. vol. i. tome ii. p. 188—190.

(107) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv.

v. p. 297—299. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. 187.

(108) Journ.

d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 85.

wards,

wards, on the capture of Amiens by Portocarrero (109). During the troubles of the League, in December 1592, we find that only fifty-one counsellors remained in the metropolis (110). The remainder had fled to the king, and were by him transferred to the city of Tours.

The firm and vigorous resistance, opposed by the parliament of Paris on every occasion, to the efforts made for extending the Papal authority, at the expence of the majesty of the French crown, and the liberties of the nation, claims our esteem. They were not less tenacious in repressing the insolence of turbulent ecclesiastics, and in restraining the irregularities or extravagant pretensions of the monastic orders (111). Their loyalty had been displayed, even in times of revolt and anarchy; nor ought it to be forgotten, that their celebrated remonstrance to the duke of Mayenne, in June 1593, conduced eminently to the preservation of the Salic law, and the eventual submission of Paris in the following year (112). The people found in them a bulwark, though a feeble and ineffectual one, against the oppression of prerogative, and the augmentation of taxes. If all these circumstances are considered, we must admit, that, notwithstanding the vices inseparable from the nature of their constitution, they were eminently entitled to the protection of the crown; and that they conduced in no small degree to the general welfare and prosperity of the nation.

C H A P.
II.General re-
view of their
conduct,

principles,

and line of
action.

(109) Sully vol. i. tome i. p. 351.
i. tome i. p. 127.
xiii. p. 29, 30.

(110) Journal d'Henry IV., vol.

(111) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 486—490; and vol.

(112) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 268—271.

C H A P. III.

State of letters.—Natural philosophy.—Pharmacy.—Jurisprudence.—Oratory and eloquence.—History.—Polite letters.—Poetry—Drama.—The fine arts.—Erudition and literary enthusiasm.—State of the university of Paris.—Patronage of letters.—Education.—Libels and political writings.—French language.

C H A P.
III.

Ignorance of
the sciences
in France.

IF we appreciate the reign of Henry the Fourth as a period of letters, it is impossible not to admit, that, whatever advances had been made in the fine arts, or even in many branches of elegant composition, yet that the higher and more abstruse sciences were scarcely cultivated among the French. Natural philosophy had not liberated itself either from the physical and mechanical impediments, or from the superstitious prejudices which check its progress. Astronomy might be considered as unknown. While Galileo, at Florence, discovered the satellites of Jupiter, and prepared to demonstrate, in defiance of persecution, the great truths divulged by Copernicus to mankind: while Kepler was occupied at Prague, in composing and publishing the “Rodolphine Tables:” while Ortelius, at Antwerp, rivalled the fame of Ptolemy by his geographical improvements; and while Mercator, under the protection of the dukes of Cleves, enriched the world with mathematical and chronological knowledge: amidst these efforts of the human mind, France remained torpid and inert (1). The first principles of hydraulics and

Hydraulics.

(1) Biogr. Dict. vol. v. p. 522, 523; and vol. x. p. 73, 74. Bayle. Dict. vol. vi. p. 657—660. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 199, 200; and vol. xv. p. 50—52.

of optics were still misunderstood, or unascertained, at the conclusion of the sixteenth century. It was not till the year 1602, that the secret of raising water higher than its source, by means of mechanical powers, was put in practice. Claud de Monconnis, president of finances at Lyons, exhibited an experiment of this kind with success, in presence of the king, at Rouen. The royal gardens at St. Germain were soon afterwards embellished by him with fountains, which, however inferior to the water-works of Louis the Fourteenth at Versailles and at Marly, excited the astonishment and admiration of all his contemporaries (2).

C H A P.
III.

Telescopes, so indispensable for exploring the motions and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, were first brought to Paris in 1609 from Middleburg in Zealand, where the invention had originated among marshes and vapours. Galileo soon improved upon their construction, and rendered them capable of the most sublime, as well as vast discoveries (3). The telescopic glasses, known in France before the death of Henry the Fourth, were still exceedingly imperfect, and far inferior to those common at the Hague or in Italy. It is evident, from the description left us by l'Étoile, that they could only be considered as the rudest specimens of optical machines (4). Not a single man of genius in the sciences of astronomy, chemistry, or natural philosophy, had yet arisen in France. Descartes, who attained to such celebrity under the succeeding reign, had not passed the limits of childhood in 1610; and Gassendi was still unknown. A similar sterility characterised the professions of pharmacy and surgery. Foez did not reach the eminence of reputation ac-

Optics.

Discovery of
telescopes.

Pharmacy.

(2) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 564, 565.
vol. ii. p. 196. De Thou, vol. xv. p. 50.
vol. ii. p. 196. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 386.

(3) Journal d'Henry IV.,
(4) Journal d'Henry IV.,

C H A P.
III.Surgery.
Ignorance of
the practi-
tioners.

quired by Fernel and Paré, his predecessors (5). Paris appears, even at the end of the reign under our review, to have been destitute of able practitioners either in surgery or in medicine. If we may form an estimate of the skill or ability shewn in other branches of the art, by their success in cutting for the stone, we shall not entertain any very reverential opinion of their talents. Almost all the persons who submitted to the operation between 1594, and 1610, seem to have died of its consequences. Many of them were of the highest quality (6). The surgeons were so little versed in the symptoms of the complaint itself, that they frequently mistook them; and after the unfortunate patient had submitted to the knife, it was discovered that he had fallen a victim to medical ignorance and misapprehension. Numerous instances of this fact are preserved by l'Etoile. The trade of an apothecary was much more comprehensive than in the present age. We find Henry the Fourth desiring Sully to pay his apothecary, not only for medicinal drugs, but for sugar, spices, and torches, furnished for the royal household (7). It was not till the age of Louis the Fourteenth, that the French justly attained the pre-eminence of medical science and skill above any other of the European nations.

Jurispru-
dence.

Cujas.

Jurisprudence, in the most extensive signification of the term, as including a knowledge of the civil, canon, and common law of France, had made a far more rapid progress. Cujas, who survived the extinction of the house of Valois only a short time, and whose end was accelerated by his emotions at witnessing the subversion of justice and the destruction of the laws, left behind him a name scarcely inferior to those

(5) De Thou vol. xiii. p. 35, 36.

(6) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 54, 55, and p. 213; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 210; and tome ii. p. 169.

(7) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 303.

of Ulpian or of Trebonian among the Romans. ^{C H A P. III.}
 Such was the veneration in which he was deservedly held by his contemporaries, that, when citing his authority or decisions at the bar, it was customary to call him "the lawyer," as alone worthy of the name (8). His pupil Pithou equalled him in legal ability, and far excelled him in every species of classical erudition, as well as acquaintance with polite letters (9). We should not suspect so dissolute a monarch as Henry the Third, of imitating Justinian in the most elevated and laudable act of that emperor's administration. Yet Brisson, first president of the parliament of Paris, who fell a sacrifice to the fury of the "council of sixteen" in 1591, had by Henry's order, collected in a single volume, all the edicts and institutions of the kings of France. He named it "Le Code Henry," from the prince at whose command it was compiled (10). Henry the Fourth does not appear to have extended equal attention to so important a branch of legislation and science.

That the oratory of the bar had not emancipated itself, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, from the false ornaments of a vicious and pedantic taste, is manifest by the specimens left us of that species of eloquence. Henry the Fourth, desirous to shew his guest, the duke of Savoy, every object most deserving of attention in the capital, conducted him in January 1600, to the great hall of the court of justice. Harlay, first president of the parliament of Paris, selected from among the causes depending before the tribunal, one not only interesting in itself, but calculated to display, in all its extent, the legal ingenuity and ability of the greatest advocates of France. The king and duke, concealed behind a curtain, were present at the trial. A wealthy Gascon,

(8) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 229—231.
 (10) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 523.

(9) Idem, vol. xiii. p. 37, 38.

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III.

of the name of Prost, who had arrived in the metropolis during the preceding year, suddenly disappeared. The wife of the person in whose house he had lodged, named Bellanger, by trade a baker, gave notice of the event to the commissaries of the police; but she previously entered the apartment of Prost, and took from thence a part of his money and clothes. The mother of the deceased repairing to Paris, and having discovered the theft, immediately instituted an enquiry into the proceeding, and accused Bellanger of being the murderer. According to the forms of criminal justice in that age, the baker underwent the torture; from which, however, his wife and maid-servant were exempted. As they persisted to deny any participation in the crime, and no indications of their guilt appearing, they were all liberated. Soon afterwards, two criminals, convicted of various offences, confessed that they had murdered Prost, and pointed out the place where they had thrown his body. Bellanger, on this discovery, commenced a prosecution against the mother of the deceased, demanding very ample pecuniary damages for the imprisonment, and other injuries which he had unjustly suffered (11).

Pleadings
on it.

Such was the nature of this celebrated cause, upon which the first pleaders of the bar were retained. Robert opened it for the plaintiffs; Arnauld was employed by the defendant; and Louis Servin, attorney-general, summed up the evidence and arguments on both sides. The three speeches pronounced on the occasion, are literally transmitted to us by Matthieu; and they enable us to form an accurate opinion on the legal eloquence of the time. In all of them we discern acute penetration and sound rea-

(11) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 439, 440. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. p. 454, 455. Chron. Septen. p. 110, 111. Mezeray, vol. x. p. 172. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 225—227.

soning;

soning; but they are deformed by far-fetched and unnatural conceits, loaded with a redundancy of learning, and rendered tedious by perpetual endeavours to discover precedents, or similar cases, among the fables of antiquity. Robert begins his harangue by observing, that the wound inflicted on Telephus, the son of Hercules, by the spear of Achilles, could only be healed by the touch of the same weapon. Besides the general application of the remark to the court collectively, the particular sting of it consisted in its personal allusion to the first president, Harlay, whose Christian name was Achilles (12). He soon afterwards compares the false and calumnious accusations made by the mother of Proft, which had misled the judges, to the torch of Nauplius, the father of Palamedes, which occasioned the shipwreck of the Grecian ships on the rocks of the Chærades (13). After a digression of considerable length and equal erudition, upon the effects of calumny, he mentions the circumstance of Ceres having condemned herself to make for Pelops an ivory arm, in the place of that which she had inadvertently eaten at the banquet of Tantalus. He derives from thence an argument in behalf of his client, whom the court had imprisoned and tortured, though innocent of the crime imputed to him, and demands compensation for the severity with which he had treated (14). It must be confessed, that such reasons do not produce conviction.

The speech of Arnauld, in justification of the mother of Proft, is a much more simple unsophisticated, and affecting appeal to the understanding, as well as the passions; though it is not by any means free from a mixture of affectation and bad taste (15).

(12) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 455, 456.

459.
466—476.

(14) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 462, 463;

(13) Idem, p. 458,

(15) Idem, p.

C H A P. There are passages in it of extreme beauty, and which in every age must excite admiration. That of Servin, while it displays the force and energy of a capacious mind, capable of combining, comparing, and forming its final inductions with consummate ability; is yet disgusting from the perpetual citations with which it is oppressed (16). The same spirit pervaded his harangue on the day subsequent to the assassination of Henry the Fourth in 1610, when Mary of Medecis appeared in the parliament to claim the regency, with her son, the young king. At a moment when France was plunged in just affliction, and when tears or sobs interrupted every voice, Servin exhorts Louis the Thirteenth "to conduct " himself towards his mother, as Alexander Severus " had done to Mammœa; and to act only by her " counsels who was seated by him, as Bathsheba by " Solomon (17)." Of the general eloquence of the period, many specimens are preserved in de Thou, and other contemporary writers. They bear the same characteristic impression, though varied in the different speakers. We are covered with astonishment at the quantity of extraneous matter, the numerous precedents drawn from scripture and ecclesiastical history, as well as the variety of scholastic or theological learning, contained in the speeches of the archbishops of Lyons and Bourges, during the conferences at Surenné, between the delegates of the king and the League, in 1593. It is not possible to display a greater exuberance of knowledge, nor less judgment and selection in applying it to the points in dispute (18).

Eloquence
of the pe-
riod.

Speeches of
the arch-
bishops of
Lyons and
Bourges.

Speeches of
Henry, and
of Coque-
ley.

If we were compelled to name two models of oratory, the most exempt from the defects enumerated,

(16) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 477—498.
200.

(17) De Thou, vol. xv.
(18) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 722—745.

we should select the harangue pronounced by Henry ^{C H A P.} the Fourth himself to the parliament of Paris in ^{III.} 1599, upon their refusal to register the edict of Nantes; and the speech of Coqueley, a counsellor in the same august assembly, immediately afterwards. They are neither embellished with unnatural flowers of rhetoric, nor obscure by unnecessary quotations and appeals to fable and mythology. Their character is brevity, energy, and simplicity. The language of the king is peculiarly beautiful, and animated, and mixes familiarity with dignity (19). It is singular to remark, how widely they differ from the general style of oratory by which the time was distinguished.

Many writers in the various branches of historical ^{History.} composition arose between the death of Henry the Third and the accession of Louis the Thirteenth. Brantome is, in fact, only a dissolute courtier, who neither emulates the praise of genius nor of virtue. ^{Brantome.} His "Memoirs," if they can with propriety be so denominated, are either loose biographical sketches, or collections of the amours and gallantries of the court of France. Yet, with every defect of style, order, and language, they will ever continue to be read. The number of amusing anecdotes of the most distinguished personages of his time, contained in them; the picture of manners which they convey; and even the incoherent nature of the work, which wanders in perpetual digressions; have an inconceivable charm, and do not suffer the reader to be fatigued or disgusted. It is impossible to apologize for the wanton and perpetual breaches of decency which occur. We are amused at the panegyrics which he lavishes on personages, who are only known to posterity by their vices. Margaret, the wife of Henry the Fourth, the Messalina of the sixteenth century, is his

(19) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 375—384. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 210—214.

heroine.

C H A P. heroine. To her he dedicates his "Lives of the
 III. foreign Commanders of his own Time;" as he
 does the "Vies des Dames Galantes" to her brother
 Francis, duke of Alençon (20). Though Brantome
 may be said to have flourished under the three last
 kings of Valois, to whose memory he is not a little
 partial, yet he wrote under Henry the Fourth, and
 died not many years after the assassination of that
 prince, at an advanced period of life.

- Chiverny.** The Memoirs which bear the name of Chiverny,
 and which carry in them the indelible marks of
 authenticity, are feeble productions, unworthy of a
 man, who, two reigns, had been chancellor of
 France; and who, during near forty years, had been
 conversant in all the mysteries of state. L'Etoile is
 an humble journalist; simple, and only valuable from
 the number of perishable facts, or daily occurrences,
 which his industry has preserved. The manners of
 the age are, nevertheless, to be traced in him, more
 than in the productions of Davila or de Thou.
- Cayet.** The two works of Cayet, his "Chronologie
 "Novennaire," and "Septennaire," which include
 a period of about fifteen years, from 1589 to 1604,
 are laborious and accurate compilations. Matthieu
 is learned, and entitled to belief, on account of the
 access which his situation, as historiographer of
 France, gave him to information; but neither he
 nor Cayet deserve to rank as enlightened historians.
- Sully.** The works of Sully offer a vast mass of undigested
 materials, letters, papers, and documents, heaped
 together with little order or selection. They present,
 notwithstanding, collectively, an animated portrait
 of Henry the Fourth, whom they depicture as equal-
 ly amiable and dignified, though they neither conceal
 his defects, nor palliate his errors. It is in this chaos

(20) Brant. Cap. Etrang. tome i. Dedic. and Dames Gal. tome i. Dedic.

of matter, that we must discover the state of the French finances at his accession, and their progressive amelioration to the period of his death. Sully derives no literary claim to respect from his Memoirs, where he never comes forward in the first person, and in the composition of which, as a work, he appears not to have had any share. They are, in fact, only recollections preserved by four of his official secretaries, who address their master, and remind him of the facts which they record. It may even excite some surprize, that during his long retreat of more than thirty years from public business, subsequent to the assassination of Henry, he should not have had the ambition to compose an original work; and after attaining the praise of a great minister, have emulated the fame of an illustrious historian.

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Davila is a writer of a very different description. Davila. Though an Italian, in which language he composed his "History of the Civil Wars;" yet, as he passed a considerable part of his life in the service of France, the events of which kingdom he records, he may justly be regarded in the light of a native. Bolingbroke, who was so well able to appreciate literary merit, has not hesitated to place him in competition with Livy (21). Even if so high an encomium should appear to be exaggerated, he will always occupy one of the most distinguished places among modern historians. He is neither diffuse, nor prolix, nor digressive, nor affected. His narration instructs not less than it pleases, by the penetration which it discovers, the hidden springs of action which it developes, and the intimate acquaintance with the human heart and the principles of its conduct, which it displays. He rarely wanders from the precise limits of his work, which contains little information

(21) Letters on the Study of History, letter v.

C H A P. upon the events which took place in the surrounding
 III. states of Europe, during the period of thirty-eight
 years, from 1560 to 1598, which he embraces.

