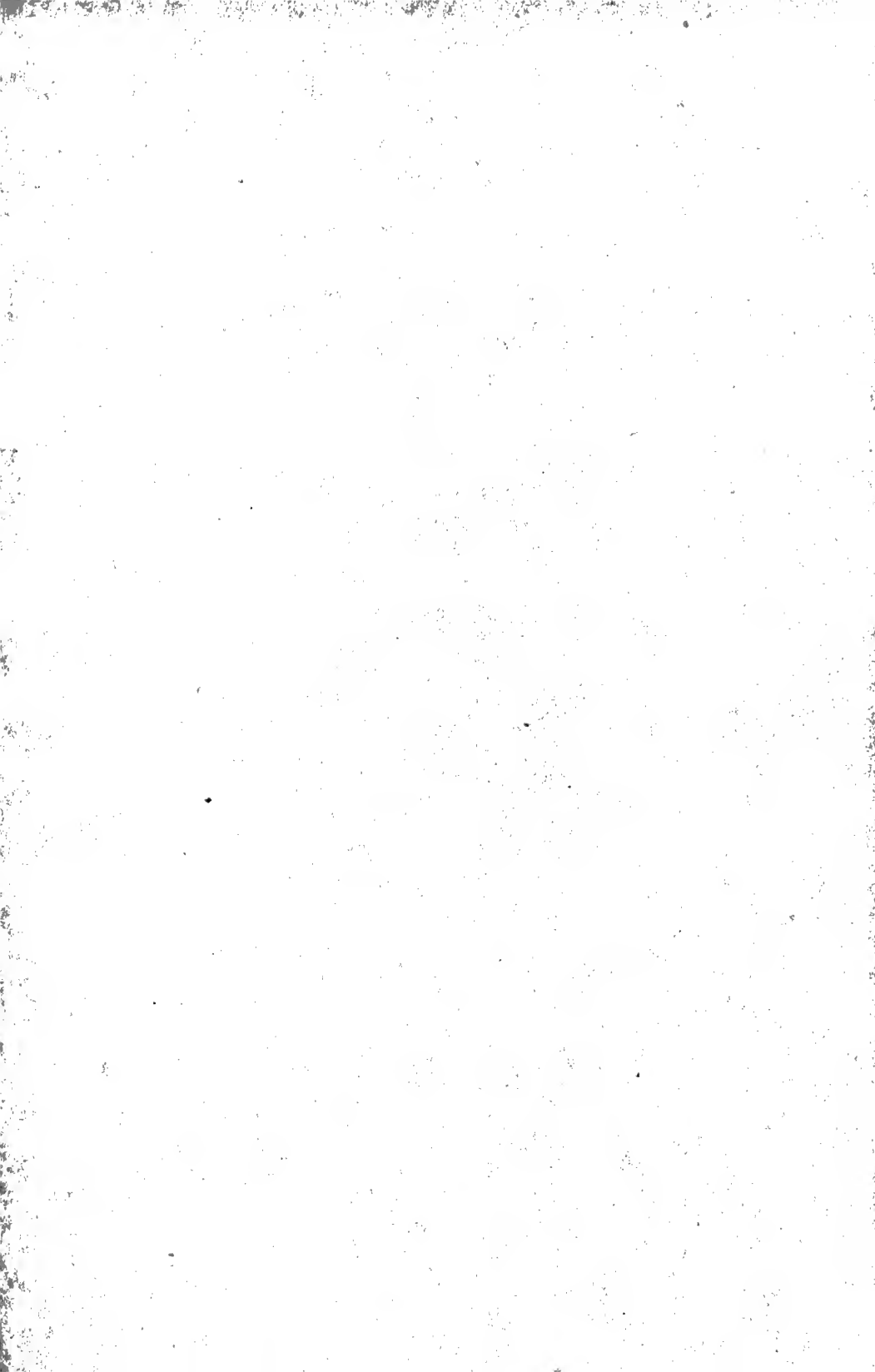




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## VOLUME II

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# The Middle Ages and their Autobiographers