De Thou. But the palm of historic merit and celebrity under Henry the Fourth, belongs to de Thou. Perhaps it may not be too much to say, that since the great models of antiquity, no person so illustrious in that branch of composition has arisen among European nations. Machiavel and Comines, who preceded him, have not equalled and Guicciardini has not exceeded his reputation. France, so fertile under Louis the Fourteenth, in almost every other species of genius, gave birth to no historic writer who can be placed in competition with him. Giannoné is every way his inferior. Posterity will better decide, whether the names of Hume, Robertson, or Gibbon, are worthy to emulate an equality with de Thou. Voltaire, though pre-eminent in talents, and formed to delight in whatever walk of letters he preferred, is rather a beautiful and seductive, than a laborious, accurate, or profound historian. The merits of de Thou were fully acknowledged by his contemporaries, and avowed even by those who most condemned or reprobated his political opinions. "The cardinals Aquaviva, Visconti, Sforza, and others of the sacred college, whose minds are elevated above the ordinary capacity of men," says the cardinal du Perron, writing from Rome in 1606 to the historian himself, "are never weary of praising and celebrating your works, which they place in the first rank after Sallust, Tacitus, and the other antient luminaries of the Roman history (22). It is to be observed that, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, Italy pretended to the undisputed supremacy in deciding upon the nature of literary productions, and stamping their fame. "If Alexander," adds du

Sentiments
 of du Per-
 ron

on his his-
 tory.

(22) De Thou, vol. xv. Pieces supplem. p. 160.

Perron at the close of his letter, "prized his labours
 " in the hope of being commended by the Athenians,
 " so much greater satisfaction ought you to feel at
 " being praised by the wits of Italy, who generally,
 " on the article of judgment, carry away the palm
 " from all others (23)."

Notwithstanding these public and deserved eulogiums, such were the prejudices of the age, and so dangerous was it to manifest any tendency towards toleration in matters of religion, that the history of de Thou could not escape being publicly condemned at Rome. The first eighteen books, which appeared in 1603, drew down the vengeance of all the zealots of Europe. Even the powerful interposition of some members of the college of cardinals, who admired and honoured the author, was vainly exerted to prevent its being placed in the list of works prohibited by the "Index expurgatorius (24)." Carracioli, who was charged to draw up the sentence, declared that "it was not possible to doubt of his being a Calvinist; and as such, that he ought to be ranked among the heretics of the first class (25)." The censure was published in November 1609 (26). We cannot wonder that the generous and unrestrained impartiality with which he speaks of the Hugonot chiefs, or that the language of detestation in which he mentions the acts of perfidy, intolerance and cruelty, exercised against them by Charles the Ninth, and the heads of the League, should excite clamours in the Papal court. If he had flourished a few years earlier, or if Paul the Fifth had been animated with the spirit of many of his predecessors, de Thou might, in all probability, have been committed to the flames, as Palearius and Carnesecchi had been, under

C H A P.
 III.

Persecution
 of de Thou,

and condem-
 nation at
 Rome.

(23) Idem, *ibid.* (24) *Journal d'Hen. IV.*, vol. ii. tome i. p. 7, 8.
 De Thou, vol. xv. *Pieces suppl.* p. 146—155, and p. 159. (25) De
 Thou, vol. xv. *Pieces suppl.* p. 141. (26) *Journal d'Henry IV.*, vol.
 ii. tome i. p. 207, 208.

CHAP. the pontificate of Pius the Fifth. His eminent virtues, and the lustre of his genius, could not have protected him from the researches of the inquisition.

III.

Sublimity of his history.

All the majesty and dignity of historic composition are blended in his works with the most unaffected simplicity. His comprehensive talents embrace Europe in their grasp, and combine the events of its most remote states or kingdoms with the annals of the French monarchy. He is the biographer, as well as the historian, of every person eminent for parts or merit, between the accession of Henry the Second and the year 1607. It is to be regretted, that either his health, or his various avocations, did not permit him to continue his labours to the conclusion of the reign of Henry the Fourth. Perhaps it may likewise be subject of concern, that he preferred the Latin language to his own, as it has involved him in some obscurity on the article of proper names, places, and nations. It was impossible that a man who circumscribed so vast a compass, and who wrote upon contemporary or recent events, should not sometimes compose from erroneous documents, or partial materials. If we were inclined to criticize, or to point out the blemishes of so sublime a production, we might possibly think that it is too diffuse, and that if compressed, it would have been more valuable. But the partialities of de Thou, supposing that such are admitted to exist, are only the laudable predilections and attachments of a virtuous and patriotic citizen, towards the succession of the sceptre in the house of Bourbon, for the majesty of the throne, the liberties of the Gallican church, and the general felicity of the people.

Blemishes of it.

Casaubon.

Few writers in the walk of polite letters, whose reputation has survived the lapse of near two centuries, or passed the limits of France, appeared under Henry the Fourth. Isaac Casaubon was a native of Geneva, though he remained several years in the court,

court, and under the immediate protection of that prince (27). Joseph Scaliger, by birth a Frenchman, yet retired to Leyden, where he received, from the liberality of the Dutch, the recompence denied to his talents by his own countrymen (28). Both, though incontestably men of extraordinary endowments, and who have enriched the world by their labours, were rather critics, and eminent for profound erudition, than distinguished by that elegance of talents which constitutes the aptitude for polite letters. Pasquier is at once a learned, animated, and entertaining writer, in almost every branch of composition. One of the most amusing productions of the period, and which blends infinite humour with the keenest shafts of ridicule, is the "Satyre Menippee." It appeared in 1594, and had no inconsiderable effect in decrying, as well as in exposing to a degree of general derision, the party and principles of the League (29). We should be at a loss to compare it with any similar production in the English language. Neither the "Rehearsal" of the last century, nor "Hudibras," nor the "Tale of a Tub," nor the "Rolliad," though all of them models of irony, wit, and satyre, have any analogy or resemblance to the Satyre Menippee." A canon of the cathedral of Rouen, named Le Roy, is commonly supposed to have commenced it; but having left it imperfect, others prosecuted and completed the work (30). The convocation of the States General at Paris by the duke of Mayenne, at which, in a special manner, levelled the force of his ridicule, received an injury in the public estimation from it, which rebounded on the faction itself, and on all the

C H A P.
III.
Scaliger.

" Satyre
" Menip-
" pee."

(27) Biog. Dict. vol. iii. p. 179—183. (28) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 52, 53. Biog. Dict. vol. xi. p. 309—312. (29) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 286, 287. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 702. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. 287. (30) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 702. Satyre Men, vol. i. Avis. p. 16, 17. Esprit de la Ligue, vol. i. Ouvrages cités, p. 36, 37.

C H A P. III. partizans of Spain. In this line of composition, we ought not to omit the "Confession de Sancy," written by the celebrated Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné; and in which, with great erudition and uncommon energy, as well as ability, we trace all the envenomed and malevolent asperity characteristic of the author. It seems to have been published towards the commencement of the seventeenth century (31). The local and personal nature of these satyres, as well as the affected obscurity of many passages in both, have contributed to diminish their reputation, and to consign them to a premature oblivion. It would be unjust not to include among the men of genius, who illuminated and distinguished the period by their writings, the two cardinals, d'Offat and du Perron. The names of Bodin and of Vignier, who excited the admiration of their contemporaries, are now totally forgotten (32).

Geography. Geography appears not to have advanced beyond its first rudiments, at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Thevet had, indeed, published a map of France before 1593; but it was a very defective work (33). La Guillotiere, who died in 1594, was a man of superior talents and greater accuracy (34). Charts were usually drawn with the pen, not engraven, and were rather preserved in the museums of men of taste and letters, than intended for sale (35). In 1608 we find Sully, by order of the king, sending engineers to make exact charts and surveys of the frontiers of France: from the specimens left us of its execution, it was performed with care and ability. The object intended by Henry and his minister was nevertheless political, not literary (36).

(31) Confess. de Sancy, Preface, 33—39. (32) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 33—35. (33) Satyre Men. vol. i. p. 129. note. (34) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. 58, 59. (35) Idem, *ibid.* (36) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 222, 223.

If France was less exuberant of poets under Henry C H A P.
III.
the Fourth, than during the reigns of the last prin-
ces of Valois, the paucity of numbers was in some
measure compensated by the appearance of Mal-
herbe. With him the French language began to
assume correctness, purity, and grace. He is, in all
other respects, inferior to Ronsard. His productions
are in general short, feeble, courtly, and composed
on fugitive or temporary occasions. Malherbe rarely
attempts the sublime, and is rather exempt from
faults, than abounding in beauties. He seems to
have been overrated by Balzac and by Boileau, who,
charmed with the chastity and clearness of his verses,
demanded no other qualities of a poet (37). Voltaire
has reduced him to his proper place and just dimen-
sions: he is nevertheless read and tasted, after a hundred
and eighty years, though he will not sustain a compari-
son with the writers of the age of Louis the Four-
teenth. Regnier acquired a considerable reputation Regnier
by his satyres, during the last ten years of the reign
under our review. He is usually obscure, and almost
always libertine. Even his best productions are ser-
vile imitations of Horace, Ovid, or Juvenal; yet as
the species of poetic composition was new, and as
there is no deficiency of animation, energy, or
warmth, in his satyres and elegies, he still preserves a
place among the poets of the time. The celebrated
mademoiselle Scuderi, in her romance of "Clelia,"
has mentioned him with applause; and Boileau,
while he admits his indecency, yet speaks of him in
terms of respect (38). Passerat, Chretien, Rapin,
and du Bartas, however read and admired at the
beginning of the seventeenth century, are nearly
unknown to the present age (39).

(37) Balzac, Lett. latine a Selhon. Boileau, Art. poetique, chant. i.
(38) Clelie, tome viii. liv. ii. p. 587. Boileau, Art. poetique, chant. x.
(39) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 231, 232; and vol. xiii. p. 36, 37; and vol. xiv p.
59, 60; and vol. xv. p. 30. Regnier, vol. i. Satyre ix. p. 134. Journ.
d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. tome. i. p. 198.

C H A P.

III.

Preference
given to the
Latin lan-
guage.

Notwithstanding the successful efforts made by Malherbe to purify and to refine the French language, Latin continued to be the favourite vehicle for the lighter effusions of wit, taste, and satire, even in the court. Many of these productions have all the neatness of Martial, and may rank with the best epigrams of that poet. The one, written by Rapin on the death of the chevalier of Aumale, who was killed in the attack of St. Denis, where repose the kings of France, is peculiarly happy.

- “ Ut Phrygio, cecidit Priaimëia littoꝛe, virgo,
 “ Ad Busti hostilis marmora, jussa mori:
 “ Ut generi ad statuam, non uno Julius ictu;
 “ Et victor, victi corruit ante pedes:
 “ Sic hostis regum, regum ad monumenta suorum
 “ Procumbens, merita cæde, cruentat humum.
 “ Nunc gaudete pii; nam cum hæc regalibus umbris
 “ Victima dat pœnas, et probat esse deos (40).”

The lines, composed on the pardon of Henrietta marchioness of Verneuil, in 1605, after the conspiracy of the family of Entragues, against Henry the Fourth, are equally beautiful. We shall admit their claim to praise, though we should detect the plagiarisms committed by the author on Catullus, or on Virgil.

- “ Mors & amor, dubio Henricæ de funere certant,
 “ Et voti causas reddit uterque sui.
 “ Jactat amor formam, et molles commendat ocellos:
 “ Mors, scelus, et miseræ crimina nota refert.
 “ Sub Jove res acta est, cæcum qui pectore toto
 “ Vulnus alit; victo judice, vicit amor (41).”

(40) Satyre Men. vol. i. p. 209.
 some i. p. 71.

(41) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i.

The drama was still in a very rude and imperfect state, during the period which we are reviewing. Comedy had neither elegance nor refinement; and the pieces, represented even before the court, seem to have been only a sort of farces, calculated to excite mirth, by a coarse delineation of manners, at the expence of decorum, and of respect for the civil power (42). Tragedy had not yet awoke, and Corneille was hardly born in 1610. Garnier, who died in 1590, had succeeded to the fame of Jodelle: but his productions are now forgotten, or of little estimation (43).

No school for painting, architecture, or sculpture, had been yet formed. The age seems not to have produced any artists of celebrity, in either of those branches. Vouet must be, in strictness, considered as belonging to the reign of Louis the Thirteenth; though many of his earlier productions are anterior to that prince's accession. He was the father of painting among the French, but far inferior in strength of genius and vigour of execution, to his contemporary Poussin. Medals, commemorative of the principal events of Henry's reign, or containing allusions to his political situation, were annually struck, and presented to him by Sully. Many of them display considerable elegance of classical taste, and might have been offered to Augustus, or to Trajan. In 1588, Charles Emanuel duke of Savoy, having availed himself of the troubles of the French monarchy, to seize on the marquisate of Saluzzo; and desirous to perpetuate the remembrance of an act which augmented so greatly his power and dominions, caused a medal to be struck of a very insolent nature: It represented a Centaur, trampling under his feet a royal crown, with the single word "opportunè" annexed.

C H A P.
III.

Medals.

Their taste
and execution.

(42) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tom. ii. p. 140—142. Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 386.

(43) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 232.

CHAP. II. To have ventured on thus insulting the sovereign, whom he had previously injured and despoiled, Charles Emanuel should have been better assured of retaining his usurpation. After the short and successful campaign against Savoy in 1600, terminated by the cession of Bresse and Bugey to Henry the Fourth, Sully chose for his master's device, at the commencement of the following year, a Hercules vanquishing a Centaur, and replacing a crown; under it was inscribed "opportunius (44)." Several others of the mottos or emblems engraven by his directions, as well as the allusions selected, are uncommonly beautiful, and display an intimate acquaintance with all the most interesting and picturesque passages of the history of Greece and Rome (45).

Erudition, The age was strongly characterized by its erudition and love of antient learning. Even soldiers and statesmen emulated the praise of scholars. The younger Biron, who had passed his whole life in camps, was, as we learn from d'Aubigné, intimately acquainted with Greek; though he studiously concealed it, or felt an awkward shame at its discovery (46). Ecclesiastics not only read and conversed, but thought in Latin. We find the archbishop of Bourges, when expiring in 1606, addressing himself to his confessor in that language, as he had done during the whole progress of his distemper, to the assistants about his person. His pulse fluttering previous to his dissolution, he demanded, "Heu! quænam, et quanta hæc est agitatio?" The priest replying; "Majora, pro te, passus est Christus;" the dying prelate answered, "Majora, peccata mea meruerè: sed, per effusionem sanguinis Christi, remedium animæ meæ spero." He breathed his last a

peculiarly of
the clergy.

Instance.

(44) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 8. (45) Idem, p. 40, and p. 62; Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 382. De Thou, vol. xii. p. 128, 129.
(46) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 487.

few moments afterwards (47). Not only history, C H A P. III. but almost all productions of controversy, theology, and medicine, were more frequently written in the Latin, than in the French language (48). Great literary enthusiasm animated men of letters. Hadrien Romanus, says de Thou, having proposed a problem to all the mathematicians of the globe, it was resolved in an instant, by Francis Viète of Fontenay in Poitou, who returned it with additions and corrections, to its author. Overcome equally with surprize and veneration at such a display of talents, Romanus immediately set off from Wurtzburg in Franconià, to see and converse with him. Arriving at Paris, he found that Viète had quitted the metropolis, to retire to his native province: but far from relaxing in his pursuit, Romanus resumed his journey. The two literati passed a month together, charmed with each other's society. As an acknowledgment of the honour conferred on him, Viète caused his friend to be re-conducted to the frontiers of France, and all his expences to be defrayed (49). We must admit, that neither such ardour nor such generosity are common in the present age.

Literary enthusiasm.

Example of it.

The university of Paris seems, notwithstanding the convulsions and ravages of civil war, to have rapidly recovered, after the submission of the capital to Henry, in 1594. How numerous were the students at the close of that year, we may infer, when l'Etoile assures us, that such was the consternation occasioned by Chatel's attempt to assassinate the king, as to stop more than six hundred from proceeding on their journey to the metropolis, who were already set out, and to occasion nearly as many more to leave the university (50). Its discipline had become so relaxed,

University of Paris.

Numbers of students.

Renewal of the discipline.

(47) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 124, 125. (48) Ibid. p. 205, 206. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 37, 38. (49) Ibid. vol. xiv. p. 162—164. (50) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 68, 69.

that,

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that, in 1598, it was judged indispenfable to examine and revise the ftatutes, enacted about a century and a half earlier, under the reign of Charles the Seventh, by cardinal d'Estouteville. The archbifhop of Bourges was placed at the head of a commiffion, exprefsly appointed for the purpofe, by the crown. He affembled the rector, deans, and profefors in the four faculties of theology, jurisprudence, medicine, and arts. De Thou, the celebrated hiftorian, harangued them in the name of the Parliament of Paris. The new regulations were then read, which were principally directed to inculcate, and to enforce obedience to the fovereign, to the civil magiftrates, and to the laws. Servin, attorney-general, added an exhortation to each of the faculties feparately. He advifed the theologians to quit all polemical books of divinity, in order to adhere folety to the Bible, as the only rule of conduct. It is amufing to obferve, that he enjoins the profefors of phyfic, "to perufe carefully the works of the divine Hippocrates, to follow his precepts, and on no confideration, to run into empiricifm (51)." Notwithftanding the renovation of the ftatutes, the difcipline continued to be fo defective, that, in the fucceeding year, it was found neceffary to name four cenfors, by exprefs direction of the parliament (52). L'Etoile fays, that in 1605, during the fair held in the fuburb of St. Germain, the ftudents, pages, and lacqueys were fo riotous, as to endanger the public tranquillity. They drew up, and engaged in regular bodies. One of the lacqueys having cut off a ftudent's ears, and put them in his pocket, the ftudents fell upon the lacqueys, wounded, and killed numbers of them (53).

Particulars
of it.

Cenfors
named.

Protection
of letters by
Henry.

It cannot, with perfect regard to truth, be afferted, that Henry the Fourth extended as munificent a pro-

(51) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 449—454.
(53) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome 1. p. 71.

(52) Ibid. p. 454, 455.

tection to arts and letters, as Francis the First, or ^{C H A P.} Henry the Third. He loved, cultivated, and re- ^{III.}warded their professors, but it was without enthusiasm. He came to the crown when it was impoverished by civil war, and he was from natural disposition, economical. Sully had little taste for productions of genius, and no predilection for expensive gratifications. If, however, Henry did not carry his passion for science and the elegant attainments of the mind, to so great a height as some of his predecessors, he was, on the other hand, far from neglecting or despising such researches. He invited Casaubon into France, ^{Casaubon.} settled on him a considerable stipend, and made him first librarian. We may see, in his own letters to his minister, how warm an interest he took in the affair, and how personally he urged the care of Casaubon, as peculiarly near his heart (54). Malherbe was made a ^{Malherbe} gentleman of the bed-chamber, and had a pension, as well as a table and apartments, provided for him at the expence of the crown (55). Matthieu held the ^{Matthieu} office of historiographer of France, with considerable appointments (56). Margaret of Valois, who with the vices, inherited many of the characteristic virtues and great qualities of the house from which she sprung, was, during her whole life, the patroness of letters and science (57).

The seminaries of education for youth, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, appear to have been as defective, as the system of education itself was bad. The Jesuits, after their recal in 1604, became the favourite instructors and preceptors throughout France; but they did not effect their establishment in the principal cities of the kingdom, without violent struggles on the part of the other ecclesiastics

Seminaries and system of education, defective.

(54) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 395, 440. Biogr. Dict. vol. iii. p. 180—182.
 (55) Poesies de Malherbe, Vie, p. 13, 14. (56) Matthieu, vol. i. Dedication.
 (57) Vie de Marg. p. 398, 399, and p. 409.

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III.
Jesuits.

and professors. In many places, all the colleges and schools were abandoned on their arrival, and the worst consequences flowed from this temporary suspension of instruction. The inhabitants of Poitiers, writing to Sully in 1607, say, "We have already represented to you the miserable condition of this province, where there is no longer any method of forming the youth to letters and virtue (58)." They proceed to state the anarchy and confusion in which Poitiers had been involved during two years, since the intrusion of those unwelcome strangers, the Jesuits. But the perseverance and superior talents of the society at length overcame all opposition:

Romances.

One of the predominant passions of the age, was the rage for romances. To "Amadis" succeeded "Astræa," written by the marquis d'Urfé, and which was in the highest vogue towards the end of Henry the Fourth's reign. The harsh features of chivalry began in "Astræa" to be softened down, and to give place to love (59). "Clorinda," another romance, of which the subject is borrowed from Tasso, acquired great celebrity. Matthieu says, "that it was the first French book put into the hand of Mary of Medecis after her arrival from Tuscany (60)."

Libels.

Notwithstanding the severe restrictions imposed on the liberty of the press, and the necessity of obtaining the royal permission or approbation previous to the publication of any literary work, the most atrocious libels seem to have been continually printed and circulated in Paris. Neither the political errors of the administration, the personal vices of the king, nor the secret intrigues and gallantries of the court, were spared in these anonymous productions. In some cases, the authors, though well known, were

(58) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 86, 87.
p. 866, 867. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 144.
liv. iii. p. 534.

(59) Bayle. Dict. vol. iii.
(60) Matthieu, vol. i.

left without molestation of any kind; while in others, they appear to have been prosecuted with the utmost severity. In 1605 appeared a satire, entitled, "Le Livre des Hermaphrodites," which unveiled the scenes of libertinism acted in the court, and drew a very disadvantageous picture of the dissolution of manners then existing, when compared with the simplicity and purity of earlier times. Henry, after causing it to be read to him, and informing himself of the name of the author, forbade any search to be made after him. He admitted indeed, that the work was too bold and licentious; but added, that "he could not in conscience punish a man for simply speaking the truth (61)." The magnanimity of such a conduct extorts admiration.

It was a far more dangerous experiment, as it has commonly been found in all ages, to attack the ministers, than the sovereign. Soon afterwards, a gentleman named Juvigni, of a very noble and antient family, ventured to write, and to circulate a manuscript pamphlet, the title of which was, "Discours d'Etat, pour faire voir au Roi, en quoi sa Majesté est mal servie." It was composed with a manly and generous freedom, unmixed with any expression indecent towards the king, or injurious to his service; but it bore hard upon Sully, the errors of whose administration it pretended to expose. For this imprudent act, Juvigni was prosecuted as guilty of high treason, obliged to abscond, and hanged in effigy at Paris (62). It was not less hazardous, as we may see in l'Etoile, to touch the Jesuits, who, towards the end of the reign under our consideration, attained to an exorbitant degree of power. Only to be suspected of printing any thing to their disadvantage, was a sufficient crime to involve the person in ruin (63);

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III.
Examples.

Punishment
of Juvigni.

(61) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 75.
p. 82.

(63) Ibid. p. 77, 78.

(62) Ibid,

while,

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III.Power of
the Jesuits.

while, at the same moment, foreign members of that society did not fear to disseminate writings in the capital of France, defamatory of the house of Bourbon, of the parliaments, and of Henry himself. The most complete impunity attended them; nor was any notice taken of such notorious insults on the majesty of the throne (64). It is impossible not to see, as Sully and d'Aubigné repeatedly assert, that the king, who was so fearless in the field, dreaded, and trembled at the vengeance of the disciples of Loyola. Almanacs appear to have sometimes attracted the notice and animadversion of government, when they predicted sinister events. They seem to have become common at the beginning of the seventeenth century (65).

Almanacs.

State of the
French lan-
guage.

The French language had by no means reached its standard, at the conclusion of Henry's reign. That prince, who was himself a Gascon, had rather contributed to introduce a vicious idiom, than conducted to its purity and refinement. The court, like the prince, spoke a corrupt dialect; and Malherbe laboured "a degasconner la Cour (66)." He succeeded in giving correctness to poetry, though he neither attained to majesty nor sublimity. But the French prose remained harsh, rugged, and unpolished. No writer of elegance and taste in that line of composition has as yet appeared. Balzac is the first classical author; and he did not begin to be celebrated before the commencement of Richieu's administration. Rigault seems to doubt, whether any literary reputation could be acquired by writing in French, which he treats as a barbarous jargon (67). The letters of the cardinals of Ossat and Du Perron, as well as some of Pasquier's, seem to be the most correct productions which France had witnessed, before the termination of the period under our review.

(64) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 76, 77.
p. 78, 79.

(66) Malherbe, Vie, p. 30.

(65) Ibid.
(67) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 30.

C H A P. IV.

State of manners and society.—The court.—Great offices of state.—Dress.—Tables.—Domestic arts.—Furniture.—Carriages.—Exercises and diversions.—Genius of the amusements.—Examples of them.—Theatrical exhibitions.—Their style and taste.—Rage for play.—Excesses of Henry in that article.—Corruption of the age.—Instances of it.—Libertinism of manners.—Homage paid to Gabrielle d'Etrées.—Conduēt of Mary of Medecis.—Examples of the spirit of chivalry.—Passion for duels.—Edicts issued to restrain the practice.—Crimes.—Murders and assassinations.—Want of police in Paris.—State of the provinces in that particular.—Banditti.—Offences against morals.—Magic.—Instances of the belief in it.—Demoniacs.—Examples.—Belief in prodigies.—Pestilential distempers.—King's evil.—Canine madness.

THE French court, considered as the regular establishment of a great monarchy, can hardly, with strictness, be said to have had any existence under Henry the Fourth, till after his marriage with Mary of Medecis, towards the close of the year 1600. During the period of the civil and foreign wars, such was the poverty of the crown, that the king found himself unable to sustain its dignity, and was continually reduced to the most distressing expedients, even for personal support. The temporary residence of his sister Catherine princess of Navarre, in the metropolis, did not compensate for the long absences of a sovereign, who was perpetually occupied in repelling the foreign and domestic enemies of the state, in all the various provinces of his dominions. Henry, while

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IV.
State of the
court before
Henry's
marriage.

CHAPTER
IV.

Change, on
Mary of
Medecis'
arrival.

while successively attached to his two mistresses, the duchess of Beaufort and the marchioness of Verneuil, led the life of a libertine man of pleasure, rather than of a prince, and maintained scarcely any ostensible court. It was in the houses of Zamet, Gondi, la Varenne, and other subservient courtiers, that he relaxed from the fatigues of war or of state, in the society of a few chosen companions. But when Mary of Medecis arrived at Paris, all the splendour of preceding times was revived. The Louvre became the ordinary residence of that princess; and we may doubt, whether the drawing-room of her relation Catherine, the wife of Henry the Second, was more magnificent, or better sustained. As early as 1604, her personal establishment was fixed at not less than fourteen thousand pounds sterling annually: a sum which, if we allow for the vast diminution in the value of money, may perhaps be considered as equal to that of any succeeding queen of France (1).

Officers of
State.

The necessary appendages of royalty, and the officers composing the household of Henry the Fourth, though regulated with systematic economy, were, it would seem, neither less numerous, nor less ample, than those of Francis the First. We may see in Sully, the sums appropriated to various branches of public utility, service, or amusement. The article of buildings consumed about twenty-five thousand pounds annually; public works, above double the sum; and the pensions exceeded eighty thousand pounds a year (2). Notwithstanding the magnitude and variety of these expences, the king allotted near a hundred thousand pounds for his personal pleasure; which included mistresses, natural children, play, hounds, and hawking (3). If we may form an idea

Their sala-
ries.

(1) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 289.
471.

(2) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i. p. 479.

(3) Ibid. vol. i. tome ii. p. 358.

of the salaries of the other great officers of state, from the appointments annexed to the offices held by Sully, they appear to have been upon a similar scale. He informs us, that the aggregate amount of his various employments, which he enumerates, equalled at least four thousand pounds per annum, independent of about eighteen hundred more in church preferments or benefices (4). Yet, as if these emoluments were inadequate to his merits, Henry, in 1601, unsolicited, conferred upon him a gratuitous annual donation of two thousand five hundred pounds issuing out of the treasury (5). However eminent were the services rendered by Sully to the State, we must admit that they were munificently recompensed. It excites astonishment when we reflect on the resources of France, which, in little more than nine years of tranquillity and a wise administration, could enable the crown to effect so many works of benefit or grandeur, to pay off its incumbrances, to maintain its splendour, to reward merit, and to lay up an immense treasure for times of war or exigency.

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IV.

Those of
Sully.

Luxury of
drefs.

The luxury of dress appears to have been carried to as great a height under Henry the Fourth, as during the reign of his predecessor. It is in Bassompierre, that we may see the most curious and entertaining details upon that article. He assures us, that at the baptism of the royal children of France in 1606, when all the nobility and courtiers strove to outvie each other in expence, the dress which he made up for the occasion, cost him seven thousand crowns. It is to be observed, that the cloth of gold, which composed the materials of this superb suit, was embroidered, or rather totally covered with pearls. The fashion of it alone came to three hundred crowns (6). His account of the whole business

(4) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 414, 415.
somp. vol. i. tome i. p. 126, 127.

(5) Ibid. p. 416.

(6) Bas-

C H A P. is highly picturesque. "When I arrived," says he, IV. "at Paris, all the taylor and embroiderers were so employed, that no money could procure them. Splendor of "But my own taylor having informed me, that a dresses dresses worn. "merchant of Antwerp had brought a vast quantity "of pearls, with which I might make up a dress superior in beauty to every other in the court, I sent "for him. Not less than fifty pounds weight of "pearl were necessary; and the merchant insisted on "receiving two thousand crowns earnest. I had "only about three hundred and fifty in my purse: "nevertheless, I gave orders for it (7)." The birthday suits of the present age, whatever taste may be displayed in them, shrink on a comparison in expence, with those worn near two centuries ago. When Henry the Fourth entered the metropolis in 1594 by torchlight, and on horse-back, he wore, says l'Etoile, "a dress of grey velvet, shot with "gold, a grey hat, and a white feather (8)." But at his nuptials, six years afterwards, we find him habited "in white sattin, embroidered with gold "and silk, and a black cape (9)." The "toque," or little Italian turban, introduced by Henry the Third, still continued to be worn, ornamented with jewels (10).

Those of
Henry the
Fourth;

and of
d'Alincourt.

Great effeminacy characterized the men on the article of dress, as we learn from Matthieu (11). D'Alincourt, the French ambassador at the court of Rome in 1608, on a day of ceremony, was clothed "in a silver tissue; his shoes and stockings white; "his cloak black, with a border of embroidery, "lined with cloth of silver; and a bonnet of black "velvet." He was besides covered with precious

(7) Bassomp, vol. i. tome i. p. 126, 127.

vol. i. tome ii. p. 45.

(9) Chron. Sept. p. 191.

(8) Journal d'Henry IV.,

d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 189, 190; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 220, 221.

(11) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 194.

stones and pearls (12). All preceding magnificence was eclipsed by that of the duke of Nevers, sent soon afterwards on an embassy from France to Paul the Fifth; and his dresses were not only splendid, but varied for the different entries, or days of audience (13). Sully, enumerating the principal articles which constituted elegance of dress in 1590, states them to be, "scarfs, feathers, stuffs, silk-stockings, gloves, belts, and castor hats (14)." If, after contemplating the splendor of upper life, we wish to see a portrait of ordinary "costume" in 1596, we may find it in the same author. They wore "the beard long and forked; a large hat, which almost entirely concealed the face; a long black cloak, buttoned at the collar; a sword, and very wide boots (15)." Among men of quality and condition, the beard and hair were cut short (16). That the same union of finery and dirt, of external show and concealed poverty, with which the French of the present age have been reproached, equally characterized them two hundred years ago, is evident from an expression of a contemporary writer. "Do we not see," says he, "the youth of the present time, wear collars and wristbands of thread-gauze starched, although the body of the shirt be composed of coarse rotten cloth, scarcely stitched together (17)?" Gallochios, a sort of large shoes, were common, particularly among the ex-students of the university of Paris, who residing in different quarters of the metropolis, and attending the lectures, were necessitated to avail themselves of this means of wading through the dirt, with which the streets were incommoded (18).

H A P.
IV.
Ordinary
drefs.

(12) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii tome i. p. 174, 175. p. 188—190.

(14) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 78.

(13) Ibid.

vol. i. tome i. p. 310.

(16) Hist. des Inaugurations, p. 446.

(15) Sully,

fest. de Sancy, p. 404.

(18) Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 199.

(17) Con-

de Pasquier, liv. viii. ch. ii.

Recherches

C H A P.
IV.

Female or-
naments.

Gabrielle
d'Etrées.

It will not be doubted, that the art of decorating and attiring the female person to the utmost advantage, had been assiduously cultivated, under a prince of the gallant and amorous complexion which distinguished Henry the Fourth. Ladies appear to have been so oppressed under the weight of their ornaments and precious stones, as to have almost lost the power of motion (19). When Gabrielle d'Etrées entered Paris with her royal lover in 1594, "she was carried," says l'Etoile, "in a magnificent open litter: she had on a robe of black sattin, variegated with white; and she was covered with pearls and jewels of such lustre, that they dimmed the torches (20)." We may see in the same author, that Henry did not disdain to assist at her toilet, to adjust her head-dress, and to place the brilliants in her hair, with his own hands (21). At the ceremony of a christening in the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, where Gabrielle and the king were present, she was so loaded with diamonds and pearls, as to be scarcely able to stand (22). How unlimited was the expence of female dress, we may judge, when l'Etoile assures us, that "he saw a handkerchief, made by an embroiderer of Paris for Gabrielle, to be worn on the ensuing day, at a ball; the price of which she had herself fixed at nine hundred and fifty crowns, in ready money (23)."

Changes in
female dress.

Mary of Medecis did not quit the Tuscan costume," nor assume the modes of France, till the day after her arrival in the capital of her new dominions (24). Some material alterations in dress were introduced by that princess. The bosom was laid bare; and the ruff, so long fashionable during

(19) Journal d'Henry IV., vol., i. tome ii. p. 60, and p. 87.

(20) Ibid.

p. 45.

(21) Ibid. p. 153.

(22) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i.

tome ii. p. 60.

(23) Ibid. p. 61.

(24) Bassomp. vol. i. tome

i. p. 55.

the sixteenth century, was rivalled, though not sup-
 planted by the "Medecis;" an ornament composed
 of lace, supported with wire, which rose behind the
 neck to the height of near twelve inches (25). It
 has been revived in our own time, and was highly
 susceptible of grace. Tissues, cloth of gold and
 silver, velvet, and ermine, constituted the materials
 of the dresses of women of distinction, on public
 occasions. We can scarcely read without smiling,
 that Margaret of Valois, in 1610, "made a present
 of the train of her gown to the church of St.
 Sulpice at Paris, to form a canopy for covering
 the holy sacrament, on great ceremonies (26)."
 It was accepted with testimonies of gratitude. She
 had worn it at the coronation of Mary of Medecis.

C H A P.
IV.Materials of
them.