(A. D. 1000—1500)

INCLUDING THE SELF-NARRATIVES OF

AVICENNA, greatest of Arabic Scientists; AL GHAZALI, foremost disciple of Mohammed; ABELARD, chief teacher of medieval Europe; SALIMBENE, frankest of monkish chroniclers; DANTE, the greatest mind of Italy; PETRARCH, the first modern man; TIMUR THE LAME, mightiest of Asiatic conquerors; FROISSART, most gay of chroniclers; and COMINES, the first watchful observer of the humanness of kings.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

**CHARLES J. BUSHNELL**

*President of the Pacific University*

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## INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME II

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THEIR AUTOBIOGRAPHERS

1000—1500 A. D.

WHEN the ancient world of Rome and Greece was overthrown by the Teutonic barbarians, all the arts, all the culture of life, sank into darkness. To that dim period of over five centuries preceding the year 1000, we now give the name of the Dark Ages. During all those shadowy centuries, autobiography, the subtlest and most introspective of the arts, seems wholly to have disappeared. The wonderful "Confessions" of Saint Augustine created no school, was imitated by no successors until, some six hundred years having passed, we begin to trace the rising culture of the Middle Ages. We then find the first autobiographical successors of Saint Augustine not among Christians, nor even among Europeans, but among the Arabic scholars of the Mohammedan empire.

The fact is not wholly complimentary to Europe's boasted civilization; but it is undeniable that up to the twelfth century the East still remained more cultured than the West. The chief scholars of the world were of Arabic race. The wild desert dwellers who followed Mohammed to the conquest of the Eastern world, were quick to assimilate the arts of Persian civilization. Learned men were highly honored among them. Even when civil wars had divided the vast Mohammedan empire among a dozen different Sultans or "Emirs," scholars were still protected. They journeyed in safety from city to city, from Samarcand and Bokhara to India and Egypt, and even to far western Spain.

It was among these Persian-Arabic scholars that the autobiographic impulse again revived. First we find Avicenna, born in the year 980, "the perfect scholar," the teacher who was accepted as having mastered all knowledge before reaching manhood. Avicenna, the most acute of thought and most

reckless of deed among Eastern philosophers, gives a crude, confused, half-scornful sketch of his wandering life, a sketch that has little value except that it is the first in the revival of the art of self-analysis.

Of far different type is the remarkable book of that next great Persian-Arabic writer Al Ghazali. When Al Ghazali wrote, at the close of the eleventh century, the Mohammedan faith was becoming corrupted and confused. A dozen shrewd and clever philosophers of the type of Avicenna had ventured to point out its weaknesses and inconsistencies. The fanatic mass of ignorant Mohammedans might still hold to their religion seriously; but for nearly all their leaders it had become a mere cloak, life's meaningless but conventionally necessary formality. Al Ghazali was the savior who rescued his world from this spiritual death. A profound and earnest thinker, he sought by long and severe study, at times in solitude and again among the busiest haunts of men, to satisfy himself as to life's real meaning and spiritual value. Like his great predecessor, Augustine, he was a seeker after the soul's truth. Indeed the parallelism of their lives is very marked. And when at length Al Ghazali believed that he had found life's meaning, he went forth like Augustine to teach it to others. He led a great reformation in Mohammedanism. The faith revived in a nobler form. Al Ghazali holds to Mohammedanism somewhat the same relation that Saint Paul or perhaps Martin Luther holds to Christianity.

Our Western minds may not wholly agree with Al Ghazali's conclusions. He is a mystic, a believer in the profound value of ecstasy. Intense passion is to him divine inspiration. He loves his God with a lover's frenzy of devotion, and perhaps confuses hysteria with holiness. Yet there is tremendous value in his little book, telling of his life, his search, and his finally accepted views. Every thinker should follow through Al Ghazali's thought with him. His book is a rare work to-day and not easily accessible; hence it is printed here unabridged.

The next great leader of men's minds who felt impelled to tell the world the secrets of his own life, was Abelard, the celebrated French philosopher, born in 1079. With Abelard we turn from East to West. Indeed we may well say that with his keen and daring independence of thought, intellec-

tual supremacy again shifted, as it had in ancient days, from Asia over to Europe. There it has since remained.

Abelard was the first great European teacher of the Middle Ages. His "school" at Paris took the leadership formerly held by the Arabic "schools" of Spain. From all over Europe thousands of eager scholars flocked to listen to his lectures; and when through his own personal misery and despair Abelard fled from Paris and shut himself in a hermit's cave, scholars followed him even there in thousands, and the wilderness became a university. Such was the medieval thirst for knowledge; such the inspiring power of Abelard. His secret of success was that he taught medieval manhood to think for itself. He unchained the human intellect, which had been held for centuries in spiritual bondage. Yet Abelard's story of himself is of the body rather than of the mind. He reached self-knowledge only through much earthly stress and suffering. His work is truly Christian in that he feels that only by the humbling of the spirit can man reach wisdom; only by the utter breaking of his earthly pride and confidence in self can he come to trust himself wholly to God. Abelard's attitude is most interestingly unlike the assured self-serenity of Al Ghazali.

From Abelard we get one view of medieval Europe, a view of its intellectual development as measured by its master-mind; from the Italian monk Salimbene, who lived a century later, we get another outlook, equally true though widely different. By the year 1284, when Salimbene sat himself down to review his churchly life, learning had become more common. Many men could both write and think. There are other monkish chronicles of this period besides that of Salimbene. His, however, is the best, the fullest and the frankest. Moreover, it is the most personal. The other chronicles deal mainly with outside events, the doings of kings and lords. Salimbene is the Samuel Pepys of his age, the gossip setting down his little intimate affairs and opinions for the reading of his affectionate niece. A charming old simple-minded comrade, Salimbene, and seemingly, from what little glimpse we get of her, with a charming niece! You will delight to meet them both.

There is, however, a grimmer side to Salimbene's book. The

work has been much talked of and quoted in recent days; because, all unconsciously, the gossiping old monk presents a terrible indictment of his age. Horror and cruelty were all around him, so commonplace that he hardly recognized them for the demons that they were. Unintentional testimony has ever been accepted in our courts of law as being the truest testimony. Read Salimbene and discover how grossly miserable was the lot of the great mass of human beings under the confused, ill-guided social organization of the Middle Ages.

Seldom of course do ignorance and misery have opportunity to speak for themselves; seldom are they capable of speaking, or even of understanding their own lot. When from the monk Salimbene we turn to the great poet Dante, we find a wholly different picture of life, Dante's *Vita Nuova* (meaning New, or perhaps early, Life) is a far greater book than Salimbene's chronicle; but Dante was self-absorbed, at least in early life, and so saw little of the world around him. He looked in upon himself, as Salimbene was wholly incapable of doing; and so his story of his life takes little note of material things, and none whatever of the miseries of society. Dante is a lover; and to him the world is all wonderfully beautiful because it holds love. It is all wonderfully miserable also, but only with the ecstatic miseries of love. In Dante's later great poem of the *Divine Comedy* he portrays passionately indeed the mad social organism around him; but in that poem he passes wholly out of our present field. He had ceased forever to think or write about himself, in thinking forever of the sorrows of mankind.

The step from Dante to Petrarch is but a short one. Their lives over-lapped, as did those of Salimbene and Dante; their character and outlook on life were much the same. Petrarch was, like Dante, an exile from the great Italian city of Florence; his life extends beyond Italy to France and Germany. He is still, like his two predecessors in autobiography, chiefly Italian; but it is an Italy which may be taken as typical of the rest of Europe. Italy led in those days, and the other nations followed.