The luxury, displayed at the tables of the great,
 during the period which we are reviewing, excites
 astonishment. The preparations for the banquet
 given by the constable Montmorency, on the baptism
 of his son in 1597, at which the king and his
 mistress Gabrielle were present, occupied all the
 cooks in Paris, during eight days. Fish was brought,
 at an immense expence, from the sea. Two sturge-
 ons only, cost fifty crowns. The dessert was not less
 superb; and the fruits served up, exceeded forty
 pounds sterling in price. As it was in the month
 of March, every pear was purchased at half-a-
 crown (27). The marquis d'O, superintendant of
 the finances, was one of the greatest epicures of the
 time. L'Etoile says, that "he surpassed all the
 sovereign princes of Europe, in prodigality and
 excess; as the tarts, served at his suppers, cost
 above twelve crowns a-price (28)." He does not,
 however, convey to us a very advantageous idea of

Tables.

Banquets.

Cookery.

(25) Hist. des Inaugurations. p. 446.

(26) Vie de Marg. p. 403.

(27) Journal. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 153, 154.

(28) Ibid p. 154.

C H A P.
IV.Progress of
luxury.Festival at
Avignon.Domestic
arts.

the French style of cookery, when he adds, that these tarts were "seasoned with musk and amber (29)." In 1596, before the termination of the war with Spain, so universal was the progress of luxury among the middle order of opulent citizens in Paris, that entertainments were given during the carnival, where dishes were brought on table, which had cost two and twenty crowns each. Three courses were commonly served; and such a superfluity of dried sweetmeats and rusks were provided, that the ladies gave them away to the pages and lacquies (30). One of the most superb festivals commemorated, was the banquet presented by the Papal vice-legate, at Avignon, to Mary of Medecis, in 1600, soon after her arrival in France. After the conclusion of the ball, the tapestry at one end of the apartment fell, on a signal given, and discovered a magnificent collation served on three tables. Besides many figures of birds, beasts, and fishes, made of sugar, there were fifty statues of the same materials, each two palms high; representing gods, goddesses, and emperors. When the collation ended, three hundred baskets, full of confectionary, particularly fruits, exquisitely imitated in sugar, were distributed to the ladies (31).

It would be a more pleasing research; to endeavour to ascertain with some precision, the progress of the domestic arts, and to follow the silent and insensible advances of ease, comfort, and elegance, in the dwellings of private life. But these softer features of history are rarely traced by contemporary writers, from their universal notoriety; and their fugitive, as well as perishable nature, renders it almost impossible to recover them after the lapse of

(29) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 57. (30) Idem, *ibid.* p. 118.
(31) Chron. Sept. p. 187. Journ. Hen. IV., vol. i. tome iii. p. 267, 268.

time. The most accurate investigation of the au-^{C H A P.}thors who wrote under Henry the Fourth, will throw ^{IV.}very imperfect light upon the subject. The majesty of de Thou's and Davila's productions, did not ^{Difficulty of tracing them.} permit them often to descend to these humble, but interesting details; and we are more indebted for them to the faithful accuracy of l'Étoile, than to those great historians. We may, however, assert with truth, that not only the houses of the opulent, ^{Furniture:} but the castles of the nobility, and the palaces of kings, were very partially and imperfectly furnished. Henry, in 1601, writing to Sully from Fontainebleau, at a time when he expected the ambassadors of Venice, says, "Send for d'Herbannes, my upholsterer, and order him to be here to-morrow be-
 " times, with five suits of tapestry, and three or
 " four beds: if more are wanted, they will be
 " found here. Direct likewise to be brought, plate
 " for the kitchen, with five basons, and as many
 " ewers, and ten or twelve silver candlesticks (32)." It is evident, that only the necessary furniture for the royal household was to be found in the palace, and that no provision was made for accommodating ^{Want of that article} strangers. Similar orders had been issued two years before, when the duke of Savoy visited the French court (33). If we would see how miserable and ^{among the nobility.} comfortless were the apartments, even in the celebrated castle of Anet, near Dreux, built by Diana de Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois, we have only to peruse the description of the night which Sully passed there in 1594. Though the duchess of Aumale, in the absence of the duke, to whom Anet then belonged, endeavoured to entertain him in the best manner possible; yet such was the deficiency in every article of necessary accommodation, that he could

(32) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 38.

(33) Ibid. vol. i. p. 441.

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not have suffered more in the meanest cottage (34). We may infer, from a passage in the "Satyre "Menippee," that arm-chairs were become common under Henry the Fourth, among the opulent or the indolent (35). Beds, besides the curtains, had often a "tour de lit," or second curtain, composed of coarse thick cloth, which excluded all air, and was extremely injurious to health, by its effects (36).

Litters.

Litters continued still to be the most commodious and ordinary conveyance for women of condition, as well as for the aged and infirm. We find Gabrielle d'Étrées constantly preferring that mode of travelling (37). The prince of Condé, when he carried off his wife in 1609, and withdrew into the Netherlands, mounted on horseback, and placed the princess behind him (38). Mary of Medecis was accustomed to be carried in a sedan chair, as we learn from Bassompierre, particularly during her pregnancy (39). The art of suspending coaches in such a manner as to render their motion easy, was unknown: in the relation left us by the Abbé de Pont Levoy, of his father the chancellor Chiverny's death, which was produced by a rupture, he expressly attributes it to the violent jolts of the coach. "Instead," says he, "of sparing his old age by a good litter, as every one advised him; he had some time before caused to be made a large hand-some coach, after the mode of the time, lined with crimson velvet, magnificently gilt (40)." If we wish to form an accurate idea of the decorations of carriages in that age, we may do it by perusing the account which Cayet gives of the coach presented by the king to Mary of Medecis, on her

Coaches,
how inconvenient.

Decorations
of them.

(34) Sully, vol. i. tome ii p. 130.

(35) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 285.

p. 311. Villeroy, vol. iii p. 207.

tome i. p. 203.

(39) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 103, 105.

(35) Sat. Men. vol. iii. p. 59.

(37) Sully, vol. ii. tome i.

(38) Journal. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii.

tome i. p. 103.

(40) Mé-

first arrival in 1600. "It was covered with brown velvet, and silver tinsel on the outside; within it was lined with a carnation velvet, embroidered with gold and silver. The curtains were of carnation damask; and it was drawn by four grey horses (41)." Notwithstanding the external splendor of their appearance, they wanted every essential convenience. Glasses were not in use before the succeeding reign. In 1594, when Catherine, princess of Navarre, made her first entry into Paris, she had eight carriages, in her train (42). That luxury had made a far greater and more general progress, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, on the other side of the Alps, than in France, is evident; since we find, at the public reception of the duke of Nevers in Rome, there were not fewer than eighteen hundred coaches and carriages in the streets (43). We learn from Bassompierre, that about the year 1607, English horses were first brought over to Paris. Their superior swiftness and beauty soon rendered them fashionable; and they were eagerly sought after, as well for hunting, as for the road (44).

The exercises and diversions in vogue under Henry the Fourth, though still active, martial, and sometimes hazardous, were less fierce than those of the preceding age, and began insensibly to assume a softer character. We find the king, habited in white sattin, running at the ring, and carrying away the prize, after he had attained his fiftieth year (35). During the carnival, the young nobility armed themselves, put on masks, and mounted on horseback, having large cushions stuffed, and covered with taffaty, at the pommels of their saddles. Thus accoutred, they assembled in chosen troops or bands, paraded

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IV.

Exercises
and diver-
sions

of the
young nobi-
lity.

(41) Chron. Sept. p. 184.

(42) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome

ii. p. 22.

(43) Ibid. v. l. ii. tome i. p. 189.

(44) Bassomp. vol.

i. tome i. p. 134.

(45) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 223.

through

CHAP. through the freets of the metropolis, and attacked
 IV. each other very roughly, or affronted all such as they
 chanced to meet in their way. It appears from
 Bassompierre's description, that very severe blows
 and contusions might be given and received in these
 encounters, by the cushions, which were usually
 filled with hard materials (46).

Combat at
 the barrier.

Only one combat at the barrier was exhibited
 during the reign under our survey, and it was the
 last seen among the French. Bassompierre, who has
 left us a minute and entertaining account of it, was
 a combatant; and he received so dangerous a wound
 in the belly, from the lance of his antagonist the
 duke of Guise, that Henry not only suspended the
 entertainment, but never would permit its repeti-
 tion (47). Louis the Thirteenth did not revive
 them, and they finally expired. It will be amusing
 to contemplate the principal features of this combat,
 as drawn by Bassompierre: they serve strongly to
 depict the manners of the age in 1605. The
 scene was the court of the Louvre, which the king
 caused to be covered with sand on the occasion.
 He assisted at it in person, with all the court, male
 and female; and the lists were placed immediately
 under the windows of the queen's apartments.
 Three champions on either side, selected from
 among the most accomplished cavaliers of the time,
 appeared to encounter, each prepared to break three
 lances. "As we had armour and liveries," adds
 Bassompierre, "ready for every occasion, I and my
 " two seconds wore silver mail: our plumes were
 " carnation and white, as were our silk stockings.
 " The duke of Guise and his troop, on account of
 " the imprisonment of the marchioness of Verneuil,
 " whose concealed lover he was, put on dress and

Description
 of it.

(46) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 104—106.
 and p. 108.

(47) Bassomp. p. 106,

" armour

“ armour of black and gold. In this equipage we
 “ arrived at the Louvre (48).” Guise’s lance hav-
 ing entered his adversary’s body at the first career,
 put an end to the diversion. His recovery was long
 doubtful, and seems to have been almost miraculous.

Naval combats were represented, on various occa-
 sions, as far as we are enabled to judge, with extra-
 ordinary dexterity. In 1604 the magistrates of Ro-
 chelle gave a splendid entertainment to Sully, the
 nature and particulars of which can be no way so
 well related as in his own language. Writing to the
 king, he says, “ At this banquet there were seven-
 “ teen tables, of which the least contained sixteen
 “ covers. On the following day, they presented us
 “ a very handsome collation of dried sweetmeats;
 “ and on the ensuing one, a naval combat of twenty
 “ vessels, with dresses, arms, streamers, and liveries
 “ of France, against twenty others of Spain, where
 “ nothing was omitted of all that is practised in real
 “ war. It was terminated by the victory of the
 “ French over the Spaniards, who were all conducted
 “ captives and bound, to the foot of your majesty’s
 “ portrait (40).”

It is not often that de Thou descends so much
 from the gravity of his style and manner, as to
 commemorate the pastimes of the French court;
 but he has violated his accustomed brevity on that
 point, in the description which he has left us, of the
 carousal performed in 1606, before the king and
 queen at Paris. There is no little display of fancy
 and taste, in the fabrication of its parts and charac-
 ters. Four troops of gentlemen, personifying the
 four elements, proceeded by torch-light to the
 Louvre. The first, designed to represent the “ wa-
 “ ter,” was composed of foyens and deities of the

(48) Bassomp. p. 106, 107.

(49) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 254.

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fea, led by Bellegarde, and followed by twelve cavaliers, splendidly dressed. In the second, were seen Vulcan and the Cyclops, employed in forging armour. They were conducted by the prince of Leon, and represented "fire." The count of Sommerive, in the character and with the attributes of "air," was accompanied by Juno with eagles and other birds. Lastly, came the duke of Nevers as the "earth," attended by elephants, on whose backs were constructed towers, in which musicians were stationed; and twelve Moors closed the march. In this order they entered the great court of the Louvre, where all the windows were crowded with spectators. Having divided into squadrons, and discharged their lances in the ground, they began a mock combat with arrows and darts, which were dextrously received on their bucklers. The spectacle finally concluded by an engagement between the cavalry, which seems to have been designed as an imitation of the Pyrrhic dance, so famous in antiquity (50). Poetry, as well as music, lent its aid on the occasion; and Malherbe did not disdain to compose "stanzas to the ladies, for the "demi-gods conducted by Neptune (51)."

Noblemen
and minis-
ters per-
formed in
them.

Sully, and
Biron.

These pageants and allegorical representations, which are now properly abandoned to the theatre, were then acted by princes, noblemen, and ladies of the highest condition. No ideas of the decorum or gravity annexed to character, office, or situation, imposed any obstacle. It is entertaining and ridiculous to consider this principle in its effects; nor can we avoid smiling, when we behold Sully, though superintendant of the finances; and Biron, a marshal of France, commanding the armies of the crown; both dancing in the same "ballet." Sully informs us, that in 1597, at a moment when he was occupied in

(50) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 546. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 115.
(51) Malherbe, p. 81—83.

finding pecuniary resources wherewith to continue the war, and to sustain the shock of the Spanish arms in Picardy, he made one of fourteen in a "ballet," which Biron undertook and executed in honour of a married lady to whom he was attached. In justice to Sully, however, it ought to be added, that he wished to decline this exhibition of his talents for dancing; and he says that he only consented at Biron's urgent entreaty, supported by the king's commands. He had scarcely finished the "ballet" and retired to rest at a very late hour, when he was awoke, and summoned to attend a council, on the arrival of the disastrous news of the surprize of Amiens by Portocarrero (52).

In 1602, we find Mary of Medecis performing the first part in a magnificent diversion, presented by her to the king, and divided into three acts. She associated to herself fifteen of the most beautiful or accomplished princesses and ladies of the court, for the purpose. The entertainment opened with Apollo and the nine muses, who sung, danced, and played on instruments of music, every cadence ending with these words, addressed to Henry:

" Il faut que tout vous fasse homage,
" Grand roi, miracle de notre age."

Eight maids of honour performed the second act, or dance. In the third, appeared the queen herself and her band, divided into four troops, covered with jewels of inestimable value. The young duke of Vendome, natural son to the king by Gabrielle, preceded Mary, in the character of Cupid. This "ballet," it seems, made three stations, or exhibitions; the first at the Louvre, the second at the duke of Guise's hotel, and lastly, in the great hall of the archiepiscopal palace.

(52) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 349.

C H A P. ^{IV.} The papal nuntio, together with all the foreign ministers, were present at its performance (53). But it is in Bassompierre, that we find every detail of these gallant amusements, in which he was a distinguished performer. From him we learn, that satire sometimes mingled in them, and that it did not spare even the king. In 1593 he tells us, that he was one of twelve men of quality, who danced a "ballet" at Monceaux, expressly to amuse the royal leisure. They personated barbers, in order to ridicule Henry, who, on account of a dangerous complaint of a very delicate nature, had recently been under the hands of surgeons (54). No offence whatever was taken at such a liberty.

Satirical
dances.

"Branles." The species of dance, denominated "branles," which, by a slight corruption of orthography as well as pronunciation, were the celebrated "brawls" of queen Elizabeth's court, attained to the highest vogue, and were beheld with a sort of enthusiasm, under Henry the Fourth (55). The duke of Montpensier in 1608, though at the point of death, and only a very few days before he actually expired, quitted his bed in order to be a spectator of one of these dances, which was performed in his own palace by some of the young nobility (56). The king received the first impression of that attachment for the princess of Condé, which engaged him in so many actions dishonouring to his character and unbecoming his age, by seeing her in the dress and character of Diana, in a "ballet" at court. She was then unmarried, and in the first flower of youth (57). How superior the French were esteemed in the profession of dancing as well as fencing, we may infer from Sully's bringing over with him to London in 1603, masters in both those

Their
vogue.

"Ballets."

(53) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. iv. p. 189, 190. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 61.
 (54) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 37, 47, and p. 135. (55) Ibid. p. 38.
 (56) Ibid. p. 131. (57) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 193.

branches of accomplishment. They were presented ^{C H A P.} by him to Henry prince of Wales, eldest son of James ^{IV.} the First (58).

The theatrical amusements during this period, appear to have been equally destitute of refinement and of genius. Personalities and coarse allusions, or satirical reflections on persons of eminence, were allowed and encouraged, as they had been by the Athenians in the time of Aristophanes. The duke of Mayenne, in the first months of his delegated or assumed authority, having been informed that the comedians of the metropolis had installed him on a royal throne, with mock ceremonies calculated to expose him to ridicule, suspended and interdicted their performances (59). Henry was far more placable, even when personally attacked. L'Etoile has left us a very amusing relation of a farce, or comic entertainment, performed in 1607 before the king, queen, and court, at the "Hotel de Bourgogne" in Paris. We may gather from it a perfect idea of the state of the theatre, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, among the French. The fable of the piece, if indeed that term can with propriety be applied to a rude and simple delineation of diurnal transactions in vulgar life, was void of any pretension to fancy, taste, or composition.

The scene discovered a mechanic and his wife, engaged in altercation; the woman complaining, that her husband passed the whole day at the tavern intoxicating himself, while the tax-gatherers, in the king's name, seized on all their little property or gains of every kind. To this reproach the man replied, not without humour, that the oppression of the taxes was an additional motive with him to drink. "For what the devil," added he, "will all the money which we can save avail us, since the king alone

(58) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 169.

(59) Satyre Men. vol. ii. p. 386.

" will

CHAP. " will be benefited by it? I am determined, instead
 IV. " of drinking less, to increase my quantity; and
 " where I swallowed three-halfpenny worth of liquor,
 " to double my dose. I shall, at least, secure that
 " from this rapacious king. Begone, therefore, and
 " bring me something to quench my thirst." These
 arguments, however witty or just, not carrying con-
 viction to the woman, she renewed her exclamations;
 which were suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a
 counsellor of the court of Aids, a commissary, and a
 serjeant, who demand payment of the taxes, on pain
 of seizure of their effects.

The torrent of abuse is now turned into a new
 channel, and directed against the unwelcome intru-
 ders; of whom the husband demands their business
 and functions. "We are," reply they, "officers of
 justice." 'Impossible,' says he; 'officers of jus-
 tice do precisely the reverse of every thing prac-
 tised by you. I don't believe you. Produce your
 commission.' The counsellor shews the order, in
 virtue of which he acts; while the woman, affecting
 to be apprehensive, that, on account of their inability
 to pay the tax, their furniture and goods would be
 seized, sily seats herself on a chest. The commissar-
 ies order her to rise in the king's name. She re-
 fuses; but they compel her, and the chest is at length
 opened. In an instant out rush three devils, who lay
 violent hands on the unfortunate collectors of the
 taxes; and each devil selecting his man, throw them
 over their backs, and carry them off in triumph.
 This was the natural conclusion of the piece, which
 could not be accused of a deficiency in poetical jus-
 tice (60).

Consequen- If, however, the dramatic exhibition closed, it was
 ces of it. followed by another of a more serious nature. The
 counsellors, commissaries, and serjeants, irritated at

(60) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 140—142.

being

being thus exposed to derision on a public theatre, made such complaints, and took such effectual measures, that the actors were all committed to prison. By the king's express interference and command, they were, nevertheless, set at liberty on the same day. He had sufficient magnanimity to despise such attacks, and to tell the persons who conceived themselves aggrieved, that "if any affront had been given, he had received a far greater one than they; but that he readily forgave it, in consideration of the amusement which he had derived from so laughable a performance." That it was one of the best exhibitions of its kind represented at Paris, is certain, since l'Etoile adds, "Every one allowed, that, for a long time past, there had not been seen at Paris a more pleasant farce, better played, or of a livelier invention (61)." We must own, that there is a wide interval between it and the productions of Moliere: yet the first comedy of that incomparable writer, "L'Etourdi," was performed at Lyons only forty-six years afterwards (62). Nor ought it to be forgotten, that, while in the capital of France the drama was at so low an ebb, in London, Shakspear had produced some of the most beautiful, though eccentric and irregular comedies, which have ever excited the admiration of mankind.

C H A P.
IV.Interference
of Henry.Low state of
the drama.

A company of Italian performers seem to have annually visited, if they did not remain stationary in the French metropolis, after Mary of Medecis' arrival. In 1603, we find the company of Isabella Andreini reciting before the court (63). They were received with applauses; but we do not exactly know what was the particular style and nature of their performance. Henry, in 1608, writes to the eldest son of the duke of Sully, enjoining him to pay the Italian

Italian co-
medians.(61) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 122.
vol. ix. p. 258.(62) Biogr. Dict.
(63) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. vi. p. 446.

comedians

C H A P. comédians a sum of money on account, and to order
 IV. them to repair to him at Fontainbleau (64). Buff-
 Buffoons. foons, male and female, as well as pages and dwarfs,
 constituted part of the royal establishment, and had
 fixed pensions or salaries annexed to their offices (65).
 Mathurine, a woman who followed the court in the
 capacity of a fool or buffoon, seems not only to have
 enjoyed the privilege of taking personal freedoms with
 the king, but to have possessed no inconsiderable de-
 gree of favour and interest (66). The order of the
 Pages. nobles, in the assembly of the "Notables" at Rouen,
 demanded in their collective capacity, that the sove-
 reign would maintain in his household the greatest
 number of pages that he was able; and that he would
 give them an education becoming gentlemen, as
 well as capable of forming them to the exercise of
 arms (67).

Rage for
 play.

Never did the rage for play, one of the most de-
 structive to morals of any which can be tolerated,
 prevail more universally, nor attain to a greater pitch
 of enormity, than under this reign. It received
 every possible encouragement from the king's exam-
 ple; and it is one of the greatest defects in his cha-
 racter. The contagion was not limited to the court,
 but pervaded private life, and fatally corrupted the
 manners of the inferior orders. It would be difficult
 to credit the amount of the sums hazarded at play,
 if they only stood upon the testimony of Bassompier-
 re, d'Aubigné, or l'Etoile. Unhappily, Henry's
 own letters, preserved in Sully, afford incontestable
 proofs of the fact. - In the autumn of 1608, "the
 " king," says Bassompierre, "knowing that I was
 " at Paris, wrote to me, to bid me return to court;
 " informing me, that I had hitherto been the deepest

(64) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 247.

-318. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 343. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii.
 p. 65.

(66) Ibid. p. 141, 142.

(65) Conf. de Sancy, p. 316

(67) De Thou, vol. xiii.

p. 21.

" gamester

gamester of the set; but that there was a Portuguese, named Pimentel, recently arrived, who greatly surpassed me. I staid some days at Fontainebleau, playing the most furious play ever known. Not a day passed, in which twenty thousand pistoles were not lost and won. The smallest stakes were fifty pistoles, and the largest were five hundred; so that it was possible to hold in one's hand, at the same time, above fifty thousand pistoles. I won in that year above five hundred thousand livres at play. The king returned to Paris, and from thence to St. Germain, continuing the same train of play; at which Pimentel won above a hundred thousand crowns (68).^{CHAP. IV.} ^{Enormous sums lost and won at court.} If we consider how little a pistole is inferior in value to a pound sterling, and if we recollect that Bassompierre's winnings, in one year only, greatly exceeded twenty thousand guineas, we shall be lost in contemplating the effects of such gaming. The conduct of Henry the Third, however profligate and depraved in other particulars, appears in the article of play, to have been less censurable than that of his successor. ^{Its pernicious effects.}

As if to corroborate the account given by Bassompierre, we find Henry writing to Sully, on the 18th of January 1609, in these words: "My friend, I have lost at play twenty-two thousand pistoles, which I desire of you to put into Feideau's hands, who will deliver you this note, that he may distribute the money among the different persons to whom I am indebted (69)." It is by no means the only order of the kind to be found in Sully's works (70). He promised, it is true, with solemn protestations to his minister, that he would not again play so deep; but it is evident that he did not keep his word. Sully so well knew his master's weakness, ^{Further proofs of it} ^{from Sully.}

(68) Bassomp. vnl i. tome i. p. 134.
p. 276. (70) Ibid. p. 326.

(69) Sully, vol. ii. tome i.

that,

C H A P. IV. that, in the month of March of the same year, the king coming to dine with him at the arsenal, he ordered cards and dice to be placed upon table, as soon as the dishes were removed. At the same time he caused a purse, containing four thousand pistoles, to be put by Henry for himself; and a second, which held an equal sum, for the purpose of lending to such as played with him (71). It must be admitted, that the style of play was, at least, becoming a sovereign. But we may see, in numerous instances, that the king, in the true spirit of a gamester; loved the amusement for its contingent advantages; and by no means refunded his winnings (72). Many of the courtiers, seduced by so bad an example, ruined their fortunes at the gaming table. The younger Biron was among the number (73). Primero appears to have been the fashionable game (74).

Progress of gaming among the inferior orders.

How general and how pernicious the passion for play became before the close of this reign, we may learn from l'Etoile. The facts related by him, are equally extraordinary with those contained in Bassompierre. "In this month of March 1609," says he, "have been established in Paris many new academies for play, where the citizens of every age stake considerable sums; which demonstrates at once the abundance, and the corruption of manners. The son of a merchant has been seen to lose at one sitting thirty thousand crowns, who never inherited from his father more than ten thousand. A person, named Jonas, has hired a house for holding one of these academies, in the suburb St. Germain, during fifteen days that the fair lasts: he has given fourteen hundred livres for it (75)."

(71) Sully, vol. ii. tome i. p. 282. (72) Ibid. p. 290. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 153; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 146. (73) Cabinet d'Hen. IV., vol. i. p. 54. (74) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 467. (75) About sixty pounds sterling. Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 193, 194.

These circumstances, which must have been of universal notoriety, and which are commemorated by a contemporary writer of unquestionable accuracy, convey an incredible picture of the rage for so destructive an amusement. We may reasonably doubt, whether at any period of the reigns of Louis the Fifteenth, or of his unfortunate successor, the "Palais royal," where every enormity and abomination found a secure asylum in the centre of Paris, ever witnessed greater, or even equal excesses in the article of play. It proves the total inattention of the municipal and civil government, to the morals of the people; since it is evident that no measures were taken for the suppression of such seminaries of vice, or for the punishment of those who presumed to open them in the metropolis.

Venality was another of the distinguishing features of the age. It was by no means confined to the courts of law, but pervaded all the departments of civil government. Bribes were offered, under the form of presents, without disguise, and accepted without shame, even by ministers and persons of the highest quality. In 1606, when Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, arrived at Paris, he commenced his political operations and intrigues, by a regular system of corruption. In order to retain the marquise of Saluzzo, of which he had possessed himself under the reign of Henry the Third, he found no means so effectual as money. The commissioners, named by the crown to discuss and report upon that important object, though the constable Montmorency and the chancellor Bellievre were among the number, did not blush to sell themselves to a foreign prince, who had usurped a part of the dominions of France (76.) Sully alone rejected his offers, and declined his mag-

C H A P.
IV.Dissolution
of man-
nera
and pro-
fligacy.

Corruption;

how general!

Duke of
Savoy.

(76) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 467, 469.

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nificent presents (77.) Such was the effect produced by Charles Emanuel's largesses, that they seduced the allegiance of Biron, procured him a perfect knowledge of the most secret deliberations of the French cabinet, and spread in ramifications so extensive throughout the kingdom, as to menace the very existence or tranquillity of the monarchy (78).

Foreign
courts.

England.

Instructions
to Sully,

to corrupt
the English
ministers

and ladies.

The same arts which operated with so much success in Henry's court, he practised in turn, without scruple, to become master of the secrets of other princes, and to direct their counsels. After the decease of Elizabeth queen of England, in 1603, we find the two ministers of France and Spain vying with each other in their efforts to corrupt, and to purchase the counsellors of James the First (79). In the instructions signed by Henry the Fourth himself, and delivered to Sully, whom he sent ambassador to London, there is a specific injunction, "to tamper
" with, and to bind to the service of his majesty,
" any of the confidential servants of the king of
" England, who may be capable of serving him,
" and on whose adherence there may appear to be
" room to confide (80)." The very nature of the expressions used, implies the objects intended to be effected by the ambassador. Sully was not negligent in fulfilling the commission; and he acted with so much dexterity, that James consented, in some measure, to the corruption of his own ministers (81). The females of distinction about the person of Anne of Denmark, the new queen of England, were not forgotten in the pecuniary distributions (82); and we see the earl of Northumberland among the first who negotiated for a pension, which was promised him by

(77) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 433—435.

(78) D'Aub. Hist. Gen.

vol. iii. p. 478. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 437—439.

(79) Sully,

vol. i. tome ii. p. 165.

(80) Ibid. p. 102.

(81) Ibid. p. 169, 170.

(82) Ibid. p. 171.

Sully (83). It may be amusing to enumerate some of the presents made to the principal personages, male and female, as they throw a light on the manners of the times; on the mode of conferring or conveying donations; and on the respective importance of the individuals themselves. The whole list is to be found in Sully. Secretary Cecil has three dozen of gold buttons, set with diamonds. Lord Sidney; a chain of large gold beads, filled with perfume, enriched with diamonds; and the portrait of Henry the Fourth. The duke of Lenox, a band for a hat, with diamond tassels. Among the names, are the English earls of Southampton and Devonshire, as well as the earls of Roxburgh and Mar. To the countess of Bedford, a gold watch, ornamented with jewels. Even Margaret Aisan, who is entitled "Fille de Chambre, and favourite of the queen," has her place among the subordinate personages (84):

C H A P.
IV.

List of presents and pensions

distributed by Sully.

Six years afterwards, when Henry dispatched Bassompierre to the court of Nancy, in order to negotiate an affair of the most delicate nature, the marriage of the Dauphin with the eldest daughter of the duke of Lorraine; the French minister was authorized to begin by corrupting and retaining all the persons, who might be judged capable of facilitating the alliance: He was limited at first to six thousand crowns in annual pensions (85). Bassompierre assures us, that on his offering Bonnet, president of Lorraine, and confidential minister of the duke, to interest him by a pecuniary recompence, in favour of the French king, Bonnet refused it; adding, that "he belonged to a master who was capable of amply paying his services (86)." Some instances of similar elevation of mind and integrity are to be found, though rarely,

Court of Lorraine.

Integrity of Bonnet.

(83) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 124, 157, and p. 171. (84) *Ibid.*
p. 169. (85) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 152. (86) *Ibid.* p. 156.

C. H. A. P. among the French nobility, during the period under
 IV. our contemplation (87).

Libertinism

in the nun-
 neries,

and court.

Examples
 of it.

The utmost libertinism of manners, and even contempt of decorum, characterized the conduct of the great. Henry led the way in this respect, and influenced essentially by his example, on the court, the nobility, and even on the people. During the siege of Paris in 1590, all the surrounding nunneries became the scene and receptacle of debauch. That of Maubuisson, where the royal standard was displayed, exhibited an example of the most unrestrained licentiousness. Angelica d'Etrées, eldest sister of the celebrated Gabrielle, was abbess of the convent (88). The clergy, in 1596, complained, that all discipline and order were extinct in the female monasteries throughout France (89). We can scarcely conceive greater violations of decency, than many which are commemorated by l'Étoile; and they are so repugnant to our modes of acting, that they impress with no less disgust than amazement. We find the king, far from drawing a veil over his amours, or trying to conceal them from the public eye, studiously exhibiting them to every observer, and deriving a sort of vanity from their publicity. Not only in his retirement, and in the apartments of his palace, he is always accompanied by his mistresses, but in every diversion, in acts of state, in public ceremonies, in the camp, and even in the solemnities of religion, Gabrielle is constantly at his side. When madame de Sourdis' son was baptized in 1594, the king officiated as sponsor to the infant, in the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois at Paris. "From the instant that he entered," says l'Étoile, "till his departure, he never ceased laughing with his mis-

(87) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 373. D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 335. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 351; and vol. xii. p. 309, 446. Memoires D'Aub. p. 142—144.

(88) Confess. de Sancy, p. 236, 237, and p. 250—254.

(89) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 20, 21.

“ trefs,

“ trefs, and careſſing her in different ways (90).” C H A P.
IV.
 The ſubſequent part of their diſcourſe and deport-
 ment, was ſtill more incompatible with the reſpect
 due to the place, and to the act in which they were
 engaged. On the 17th of March in the following
 year, being overtaken by a violent ſtorm while they
 were hunting together in the neighbourhood of Paris,
 they returned to the palace. As they paſſed through
 the ſtreets, Gabrielle was on horſeback, aſtride,
 dreſſed in green; and Henry by her ſide, holding her
 hand (91). Henry and
his miſtreſs.

When the duke of Mayenne came to Monceaux
 in 1596, to make his ſubmiſſion to his ſovereign,
 againſt whom he had been ſo long in rebellion, he
 was received by Gabrielle, who did the honours of
 the manſion, and conducted him to the royal pre-
 ſence. At ſupper, Henry and his miſtreſs eat at one
 table; the duke, with Diana d'Etrées her ſiſter, were
 ſeated at another adjoining; and the courtiers fac-
 tiously called Mayenne, the king's brother-in-law (92).
 So little reſtraint did they impoſe on the marks of
 their mutual fondneſs, that, in time of Carnival, Indecorums
committed
 Gabrielle, when accompanying him to the houſes of
 individuals, was accuſtomed to take off his mask,
 and to kiſs him wherever they entered (93). Even
 in council, they repeated the ſame indecent careſſes,
 which ſeem not to have excited any violent emotions
 of concern or of diſguſt in the miniſters preſent (94).
 De Thou, who confirms many of theſe facts, cen-
 ſures the king for celebrating the baptiſm of his ſon by them.
 by Gabrielle, with the ſame public demonſtrations of
 pomp and magnificence, which might have become
 the birth of a legitimate prince. The ceremony was
 performed by the papal legate, and accompanied by

(90) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 60, 61. (91) Ibid.
 p. 90, 91. (92) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 116, 117.
 (93) Ibid. p. 151. (94) Ibid. p. 146, 147.

C H A P.

IV.

Gabrielle,
lodged in
the camp.

all the nobility, and the members of the States then convened at Rouen (95). In the field, Gabrielle had her tent near that of her lover; and we find her lodged in the midst of the camp before Amiens, in 1597: but the soldiery, either more delicate in their ideas of propriety, or less servile in their deference towards their prince, murmured so loudly at her presence, that Henry was necessitated to remove her to a greater distance. Biron ventured to remonstrate with him on the scandal to which his conduct gave rise: a freedom not easily forgotten, even by so plausible a monarch (96). We may collect from l'Etoile, that the Spaniards themselves, besieged in Amiens, were indignant and displeas'd at Henry's bringing his mistress into the camp (97).

Homage
paid to her

All the acts of unworthy and unbecoming submission or homage, paid by the most prostitute courtiers under Louis the Fifteenth, to his successive mistresses, the marchioness of Pompadour and the countess of Barré, were infinitely exceeded during the reign which we are reviewing. Not only the first nobility, but the princes of the blood, as Villeroy assures us, kissed the border of Gabrielle's robe, presented her the napkin to wash, and shewed her the same deference which they could have done towards their queen (98). He says, that he reproached the duke of Montpensier, with thus degrading and dishonouring his own high rank. Even ladies and princesses, who might have been supposed more delicate or tenacious on such an article, betrayed equal complaisance.

by the prin-
ces of the
blood,

and ladies
of rank.