It is noteworthy indeed how the autobiographical impulse through these Middle Ages showed itself mainly in the greatest thinkers. Avicenna and Al Ghazali, Abelard, Dante and

Petrarch, each was the foremost writer and teacher of his time. Yet each autobiography is wholly different. How far apart in one way is Dante's *Vita Nuova* from Petrarch's "Letter to Posterity"! Dante is the man of passion; he is all vision, and intensity, and fervor. Petrarch is the man of intellect, calm, meditative, observant. Dante cries out his madness to the stars and to the mystery of darkness; let those listen who will! Petrarch selects his audience; he formally addresses posterity and explains to it exactly what he has done with his life, and why. Petrarch has been often called the first modern man; but perhaps comparing his voice with that of Dante the reader may not find the contrast wholly in favor of intellectual modernity.

From the medieval development of Europe our tracing of autobiography leads us aside, for a moment, to look at that unique and most interesting book, the *Mulfuzat Timury* or *Memoirs of Timur*. Timur, the mightiest and most dreaded of Asiatic conquerors, he too joins the little circle of medieval self-recorders. What impulse stirred him? Was it passion such as Dante's; self-abasement such as Abelard's; the desire to preach a religion, such as moved Al Ghazali? Timur's purpose was to instruct his descendants, to show them how he had gained empire, and how they might hold it. In literature, however, the aim of the great conqueror was as little successful as the aims of lesser men. His empire broke down completely at his death; and his book was soon forgotten. Recent generations, rediscovering it, found all its methods of government long outworn, and have read the book, eagerly indeed, but not as the great guide to empire for which it was intended. To our public the *Memoirs of Timur* is just an exciting tale of adventure, an interesting moment's vision of an age and race and mode of human living that otherwise would be forgotten.

The two closing writers of our volume bring us back to medieval Europe, but in a somewhat different mood. No longer are we with the poets, preachers and philosophers, no longer with the great chieftains of an age. Both Sir John Froissart and Sir Philip de Comines are essentially chroniclers. In that they are like Salimbene. But they are unlike him in that they are not so much personal chroniclers of their own affairs, but narrators of public events, historians.

In brief, medieval chronicle-writing in its commonest form, that is as a mere recording of the wars of kings, ends with Froissart; and modern history writing, the effort to look beneath the surface and to understand the motives of men and the vast movements of mankind, this begins with Comines.

Froissart's chronicle has long been a popular book with modern children. The author was a contemporary of Petrarch, some thirty-odd years younger; but his vision of life is wholly unlike that of the great Italian. Froissart was a fairly simple-minded French or Flemish gentleman. He accepted all the life around him at its superficial value. Those were the days when lords and ladies draped themselves in gorgeous robes and feasted, while the mass of peasants hungered, sometimes with no clothes at all. There were pompous tournaments held to show the valor of the knights; but the combatants so eased themselves in iron armor that except for a few harsh bruises they were about as safe in their tournaments as in their beds. Thus protected, they could easily overthrow in battle hundreds of unarmored peasants; and the knights therefore thought themselves great heroes—until gunpowder came to democratize the world.

Sir John Froissart was among the gayest of the dull-minded folk who, seeing this splendor, thought it splendid, and never gave a thought to the universal misery on which it was built up. He describes each new combat with unbounded enthusiasm. Indeed he spent his life traveling from court to court to gather material for his book, and he copied down in simple faith what each lord told him.

Just a century later came Comines. He was of the same race as Froissart, and was in youth attached to the same royal courts in much the same fashion. But Comines had the seeing eye, the thinking brain. The contrast between his picture of the chivalric system, and the picture by Froissart is one of the most instructive bits of reading that can be offered to mankind. "The eye sees only what the eye brings means of seeing." Comines detected the hollowness beneath the glamor, the selfishness that was hiding itself behind large-sounding words. The old chivalric world could no longer exist when Comines had spoken. But then, had it ever existed, except in the minds of men like Froissart?

Doubtless Comines was as selfish as the men he wrote about. His chronicle makes no mention of some of his own trickeries, of which we learn from other sources. He was no better than his neighbors, perhaps he was no wiser. But with Comines we come to the competent observer, the intellectual analyzer of life; and here we find the thinking power not, as with earlier autobiographers, in the one greatest man of the age. We find it in a comparatively unimportant gentleman, one courtier among many and scarce distinguishable above the rest. Hence with Comines' somewhat sordid record of the posts he held, the kings he served, and the crooked ways he served them, we come finally away from the shallow dreams and easy self-deceptions of the Middle Ages and face the keener intellectual light of modern life.