We find the two duchesses of Nemours and of Montpensier, assisting at Gabrielle's toilet, and adjusting her ornaments (99). In the "ballets" given to her brother by the princess of Navarre at Paris, Gabrielle

(95) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 25.

(96) Mezeray, vol. x. p. 96.

(97) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 177

(98) Villeroy,

vol. iii. p. 200, 201 Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 38.

(99) Journal

d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome ii. p. 60.

dances;

dances(100); and when his sister is confined to her bed by sickness, the king always brings his mistress with him to her apartment(101). The duchess of Mercœur, who boasted her descent from the ancient dukes of Brittany, did not disdain publicly to enter Angers, in the same open litter with Gabrielle(102). Death itself could not extinguish her influence. Henry, contrary to the established custom of the kings of France, who were only used to wear violet as mourning even for their queens, put on black. The whole court assisted at Gabrielle's funeral service in the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, and the foreign ambassadors condoled on her decease, as on that of a sovereign(103).

C H A P.
IV.

Towards Mary of Medecis, Henry seems scarcely to have observed any measures. At a time that he was already married to her by proxy, he publicly sent the colours taken from the duke of Savoy at Charbonnières, to his mistress the marchioness of Verneuil(104). Bassompierre acquaints us, that, on the very first evening of the new queen's arrival at Paris, her husband presented to her the marchioness, her rival(105). We may see in Sully, that, however economical on other articles, the king thought no expence too great, when the gratification of his passions was concerned. Henrietta d'Entragues exacted and received above twelve thousand pounds sterling, previous to the surrender of her person and honour(106). His ordinary presents and donations to Jacqueline de Beuil, countess of Moret, another of his favourites, are not less profuse(107). The circumstances of her pretended marriage in 1604 with Chanvalon, in the view of all Paris, were of a nature

Treatment
of the queen.

Donations
of Henry
to his mis-
tresses.

(100) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 79, 80. (101) Ibid. p. 153. (102) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 202. (103) Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 85. Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 43. (104) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. iii. p. 603. (105) Bassomp. vol. i. tome i. p. 54. (106) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 429, 430. (107) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i. p. 73.

C H A P.
IV.

Exemplary
deportment
of Mary of
Medecis.

Instance of
her severity.

totally subversive of decency, and which demonstrate the king's indifference or contempt for the public opinion (108). Bassompierre and l'Étoile, in every page of their works, give testimony to the dissolution of manners produced by his example, not only in the court, but in the metropolis, and through all the walks of inferior life (109). It must nevertheless be admitted, that Mary of Medecis, whatever faults of character may be justly imputed to her, was irreproachable as to her private deportment. She even exerted herself with becoming dignity and severity, to repress the torrent of licentiousness which polluted every place where she resided. Her pride sustained her virtue; and when she was solicited by Henry to take some steps unbecoming a woman of strict honour, in order to facilitate his designs on the princess of Condé, she refused. "I may suffer your amours," said the queen, "but I never will become subservient to their gratification (110)." It is impossible not to admire this conduct.

The baron de Termes, a man of the highest birth and connexions in the court, having been surprized in bed with la Sagonne, one of her maids of honour, she not only dismissed the unfortunate lady from her service, with expressions of indignation; but the king's interposition and authority were necessary, to prevent her from proceeding to greater extremities. She besought of Henry to immolate the baron to her resentment by taking off his head; and he was compelled to abscond for a considerable time. The governess of the maids of honour, though innocent of any connivance or participation in the fact, received her dismissal. Even the powerful exertions of her confessor were ineffectual, to obtain a mitigation of these

(108) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 61. (109) Bassomp.
vol. i. tome i. p. 43—46, and p. 116—135. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i.
tome ii. p. 118, and p. 156—159; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 136, and p. 147.
(110) Vittorio Siri. Mem. recon. tome ii. p. 260.

punishments.

punishments (111). Mary, in thus asserting her own dignity, and reprobating the libertinism of the age, acted very differently from Catherine of Medecis, who tacitly encouraged and permitted the seduction of the females of her household. Among the singular inventions of gallantry meriting commemoration, may be reckoned "love cyphers." These were characters or marks, engraved by ladies on the arms of their lovers. In 1591, when the chevalier d'Aumale was killed at St. Denis, his body was so disfigured by wounds as not to be recognizable. A woman of pleasure, named la Raverie, at length discovered and identified the body, by shewing the "Chiffres "d'Amour," which she had herself impressed on his arm (112).

C H A P.
IV.

Love cy-
phers.

Remains of
the spirit of
chivalry.

Instances.

Duke of la
Tremouille.

Some remains of the spirit of chivalry are still to be traced under Henry the Fourth. When du Pleffis Moinay was attacked and severely wounded by St. Fal in 1597, the king instantly wrote to the former in these terms: "I am exceedingly affected at the outrage which you have received, in which I participate both as your king and as your friend. In the first capacity, I will do justice to you and to myself. If I only enjoyed the second title, you have not any who would be more ready to unsheath his sword, nor who would more cheerfully risk his life for you, than myself (113)." We find the duke de la Tremouille, when about to be invested in his castle of Thouars by the royal forces, writing thus to d'Aubigné: "My friend, I summon you, in compliance with your oaths, to come and die with your affectionate, &c." D'Aubigné immediately returned the following answer: "Sir, your letter shall be implicitly obeyed. I blame it, nevertheless, in one thing, for having alleged my

(111) Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 13, 14.
verny, vol. i. p. 205. Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 400.
d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 179.

(112) Chi-
(113) Journal

" oaths,

C H A P. " oaths, which ought to be believed too inviolable
 IV. " ever to remind me of them (114)."

 D'Aubigné.

The same writer acquaints us, that when he was entrusted by Henry the Fourth, soon after his accession, with the person of the old cardinal of Bourbon, who was confined in the castle of Maillezais in Poitou, of which d'Aubigné was governor, he received intimation of an attempt meditated against his life by a captain named Dauphin, a partizan of the League. " This intelligence, though sure," says he, " did not prevent me from giving Dauphin a rendezvous at a solitary house on the border of a marsh; where he was to be at day-light. It being accepted, I quitted my fort alone, ordered the draw-bridges to be raised after me, and having found him at the place appointed, I addressed him in the following manner; ' Many persons have been desirous to prevent me from coming to speak with thee, because thou art suspected of having engaged to kill me, which, however, I would not believe. If, notwithstanding, thou hast conceived such a design, behold two daggers which I bring, and of which I leave thee the choice, that with equal arms thou may'st atchieve thy enterprise. I have likewise caused a boat to be brought hither, to the end that thou may'st escape in it across the marsh, if the chance of arms should be in thy favour.' Dauphin, as much surpris'd at my offer as pleas'd with the frankness of my proceeding, instantly threw down his sword at my feet, and assured me, with every possible mark of submission, that no such design had ever entered his head (115)."

Combat for
 a dead body.

In the personal animosity exhibited, as well as in the speeches and defiances which were reciprocally made or sent during the siege of Rouen in 1592, we

(114) Memoires d'Aub. p. 153.

(115) Ibd. p. 145, 146.

are reminded of the heroic times. A combat took place between the troops on both sides, over the dead body of a soldier who fell, which in obstinacy and duration might vie with that for the body of Patroclus, under the walls of Troy, in the seventeenth book of the Iliad, Boisfrozé, on the part of the League, and the baron of Biron, at the head of the royalists, contended for the corpse; which was taken and retaken five times. It was finally borne off by Biron; and Boisfrozé, wounded, retreated slowly into the city (116). We can never sufficiently admire the spirit of military enthusiasm, and of pious veneration for the ashes of the illustrious dead, which dictated the first article of the capitulation of Amiens by the Spaniards, in 1597. Previous to any stipulation in their own favour, the marquis of Montenegro demanded, in their joint names, that "the tombs of Portocarrero, and of all the other officers who had fallen, should be preserved inviolate; that neither their epitaphs nor trophies should be defaced; and that it should be allowed them to remove the bodies, whenever they might think proper." The demand was granted by Henry the Fourth (117).

How much sincere and fervent piety tempered the valour of the most intrepid commanders, we may see in the example of that prince himself. D'Aubigné assures us, that on the night preceding the battle of Ivry, he was continually in prayer, attended by the Hugonot chiefs (118). The ejaculation, which at the head of the battalions he pronounced aloud, with hands and eyes lifted up to Heaven, only a few moments before the action commenced, is one of the most beautiful invocations for the divine assistance, commemorated or preserved by history. It is to

(116) Chron. Nov. vol. ii, p. 13, 14.
Nov. vol. iii, p. 686.

(117) Davila, p. 1471. Chron.
(118) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 229.

C H A P. Davila, who was present on the occasion, that we
 VI. are indebted for its transmission to posterity. "O

Prayer of
 Henry, at
 Ivry.

"Lord, thou knowest the intentions of my heart,
 "and with the eye of thy providence thou piercest
 "my most secret thoughts! If it be best for this
 "people that I should attain the crown, which of
 "right belongs to me, do thou favour and protect
 "the justice of my arms; but if thy will hath deter-
 "mined the contrary; if thou takest away my
 "kingdom, take away my life also at the same time,
 "that I may shed my blood fighting at the head of
 "those, who expose themselves to danger for my
 "sake (119)." We are at a loss, in perusing this
 spontaneous effusion, whether most to admire the
 humble submission of Henry to the Supreme Being,
 or his magnanimous contempt of life, if it could
 only be preserved by the sacrifice of his throne.
 Had the unfortunate and passive prince, who lately
 expired on a scaffold by the hands of his rebellious
 subjects, possessed a small portion of the heroic
 courage of the founder of his house, the calamities
 of the family of Bourbon and of France might
 unquestionably have been averted or prevented.

Reflections
 on it.

Defiances
 and chal-
 lenges.

Mayenne.

Defiances and challenges to single combat, as
 proofs of veracity, had not fallen into total disuse
 under Henry the Fourth. The duke of Mayenne,
 calumniated by the Spanish ambassador the duke of
 Feria, besought of Philip the Second to permit and
 to authorize him to assert his innocence in single
 combat against his adversary, as well as to name the
 place and arms with which they should engage.
 Philip appears to have treated the request with silent
 disregard (120). Only three years before, in 1591,
 the earl of Essex, commanding the English auxilia-
 ries in the royal camp before Rouen, sent a cartel to

Essex and
 Villars.

(119) Davila, p. 899.
 p. 428.

(120) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 417, and

Villars, the general of the League within the city, conceived in these words: "If you will fight, either on horseback or on foot, armed or in your waist-coat, I will maintain, that the quarrel of the king is more just than that of the League, that I am better than you, and that my mistress is handsomer than yours. If you should decline coming alone, I will bring with me twenty, the worst of whom shall be an antagonist worthy of a colonel; or sixty, the least a captain." Villars accepted the challenge, but declined abandoning his public duty to engage in a private combat, till circumstances should justify such a conduct. To the two first assertions contained in Effex's cartel, he gives the lie in the most unequivocal and formal manner: but, as to the superiority of their respective mistresses in point of beauty, he speaks with more caution, as well as indifference, contenting himself with doubting it, and treating it as in itself an object which gave him little concern. No consequences followed from the defiance (121). Effex always wore Elizabeth's glove fastened to the loop of his hat, while conducting her forces to the aid of Henry (122).

The frenzy of duelling was one of the most characteristic features of the age; and the impunity which attended them, loudly accused the injudicious lenity, or the criminal negligence of the government. L'Etoile asserts, that between the accession of Henry the Fourth and the year 1607, at least four thousand French gentlemen perished in these encounters: he adds, that, far from the computation being an exaggerated one, it would be easy to verify the list in the most accurate manner (123). The dead bodies of those who fell, were interred without ceremony, as a matter of course, in which justice had little

Rage for
duels.

Numbers
who fell in
them.

(121) Chron. Nov. vol. ii. p. 502, 503.
liv. iv. p. 55.

(122) Matthieu, vol. ii.
(123) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 149.

interest.

C H A P. interest (124). A desperate and successful duellist
IV. obtained not only pardon, but enjoyed the most distinguished consideration in the court (125).

Duel of Cre-
qui and the
bastard of
Savoy.

If we would wish to form an idea of the received modes of thinking and acting, in affairs of honour among men of condition, we may do it by reviewing the principal circumstances of the memorable duel, fought in 1599 between Don Philippin, natural son of Emanuel Philibert duke of Savoy, and the marquis of Crequi. It originated from an assertion made by the latter, that, at the capture of a small fortress situated among the Alps, he had got possession of a scarf belonging to Philippin. The Savoyard conceiving himself insulted by such a declaration, sent a challenge to Crequi. It was accepted; and at their meeting the bastard was wounded, which terminated the contest (126).

Origin of it.

Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy, indignant at hearing that Crequi boasted of having "drawn the blood of Savoy," commanded his brother, on pain of his displeasure, instantly to wipe out so insolent an affront to their common family. Philippin obeyed, though, as it would seem, not without reluctance and many delays. A second cartel was sent to Crequi, who received the summons with alacrity. As it appeared nevertheless, to be too open and indecent a violation of the laws prohibiting duels, for Lesdiguières, who was governor of Dauphinè, to permit his own son-in-law Crequi, to meet his antagonist on the French territories; the scene of action was fixed in a little island formed by the Rhone, in the dominions of Savoy: the meadow was mowed, in order to prevent any ambuscade or surprize (127). It was stipulated that the two combatants should fight on foot in their shirts, armed

Place of
meeting.

(124) Journal. d'Henry. IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 52, and p. 91, and p. 118, and p. 136, and p. 148.

(125) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 57

(126) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 310, 311. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 424—426.

(127) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. 466.

with

with a sword and poniard. Only a single second was to be present on either side, and they were not to be separated till one was killed. Twelve gentlemen of the respective countries were stationed at a certain distance, who after the termination of the duel, were to take possession of the body of the vanquished champion, and to protect the victor from harm (128). A long debate arose, whether the seconds should engage, which they warmly demanded, esteeming it dishonourable to be only spectators of the danger of their friends; but it was at length determined, that the principals alone should decide the contest. Previous to the duel, each of the combatants underwent a search, for the purpose of ascertaining that they neither had concealed arms nor enchantments. Crequi, suffering his adversary to exhaust his first fury, watched an opportunity, transfixing him with his sword, and commanded him to ask his life. The bastard disdained it, and expired on the same evening. Crequi repassing the river, returned to Grenoble unwounded, and covered with glory (129).

CHAP.
IV.
Circumstances of it.

Death of
Don Philip.

In 1602, Henry the Fourth endeavoured to repress the fury of duels, by issuing an edict of the most rigorous nature: it inflicted the punishment of death, not only on the person sending, but on him who accepted a challenge under any circumstances. Confiscation of effects, and every prohibition which could impress with terror, or deter from an appeal to the sword, were added. "Never," says De Thou, "was a more wise or respectable law promulgated, nor ever was any so ill observed (130). The facility of the king, importunity, merit, or favour, obstructed its execution, and rescued the culprit

Edict of
Henry
against
duels

evaded.

(128) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 312, 313: (129) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 426.—428. Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 768. Chiverny, vol. ii. p. 89, 90. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 313—316. (130) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 110. Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. 253, 254.

C. H. A. P. IV.

Second edict.

Crimes.

Murder and affassination.

Menelay.

from the pursuit of justice (131). Wearied at length with the perpetual infractions committed, and deeply sensible to the devastation made among the upper classes of his subjects by so pernicious a custom, Henry, only about ten months before his death, published a second edict, in which, to all the other penalties, was joined degradation from the rank of nobility. He even bound himself by a solemn and public oath, never to pardon an offender, even at the solicitation of the queen (132). The short period which elapsed between its publication and his own assassination, left its operation a matter of doubt. Under Mary of Medecis, the vigour of the laws was relaxed; and it was reserved for Louis the Fourteenth, by wholesome severity, to impose some restraint on a practice so general and destructive.

During the licence of the civil wars, every crime which is produced by anarchy and contempt of the royal authority, was perpetrated with impunity. Murders were committed, not only by the desperate and the indigent, but they were coolly and premeditatedly enjoined by persons of the highest quality, and carried into execution with every circumstance of notoriety. Assassination was as often a measure of state, or an act of policy, as a gratification of private enmity and revenge. When the duke of Mayenne received intimation that Menelay, governor of la Fere, had betrayed a disposition to deliver up the place to the king, he sent thither Colas, lieutenant of his guards. The emissary arrived, and accompanied by a chosen band of adherents, having met with Menelay as he returned from the celebration of mass, instantly fell upon and dispatched him. The government of la Fere was his recompence for so atrocious an act (133).

(131) Mathieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 216, 217. (132) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 54—58. (133) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 62. Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 480, 481. De Thou, vol. xi. p. 460.

In the murder of marshal St. Pol at Rheims, three years afterwards, we strongly trace the spirit of the time, when the great considered themselves as emancipated from every restraint imposed on their passions or interests. That officer had risen from a very humble condition, to an extraordinary height of power and consideration, under the duke of Guise, assassinated at Blois: his talents, adherence, and intrepidity, surmounted the impediments arising from the meanness of his extraction. After the death of his patron, he had received from the duke of Mayenne, as heard of the League, the provisional superintendence of the province of Champagne, during the non-age and imprisonment of the young duke of Guise, the hereditary governor, detained in the castle of Tours. In this elevated situation he not only maintained himself by his courage and capacity, but he had been subsequently raised to the dignity of a marshal of France, by Mayenne. Unable, on account of the obscurity of his origin, to obtain from the king a confirmation either of his civil or military titles, he had thrown himself into the Spanish faction. With a view to retain the exclusive possession of Rheims, he introduced into the city some foreign forces; nor could the most pressing solicitations of the duke of Guise, who having escaped from confinement, desired to resume his government, induce St. Pol to dismiss the auxiliaries. Irritated at his refusal, and anxious to recover Rheims, even by the commission of a crime, if other means were ineffectual, the duke, while affecting to engage in amicable expostulation with St. Pol, drew his sword; and before the other could put himself in a posture of defence, laid him dead by a single thrust. The body, stripped, and in a state of nudity, was long left a wretched spectacle for the inhabitants. To complete the horror of so foul and

C H A P.
IV.

St. Pol,

His rise,

and conduct;

He is killed
by the duke
of Guise.

C H A P.
IV.

treacherous a transaction, it was committed in the presence, and with the approbation of the duke of Mayenne. The possession of Rheims enabled his nephew to purchase advantageous terms from the crown, with which he soon afterwards opened a negotiation. Henry gladly extended a pardon to Guise for every past offence, and received into his obedience the province of Champagne (134).

Impunity of
crimes.

Encouraged by such examples; secure of the tacit, or even specific obliteration of all their crimes, on submission to the king; and accustomed to act, each in their separate command, as independent chiefs; the leaders trampled on every moral or political restraint. Too many proofs of this fact occur in the annals of the period. We find the sieur du Pleffis in 1598, exacting, rather than obtaining the abolition of various murders aggravated by perfidy, and which ought to have conducted him to the most ignominious end. But he was in possession of castles, which it imported to reduce, and whose surrender guaranteed his safety (135). If we may believe the testimony of the criminal himself, who was executed at Meaux, the arch-duke Albert entertained in his service an assassin, at about three pounds sterling a month, who had undertaken to dispatch Henry the Fourth with a cross-bow of a new invention. We ought not, however, lightly to permit ourselves to credit these accusations, often the offspring of credulity, error, or malignity (136). The nobility who adhered to the royal cause, were not more scrupulous in the use of expedients to accomplish their projects of vengeance, than the followers of the League. In 1595, the count de Chaunes and the marquis d'Humieres, two men of the highest quality, caused their

Other exam-
ples.

(134) Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 412, 413. Journ. d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 24—26. De Thou, vol. xii. 239—241.

(135) Confess. de Sancy, p. 526, 527.

(136) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii.

p. 141.

wives

wives to be murdered: jealousy produced, in both cases, so tragical a scene. One of them was strangled with her own hair by persons masqued, and the other was drowned by her husband himself. Neither enquiry nor punishment followed these enormities (137).

C H A P.
IV.

Even after the extinction of the civil dissensions, and the revival of the power of the crown, it was long before the manners of the nation grew more humane, or the majesty of the laws could impose a restraint on private animosity and revenge. The capital exhibited frequent instances of the inability of penal statutes, to secure personal safety. "On the 29th of January 1604," in a time of profound tranquillity, "two gentlemen," says l'Etoile, "having met on horseback in one of the most frequented streets of Paris, one of them compelled the other to dismount, drew his sword, and laid him dead on the ground. He then got upon his horse, and holding in his hand the naked sword stained with blood, retired at a foot pace, towards the gate of 'St. Antoine,' without any person attempting to molest him. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and still broad day-light (138)." With what facility outrages of every sort were committed in the metropolis of France, we may collect from many passages in the same author. La Fin, whose testimony had been principally instrumental in bringing Biron to the scaffold, having repaired to Paris about four years afterwards, was attacked as he passed the end of the bridge of "Notre Dame" on horseback, in the middle of the day. Twelve or fifteen men, well mounted, unhorsed him, and left him on the ground, covered with blood. Having discharged ten or twelve pistol balls at him, and

Outrages
committed
in the me-
tropolis.

La Fin.

(137) Observations sur Alcandre, dans l'Hist. d'Hen. III., vol. i. p. 294.
Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 41—44. (138) Journal d'Henry IV., vcl. ii. tome

p. 3, 4.

C H A P. killed or wounded several other persons, this band of
IV. assassins traversed the city at full gallop with their
 drawn swords and fire-arms in their hands. No pur-
 suit was made after them, for more than twenty-four
 hours subsequent to the fact; nor were the perpetra-
 tors ever brought to any tribunal, though it was easy
 to conjecture their names and quality (139). Ver-
 mond, one of the discarded lovers of Margaret of
 Valois, indignant at her preference of a new favou-
 rite, put him to death at the door of the queen's
 palace. Being ill mounted, he was overtaken in his
 flight, brought back, and beheaded on the spot
 where he had perpetrated the crime. Margaret had
 the inhumanity, as well as indecency, to assist at his
 execution (140).

Mazanffi.

The residence, and even the presence of the king
 himself, extended no protection. In August of the
 same year 1606, Mazanffi, a brave Gascon gentle-
 man, was killed by du Terrail, under the windows of
 the royal apartments in the Louvre, on the edge of
 the foss surrounding the palace. He had just quitted
 his sovereign, who was a witness to the murder, and
 who expressed the utmost concern, as well as indig-
 nation, at so audacious an infraction of the respect
 due to himself and to the laws. It was nevertheless
 impossible to overtake du Terrail, who made his
 escape unhurt, into the Netherlands (141).

**State of the
 provinces.**

That the provinces were in a state of equal or
 greater disorder, at the beginning of the seventeenth
 century, seems to be incontestable. In many parts of
 the kingdom, such was the dissolution of all govern-
 ment, that robbers and banditti covered the country,
 infested the high roads, and committed every sort of
 outrage. It excites no little astonishment to find
 these crimes subsisting unpunished, in a time of

Banditti

(139) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 110. (140) Vie de Marga-
 rite p. 396, 397. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 109. (141) Ibid.
 p. 121, and p. 195, 196.

perfect tranquillity, during many years, and almost down to the conclusion of Henry's reign. We must necessarily admit either the ignorance, weakness, or negligence of an administration, which could tolerate such disorders. In the vast tract of France extending from the Loire to the Garonne, comprehending Poitou, Saintonge, and Guienne, life and property were as insecure, as at any period of the civil wars under Charles the Ninth. From 1602 to 1608, four brothers, of the name of Guilleri, intercepted all communication. The fairs, for thirty or forty leagues round, were deserted, and mercantile transactions were totally suspended. These chiefs had under their command not less than four hundred desperate followers, who retreated with the booty acquired in their excursions, to a fortress situated in deep woods, near the town of Niort in Poitou.

C H A P.
IV.

in Poitou
and Gui-
enne.

Guilleri.

Such was their audacity and contempt of the civil power, that they affixed in the trees, on the side of the great roads, inscriptions declaring their objects and principles. "Peace to gentlemen; death to provosts and archers; the purse of merchants." The declarations were rigidly enforced, and they did not fail to kill all the officers of police or justice who fell into their possession (142). We could not credit facts so extraordinary, if they were not transmitted to us by l'Etoile; and if they were not, from their very nature, matters of universal notoriety. In perusing them, we should be tempted to conceive ourselves transported to a barbarous country, destitute of laws, and in a state of insurrection against the sovereign: yet such was the condition of one of the most civilized kingdoms of Europe, under a prince so dreaded and respected as Henry the Fourth. It may be inferred, from an expression of l'Etoile, that he was ignorant of the outrages committed; and that as

Their depre-
dations.

Reflexions
on them.

(142) Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 182, 183.

C H A P. IV. soon as he received information of them, he authorized measures for their suppression: on the other hand, it is difficult to believe, that a king and ministers so enlightened and vigilant, could remain for many years uninformed of the condition of some of the most commercial and extensive provinces of France.

Measures of the court, for their suppression.

It became necessary to attack these formidable robbers in a regular manner; and to assemble forces for the purpose. In September 1608, orders were issued from Henry to Parabelle, governor of Niort; to levy a body of troops adequate to so desperate an enterprize. He associated to himself eighteen provosts of the neighbouring districts; and, by the aid of the peasants and citizens, they soon formed an army of four thousand five hundred men. Artillery was judged requisite to ensure success. Preceded by four small field-pieces, Parabelle ventured to approach and to storm the castle occupied by the banditti. Their commanders were not wanting to themselves, though assailed by superior numbers.

Punishment of the banditti.

They sallied out of the fort, and endeavoured to open a passage sword in hand; but overpowered and surrounded, the greater part was cut in pieces. One of the Guilleris, taken alive, expiated his crimes on the rack, as did about eighty of his accomplices (143).

Forgery.

The fabrication of false letters, or patents of nobility, may be reckoned among the characteristic crimes of the period: it had grown to a pernicious height under shelter of the civil wars; and was one of the first objects of severe repression, as well as punishment, after the restoration of tranquillity (144). So universal was the practice of forgery, that De Thou assures us, in 1601, during the time of the Jubilee, when it was enjoined to every individual to make

(143) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 183, 184. Mercure Fran. tome i. p. 289.

(144) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 159, 160.

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IV.

Impostors,

Offences
against
morals.

Blasphemy.

confession of his offences; by the testimony of the priests, not fewer than a hundred thousand persons voluntarily accused themselves of having committed forgeries (145). The fact strongly proves the general depravity of manners. By an edict issued in 1609, fraudulent bankruptcies were punished with the same rigour as robberies (146). Impostors seem to have excited the most severe animadversion of the laws. A man who had assumed the name and quality of Bartholomew Borghese, and who stiled himself nephew, or natural son to pope Paul the Fifth, was for no other crime conducted to an ignominious punishment in 1608. He was hanged, and his body thrown into the flames (147). As the papal nuntio, by order of his court, warmly solicited the false Borghese's condemnation, we may be led to imagine that some desire to gratify the pontiff, induced the commissioners named by the king, to inflict so disproportionate a penalty as death, for an offence, which, however great, might have been fully expiated by imprisonment.

It is not undeserving of notice, as it displays the modes of thinking, that some acts, which we consider and repress rather as trespasses against morals and religion, than as crimes against civil society, were capitally proceeded against in the age under our review. Blasphemy was, in more than one instance, punished with an ignominious death. A lunatic, who called himself Jesus Christ, was, without any regard for the disordered state of his intellects, publicly executed in 1597 (148). In 1604, a man, convicted of having "uttered horrible and execrable" blasphemies against Jesus Christ and his most holy "mother," was hanged, and afterwards burnt at

(145) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 573.

(146) De Thou, vol. xv. p. 54.

(147) Ibid. p. 29, 30. Bruys, Hist. des Papes, vol. v. p. 155.

(148) Jour-

nal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 160.

C H A P. Paris (149). Another unhappy wretch suffered in
 IV. the same manner for similar expressions, three
 years afterwards, before the cathedral of Notre
 Dame (150).” In the two last cases, the criminal
 words uttered were suppressed, and the sentence
 itself was consumed to ashes with the body, in order
 to bury in oblivion such impiety, and to prevent its
 pernicious consequences among the people. It is
 probable that in the present age, offenders of this
 description would only have undergone a short confinement, if they had not even escaped all correction. Nor can we forbear observing, that, in the examples above cited and preserved by l’Etoile, the culprits were all low mechanics, or waiters at places of vulgar diversion. Men of a superior description in life, would scarcely have been prosecuted with so much severity.

Punishment
 of it.

Remarks on
 the crime.

Incest.

Severity of
 punishment.

Incest was likewise, under Henry the Fourth, considered to be deserving of death, and capitally punished. “On the second of December 1603,” as we learn from the same accurate writer, “were beheaded in the ‘Greve,’ at Paris, a handsome Norman Gentleman, possessed, as it was said, of ten thousand livres (or about four hundred pounds) a year, named Fourlville; with his sister, who was very beautiful, and about twenty years of age: they were executed for incest, which they had committed together.” The unfortunate father threw himself at the king’s feet; to demand their pardon, which Henry declared that he would have granted, if the lady had not been a married woman. Mary of Medecis, by her expressions of horror and detestation at the enormity of their crime, appears to have conduced to confirm her husband’s resolution, not to remit or commute the punishment. The

(149) Journal d’Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 60.
 ii. tome i. p. 145.

(150) Ibid. vol.

only mark of grace extended by the crown, was to restore the bodies to the father for interment (151). C H A P.
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Magic and sorcery, where the proofs of those pretended crimes appeared to the judges to be satisfactorily made out, did not less inevitably conduct to the scaffold or the stake, than the offences already enumerated. Frequent examples of such absurd and barbarous executions occur in l'Etoile, who seems to consider them as dictated by justice, and necessary for repressing the intercourse with evil spirits (152). Magic.

In 1609, a priest and a stone-cutter, convicted of magic, were hanged and burnt at Paris. The former was proved "to have said the ritual of the " mass backwards, and to have sacrificed to the " devil many times under a gallows." He had associated to himself as assistants or noviciates, a number of lawyers' clerks, peasants, and shepherds, under promise of teaching them occult secrets of various kinds. The art of discovering hidden treasures, of transmuting metals, of curing diseases regarded as beyond medical skill, and of acquiring affection, were among the number (153). It can scarcely be doubted, that, whatever degree of credulity might be found among the disciples, the principals were impostors. Persons put
to death for
it.

If we carry our enquiries minutely into the genius and state of the human mind under Henry the Fourth, it will be found, that not only the weak, the timid, the illiterate, and the superstitious, had recourse to magic as a means of penetrating into futurity, but that men of superior education and endowments were equally dupes to this imaginary science. The old cardinal of Bourbon, who was proclaimed king by the League, had been seduced from his allegiance, and gradually persuaded to abandon the interests of Belief of the
age in ma-
gic.

Cardinal of
Bourbon.

151) Journal d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 270. (152) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i. p. 57, 58, and p. 201. (153) Ibid. tome ii. p. 199.

CHAPTER
IV.

The young
cardinal of
Bourbon.

His conver-
sation with
Sully.

Gabrielle
d'Etrées.

Calculation
of her na-
tivity.

the family from which he sprung, by the delusive assurances of astrologers, who promised him the crown, after the extinction of the reigning house. His reliance on the completion of these predictions, laid him open to all the artifices and suggestions of the duke of Guise (154). We find the young cardinal of Bourbon, his nephew, equally credulous, and imputing his death not to the natural and gradual advances of disease, but to the effects of sorcery. When Sully came to visit him, only a short time before he expired, the cardinal exclaimed: "I am equally rejoiced to see you, as I am persuaded you will be concerned to find me in this state of languor, caused by the wickedness of madame de Rozières, who, as every one believes, has bewitched me in such a manner, that either she or I must speedily die." He added, that as he had been assured three days before, of madame de Rozière's dangerous condition, who lay at the point of death, he was still in hopes, if she died, that her charm might dissolve with her (155). It is difficult to gather from Sully's account, what degree of faith he lent to the cardinal's narration.

Gabrielle d'Etrées, from her anxiety to ascend the throne, and from the perpetual doubts which naturally arose in her mind relative to her attainment of so vast an object of ambition, had frequent recourse to astrologers. They in general seem not to have flattered her with the gratification or enjoyment of her hopes. She was deeply affected at so mortifying a notification, which preyed on her spirits, impaired her health, and not improbably accelerated her end (136). Matthieu declares, that he had seen the calculation made of her nativity, which was shewn to him by the man who had drawn it, and who assured

(154) De Thou, vol. xi. p. 154, 155.
p. 149.

(155) Sully, vol. i. tome i.
(156) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 424.

him that it was infallible. The prediction asserted, ^{C H A P. IV.} that "a child would prevent her from attaining the elevation to which she aspired (157)." As she died in violent convulsions, at an advanced period of her pregnancy, and was delivered of a dead child before she expired, the prophecy appeared to be fulfilled. It was generally believed by her contemporaries, and positively asserted by those who were about her person and bed during her last illness, that she had communication with evil spirits, who twisted her neck, and left her in a state of distortion (158). The melancholy spectacle exhibited by her body, which preserved no trace of its former beauty, and which was so changed as scarcely to retain the appearance of a human figure; gave rise to these fables, invented by credulity, and propagated by folly or malignity (159).

Prediction
respecting
her.

Circumstances
of her
death.

Charles Emanuel duke of Savoy, one of the most superior princes of his time, yet, as we learn from De Thou, lent an implicit belief to the assurances of astrologers; he even regulated in many instances, his political or military enterprizes, by their fallacious calculations (160). The criminal and unfortunate Biron, ^{Duke of Savoy.} whose ambition abbreviated his life, and precipitated him on ruin, was, even to his last moments, occupied with magical studies. When Bellievre the chancellor, and others of his judges, entered his chamber in the Bastile, to announce to him his sentence and immediate execution, they found him calculating his own nativity, and deeply engaged in the research (161). ^{Biron.} He not only accused la Fin of having deluded and seduced him into schemes of a treasonable nature, by the predictions which were shewn him; but he set up seriously in his defence at the bar of the parliament, as his best exculpation, that he was a passive agent, ^{His defence on his trial}

F (157) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 307.