## THE LETTERS OF ABELARD

*By Charles J. Bushnell, Ph.D.*

THERE is no more important field of reading for young and old than the field of autobiography. The stories of their own lives and times by the great men and women who have notably influenced history have a romance, a reality and an important discernment of social changes and moral truths that no stories about the leaders by smaller souls can have. Usually the great souls are both great seers and great writers. They make us see our world with something of the wonder, and interest and marvel that it inspires in themselves. And that is of the utmost value in inspiring new achievement and character development in the rising generation, and in helping us all to understand better the progress of the world.

I read the other day the letters of Abelard, that fiery intelligence, that wonderful man of the Middle Ages in France, who changed the course of human thinking toward a more intelligent and reasonable view of God and man. This Peter Abelard was born about 1079 in Brittany of a noble family. Giving up his heritage as the eldest son, in order to devote his life to philosophy, he became a knight-errant of truth, an intellectual inspirer of his generation. Defeating in argument the leaders of thought in the provinces of France, he came at the age of twenty to Paris, the center of learning of the times.

Imagine the conditions of life of that day, when people, without modern science and sanitation, lived without chimneys on their houses, without forks at their tables, without glass in their windows, without matches, without stoves, without common schools, without organized universities. The students who came together to hear the few teachers, traveled on foot or horseback molested by highwaymen, and in their assembly rooms sat on rude benches or on straw on the floor.

Sometimes they sat in a courtyard, as at the Cathedral School at Notre Dame. Often the students were drunken and turbulent. It was an age of violence and disorder.

Here came the young Abelard. At first a pupil of the leaders like William of Champeaux and Anselm, he soon became their master and defeated them in public debate. His leading thought was the modern idea that thinking is a natural instrument of progress. He held that faith, as expressing the impulse to live, although primary in experience, is naturally blind and inadequate, needing to be clarified and directed by reason. Like all men who are ahead of their times he was fiercely attacked, especially by the theologians. Confident of his brilliant powers, he became too flippant and arrogant in dealing with opponents. But he was the most splendid and successful lecturer the Middle Ages ever saw, gathering about him in Paris at one time from all parts of Europe more than five thousand young men. A hundred of them later became great prelates, including Pope Innocent III.

Abelard came violently into conflict with the customs and conventions of his age in two ways: First in philosophy, and, second, in love. Both of these conflicts powerfully illustrate the tragedy of the stupid restriction of unchanging custom upon the expanding soul of man. In the former conflict, after drawing to himself the most aspiring spirits—even three thousand into the desert of Champagne at one time—he was finally beaten by the political might of the Church and driven into a monastery (at Cluny) where he died in seclusion and sorrow.

In the second conflict with tradition he had a romantic love experience that has few equals in history. "With proud and aristocratic bearing, severe yet negligent dress, beautiful and noble figure, musical and electrical voice," poetical instincts and powerful intellect, he became at the age of thirty-eight the idol of both men and women. At that time he met Heloise, the niece of Fulbert, the stupid old canon of the Cathedral School of Notre Dame, where Abelard was the idolized master. Heloise, though at that time only eighteen years old, was Abelard's true and natural mate. Intellectual, brilliant, beautiful, poetical, imaginative, affectionate, sympathetic, and ambitious, she was vastly superior to almost all the men around her. Naturally and ideally these two great personalities fell

in love with each other. Then came the rule of the Church between them,—the rule of celibacy and disparagement of marriage for all high churchmen. It required choice between ambition and marriage. This situation led to one of the greatest tragedies of history—a tragedy that Abelard was not strong enough nor generous enough to avert—that led to secret love, secret marriage and eventually the convent and the monastery for Heloise and himself. As for Heloise, her deep and true instinct transcended always the foolish limitations of her time. Her instinct naturally and persistently called for wedding and eternal love, yet was twisted by the spirit of narrow ecclesiastical polity into a disparagement of the home and child nurture as ignoble. Was there ever a greater tragedy? It is a story worth reading; for, after all, it teaches that love, when judged by a lofty standard, is worship of what is most glorious in mind and soul.