(158) Observations sur

Alcandre, p. 300, 301.

(159) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii p.

211, 212.

(160) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 538.

(161) Journal

d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 192.

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Nature of it.

under the involuntary impulse of magical spells and powers too strong for resistance. Nothing can so strikingly depict the feeble progress which reason had made at the beginning of the last century in dispelling error, as to contemplate a marshal of France pleading magic in extenuation of treason: nor, though the excuse was considered as invalid or insufficient by the tribunal before which he was arraigned, did the mention of it appear to excite either laughter or contempt in the audience. "What reliance," exclaimed Biron, "can be placed upon the testimony of the most wicked and execrable man upon earth, who never approached me without enchantment, nor quitted me till he had previously enchanted me? Who bit me on the left ear, made me drink charmed waters, and called me his king, his prince, and his lord? He will not dare to deny, that he shewed me an image of wax, which pronounced these words in Latin, 'Rex impie, peribis.' If such was his empire over an inanimate body, what could he not effect upon me, whose will he tyrannized by magic, and did with it whatsoever he pleased (162)!" It requires the unanimous agreement of contemporary and impartial writers, to convince us that there is no exaggeration in these facts.

Sully.

Henry the Fourth.

Sully, as we may gather from various passages in his *Mémoires*, by no means regarded astrological studies or predictions as undeserving of credit and attention (163). Even Henry the Fourth himself, with the inconsistency natural to the human mind, while on some occasions he professes his contempt for such delusive pursuits, yet at other times seems equally persuaded of their foundation. L'Etoile says, that two persons, Risacafza and Villandri, had foretold the

(162) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv. v. p. 307, 308. and p. 335. Journ. d'Hen. IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 194. De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 90. Chron Septen. p. 304, and p. 311.

(163) Sully, vol. i. tome i. p. 31-33, and p. 310.

king his danger from Chatel's attempt to assassinate him in 1594, but that he laughed at their idle prognostications (164). On the memorable day when he was stabbed by Ravailac, if we may credit the same writer, his natural son, the duke of Vendome, came to him, to entreat of him not to stir out, as la Brosse, a man celebrated for his skill in astrology, had declared that he was menaced with a signal calamity. "La Brosse," replied the king, "is an old cheat, who has a mind to get some of your money; and you are a young fool to believe him. Our days are numbered before God (165)." It is clear however, that he did not always think or act with such composure (166).

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His contempt of
astrology.

One of the most singular and well-attested facts of his life, is the prediction that he would be stabbed in a coach. As early as 1604, Henry himself related it to Sully, adding, that he resigned his life into the hands of the Supreme Being, and that he had always been most apprehensive of poison (167). Voltaire, sceptical as he is upon almost every point, admits the reality and existence of such a prediction; which, he adds, originated from the king's timidity in a carriage: but, he forgets that those alarms were produced by the denunciation (168). We have Henry's own authority for it. During the preparations made for celebrating the queen's coronation, Sully says, that he often, in the agony of his mind, exclaimed, "I shall die in this city! They will kill me. For, not to conceal any thing from you, I am assured that I shall be killed at the first great ceremony which I shall perform, and that I shall die in a coach. This it is, which renders me so timid (196)." All

and belief in
it, on other
occasions.

His prefaces
of his assas-
sination.

- (164) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 69.
 ii. tome ii. p. 224, 225. (166) Ibid. vol. i. tome ii. p. 91. Sully,
 vol. i. tome ii. p. 22, 23. (167) Sully, vol. i. tome ii. p. 334; and vol.
 ii. tome i. p. 477. (168) Voltaire, vol. x. p. 226. (169) Sully,
 vol. ii. tome i. p. 476, 477, and p. 479.

these

CHAP. these instances of credulity and superstition held to
 IV. and arose from the state of the human mind in that
 age: they disappear in a more enlightened period. No astrologer foretold the lamentable destiny of Louis the Sixteenth, of his queen and sister, the subversion of the most antient of the European monarchies, and the calamities of every kind with which France has been desolated since 1789. The progress of reason and science has dissipated the delusions practised on ignorance.

Reflexions.

Facility of impostures.

Martha Broslier.

Her appearance and deceptions.

Testimony of Marescot.

The propensity to believe in the marvellous and the impossible, an infirmity common to man in every century, necessarily attains force, in proportion to the general darkness. Paris, at the period which we are surveying, was a theatre on which the grossest impostures were greedily swallowed. Martha Broslier, a miserable and illiterate wretch, trained to personate a demoniac by an artful and indigent father, whose deception was at once so obvious and so coarse as to excite ridicule; yet long agitated the capital, and might have produced an insurrection, if vigorous measures had not been adopted by the parliament. She appeared in 1599, at a time when the minds of the public were still in a state of dangerous fermentation, and not long after the promulgation of the edict of Nantes in favour of the Protestants. Neither the detection of her imposture previous to her arrival in the metropolis, the ignorance and imbecility of her conduct, nor the decided testimony of able and experienced members of the faculty, could dispel the illusion. Marescot, a physician whose mind was liberated from the superstitious prejudices of the age, and who beheld in the contortions of the pretended demoniac, only the symptoms of ordinary disease, heightened by artifice, endeavoured to undeceive the multitude. After detecting her tricks, he had the courage, in defiance of the admonitions of the ecclesiastics, who asserted that she was under the influence

of

of an evil spirit, to seize and stop her in the midst of her most violent gesticulations or convulsions. The deception was apparent and undeniable (170).

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Notwithstanding Marefcot's attempts to disabuse the people, their credulity encreased in proportion to the efforts made for their instruction. Factionous or bigotted priests supported the error; and some of the physicians, deceived by equivocal appearances, either spoke with hesitation, or pronounced her a demoniac. Her triumph was complete; and she ventured, in her intervals of reason, to assert that she was possessed by three devils. She proceeded to name them, to characterize them by their respective qualities, and to obtain belief, while she insulted the human understanding (171). So universal was the contagion, that the most serious consequences were justly apprehended; and Henry, alarmed, enjoined the parliament to take cognizance of the affair without delay (172). The pulpits resounded with appeals and declamations against the pretended infraction of the privileges of the clergy, by the interference of the civil magistrates. Under a government of less vigour, a sedition in Paris would have followed. Even the final sentence, pronounced by the highest tribunal in France, declaring Martha Broffier free from all demoniacal possession, and ordering her to be sent back to her native town near Orleans, could not extinguish, though it checked the further efforts of faction in the metropolis (173). She was soon afterwards, in defiance of the injunctions of the parliament, carried to Rome by a new patron, who hoped to convert her to purposes highly injurious to the repose of the French crown. But the papal court had changed its maxims; and

Credulity of
the Parisi-
ans.

Serious con-
sequences
dreaded.

Interference
and sentence
of the parlia-
ment.

Termination
of her im-
posture.

(170) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 209—211. Chron. Sept. p. 89—91. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 392—396. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 434—438. (171) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 338. (172) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 400, 401. (173) Chron. Septen. p. 91. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 213—217. Matthieu, vol. i. liv. ii. p. 339—341.

C H A P. IV. Clement the Eighth, satisfied with the submission of Henry the Fourth to the holy see, refused his aid to perpetuate imposture, or to excite commotions in the kingdom. The impostress herself, abandoned by all, was left to her original obscurity, and reduced to the last extremities of indigence (174).

Other ex-
amples.

Her ill success did not hinder a renewal of the same experiment, only five years later. Another female, of the vilest description, named Adrienne du Fresne, excited equal curiosity in the capital: she was nevertheless prevented, by the vigilance of the government and magistrates, from giving birth to any political calamity; and she seems to have sunk insensibly into oblivion (175). Yet Cayet, a writer otherwise far from contemptible, does not hesitate to assert, that the demon who actuated her, had replied to himself in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, and German (176). He even relates many curious particulars of the conversation of the evil spirit, who drew to him a continual concourse of the idle, the superstitious, and the inquisitive. It was long before philosophy dispelled these chimeras, and exposed them to ridicule.

Belief in de-
moniacle
possession.

Popular su-
perstitions.

Among the popular superstitions, none was more generally believed, even by the higher classes, than the existence and appearance of a phantom or spectre in the forest of Fontainebleau: it was called "the great hunter," and was always accompanied with the apparatus of the chace, horses, hounds, and horns. Matthieu seriously assures us, that in 1599, Henry the Fourth, hunting with his courtiers, was interrupted by this supernatural appearance; that he commanded the count of Soissons to advance, in order to see from whence the noise proceeded; and that a large black man presented himself among the

(174) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 403—407. Confess. de Sancy, p. 185—191.
(175) De Thou, vol. xiv. p. 326—329. (176) Chron. Septen.
p. 407, 408.

bushes, who suddenly vanished, leaving the spectators petrified with amazement and terror. He adds, that
 “no doubt of the fact could remain, as it had been
 “seen by so many eyes; and heard by so many
 “ears (177).” Cayet, another contemporary writer, confirms it with additional circumstances (178). D’Aubigné likewise mentions it, though only as a story which he had heard and believed (179). But neither De Thou nor Mezeray have condescended to relate so puerile a fable; and their silence sufficiently demonstrates the contempt in which they held these vulgar productions of folly and credulity.

If, nevertheless, we wish to see how susceptible of every impression of that nature was the age itself, and how implicit was the belief given to prodigies or violations of natural causes, we may behold it fully displayed in the memorable speech pronounced by the king in person, to the deputies of the parliament of Paris. The harangue was made in the palace of the Louvre, in March 1599, on occasion of the promulgation of the edict of Nantes. It is not here a bigotted or credulous historian, who recounts a fact which he has heard from others. It is Henry the Fourth who asserts; and the members of the first tribunal in France, convoked by his order, who are the auditors. De Thou, one of the number, has commemorated the words, and transmitted them to posterity. “I remember,” said the king, “it is
 “now twenty-six years ago, that being in the court
 “of Charles the Ninth, I proposed to Henry of
 “Lorraine duke of Guise, my relation, and who was
 “then my friend, to play at dice. There were with
 “us a great number of people of the court, and
 “among others la Chatre, who is now present, and
 “who can authenticate to you what I am going to

C H A P.
IV.
Spectres.

Memorable
one related
by the king

(177) Matthieu, vol. i. liv. i. p. 155—157.

(178) Chron. Septen.

(179) D’Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 540.

CHAP.
IV.

“ relate. The table was wiped; and at the instant
 “ that we were going to begin our play, drops of
 “ blood appeared, which we vainly wiped away, and
 “ which appeared many times, without our being
 “ able to know from whence they flowed. We accu-
 “ rately remarked, that none of the assistants bled at
 “ the nose, nor at any other part of the body. Asto-
 “ nished at this prodigy, I drew from it a bad omen:
 “ I immediately quitted the game, and I communi-
 “ cated my thoughts to my friends. Turning to
 “ them, I said, without being overheard by the duke
 “ of Guise; I foresee that there will flow torrents of
 “ blood, on some future day, between the duke and
 “ me. Events as calamitous to the state, as painful
 “ to myself, have justified my predictions (180).”
 Voltaire, not content with resolving this prodigy into
 the fallibility of the senses, the superstition of the
 time, and the disposition common to man in every
 age to believe in the marvellous, endeavours, as far
 as he is able, to explain the fact, and to account for
 it on philosophical or physical principles. “ The
 “ Jesuit Daniel,” says he, “ who has caught at this
 “ fact, ought to have known enough of physics not
 “ to be ignorant, that black points, when they make
 “ a particular angle with the rays of the sun, appear
 “ red. Every man may make this experiment in
 “ reading (181).” However ingenious the solution
 of Voltaire, it is evident that it cannot apply in the
 present instance, since Henry asserts that the spots
 were repeatedly wiped out, and as often re-appeared.
 There is scarcely any degree of testimony, however
 concurring or unanimous, which can, or which ought,
 to induce us to believe what is in itself impossible.
 If we were to admit the reverse of the rule, history

Reflexions
on it.

(180) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 375:
vol. x. p. 166.

(181) Voltaire, Œuvres compl.

would

would become a collection of legends, fables, and prodigies. C H A P.
IV.

From the defective police of Paris, added to the dirt and filth of the inferior orders, the plague, or pestilential and malignant diseases, committed continual ravages in the metropolis and its environs (182). In August 1603, we find near two thousand persons dying of it weekly (183). Nor was it by any means limited to the dwellings of the indigent. Margaret of Valois in 1606, after seeing three of the officers of her household perish before her eyes, was necessitated to quit her palace in the capital, and to retire to one of the neighbouring villages for safety (184). It was felt with no less severity in the provinces (185). Henry the Fourth, among the other appendages and prerogatives attached to the monarchical dignity, inherited that of curing the distemper known by the name of the king's evil. He seems not to have lost any time, in dispensing its healing virtue to his subjects. As early as Easter Sunday 1594, only about a fortnight after the subjection of Paris, "he touched publicly," says De Thou, "in the court of the Louvre, conformably to an antient custom, six hundred and sixty poor persons infected with the scrophula; and in his own apartment, he touched thirty other persons of a higher description (186)." Cayet declares, that many of these individuals, it was notorious, had been cured by the royal touch; and he adds, that the voluntary return of the rector, professors, and members of the university of Paris, to their duty and obedience, was principally produced by the emotions excited in them, at seeing Henry

The plague.

Its ravages.

The king's evil.

Persons touched by Henry the Fourth.

(182) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 133, and p. 135; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 51, and p. 118, and p. 123. De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 18. Chron. Nov. vol. iii. p. 619.

(183) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p.

259. (184) Vie de Marg. p. 398.

(185) Journal d'Hen. IV.,

vol. i. tome ii. p. 144.

(186) De Thou, vol. xii. p. 149.

C H A P. thus fulfil one of the most sacred functions belonging
 IV. to a Catholic king of France (187).

Spaniards.

Matthieu says, that the greater number of those who came to Fontainebleau in 1602, to avail themselves of his power of healing, were Spaniards. They arrived, under command of a captain or leader, who brought in his hand an attestation from several Spanish prelates, of cures performed by Henry on their countrymen (188). It may be inferred from this and other passages, either that Philip the Second and Third did not arrogate the same virtue, or that they had attained no celebrity among their own people, in its exercise. De Thou speaks of the pretension and practice, as a prejudice sanctioned by antiquity (189). What confidence Henry himself placed in its efficacy, it is hard to say; but in his letters to Sully, he expresses great anxiety to touch the persons who had repaired to him at Fontainebleau, for the purpose (190). It appears from concurring testimonies, that towards the end of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards were much more universally afflicted with cutaneous and leprous distempers, than the French. During the time that the troops of Spain remained in garrison among the Parisians, and peculiarly in the memorable siege in 1590, when they became domiciliated in the metropolis, they communicated the disease to their allies. It was so malignant, that many hundreds died of it; but the ejection of the foreign auxiliaries soon afterwards, checked and gradually extinguished its ravages (191). We may reasonably doubt, whether the malady of the Spaniards was not rather the one said to have

Leprous distempers frequent among them.

(187) Chron. Noven. vol. iii. p. 347.

(188) Matthieu, vol. ii. liv.

ii. p. 212.

(189) De Thou, vol. xiii. p. 521.

(190) Sully, vol.

i. tome i. p. 72. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome ii. p. 240, and p. 252, and p. 266.

(191) Satyre Men. vol. ii. p. 133. Chron. Nov. vol. iii.

P. 349, 350.

been brought from the new world; and the effects of which continued to be most sensibly felt among the French of every rank, throughout the period under our review. The symptoms, as described in many of the contemporary writers, justify the opinion (192).

C H A P.
IV.

Among the scourges or calamities of the time, may justly be reckoned the frequency and deplorable effects of canine madness, particularly in Paris. No measures of efficacy seem to have been pursued, for preventing the accidents; and so imperfectly was the method of cure understood, that it was customary, on the first symptoms of insanity, however equivocal or slight, to anticipate its progress, by putting the person to death. The mode of doing it was usually by suffocation between two feather-beds, or by laudanum. We find instances in l'Etoile, of husbands thus reluctantly dispatching their wives, fathers their children, and friends performing the office of executioner to those whom they most loved (193). The unfortunate wretches themselves often besought of the persons present, to liberate them from the horrors of madness, by administering to them poison. It is nevertheless evident, that the remedy of dipping in the sea was known, prescribed, and practised (194). But the ignorance and superstition of the people, induced them frequently rather to recur to supernatural or pious means of cure. A shrine of St. Hubert in the Ardennes, on the frontiers of Flanders, was resorted to by many individuals, who hoped by his intercession, to avert the consequences of the accident. Experience constantly proved the inability of the

Canine
madness
common.

Persons put
to death,
who were
afflicted
with it.

Superstitious
observances,
and modes of
cure.

(192) Confess. de Sancy, p. 312, 313. Sat. Men. vol. ii. p. 382. Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 102; and tome ii. p. 133, and p. 139, and p. 142; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 5.
(193) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. i. tome i. p. 249; and vol. ii. tome i. p. 20.
(194) Ibid. vol. ii. tome i. p. 50.

CHAP. IV. faint to effect so salutary a work, without extinguish-
ing the practice itself (195). With such difficulty
does reason penetrate, and so natural is it to man to
have recourse to the most absurd-expedients under
indisposition, in preference to those dictated by
wisdom and science.

(195) Journal d'Henry IV., vol. ii. tome i. p. 22, and p. 128.

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