# AVICENNA, "THE PERFECT SCHOLAR"

THE GREATEST OF ARABIC PHYSICIANS, THE FOREMOST SCIENTIST  
OF HIS AGE

980-1037

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The fragmentary sketch which follows was unquestionably written by Avicenna's own hand. It is thus the first piece of autobiography preserved to us after a blank of several centuries. In that interval the world had been, as it were, torn to pieces and remade again. The Teutons had destroyed the old Roman civilization. The Arab hordes of Mohammed had swept over the ancient world of the East, and upon the remains of its antique culture built up a barbaric empire of their own. This Arab empire in its turn had ripened into a civilization far more advanced in literature and science than that of Europe. Hence Avicenna, as the most learned of Mohammedan doctors, was really the most learned man of his day. To this leading thinker of the age there came once more the world-old desire to tell about himself. How well or poorly he accomplished it must be left to the reader's judgment. The peculiar autobiographical method by which the author quotes himself, leads to some confusion, but the entire sketch is Avicenna's.

This remarkable philosopher was apparently a sort of child phenomenon. He assimilated knowledge so rapidly and so completely that he was a master-teacher before he was twenty. He was equally renowned as a physician, as a mathematician, and as a philosopher. Other sciences, too, he had made his own. He lived a vigorous life of movement and adventure, of intrigue also, and of dissipation. When he died the sultans of his world seem to have thought themselves well rid of a servant too able and too reckless to be easily controlled. The value of his writings far outlasted his life. For five hundred years the universities of Europe continued to study the medical works of Avicenna.

## THE LIFE OF AVICENNA

ABU ALI EL-HOSIEN, son of Abd Allah, son of Sina, commonly called Avi-Sina or Avicenna, tells as follows:

His father who was a native of Balkb had come into the country of Bokhara at the time of Nouh son of Mansour; he lived in the town of Kharmitan, in the neighborhood of Bokhara, where he exercised the profession of money-changer; he had married a woman from Afchanah. That woman gave him two children, our philosopher being the oldest. He was born in the year 375 in the month of Safar. After the birth of their children the parents of Avicenna went to Bokhara.

Avicenna, still very young, was put in the charge of a master in order to learn the Koran and the elements of belles-lettres. At ten years of age he had made so much progress that he excited admiration. There came at that time to the city of Bokhara Ismaelian missionaries of Egypt, who taught the theory of their sect touching the soul and the reason. The father of Avicenna embraced their doctrine. As to our philosopher, he says, "That he heard and understood what those people were saying, but that his soul did not receive it."

These missionaries taught also profane sciences, Greek philosophy, geometry, and Indian calculation. Avicenna learned that kind of calculation from a vegetable dealer. He studied also with success law and oratory under a hermit called Ibrahim.

After that came to Bokhara a fellow called Natili, who set up as a philosopher. Avicenna's father was a good friend of the sciences and eager for the progress of his son, so he had this Natili live in his house, hoping that the young man would learn much from him. Avicenna studied under his direction the principles of logic; but as to the details of this science, that man had no knowledge of them, and each time a question was asked, the pupil solved it better than his master. Avicenna then began to study by himself; he read the treatises of logic and examined attentively the commentaries. He did the same with Euclid's geometry. He learned the five or six first propositions with Natili, then he finished the book alone. He passed then to the study of Almageste [astrology] which he says he understood with marvelous facility. Natili left him and went to Korkandj. Avicenna read also the sayings of philosophers, and also several commentaries about physics and theology. As he expressed it, "The doors of science were opened to him."

He wanted then to learn medicine, and said, "This science is not difficult." He made very rapid progress. After being initiated into it by books, he began to visit sick people; and he acquired in empiric treatments more experience than can be told. Physicians began to come and study under his direction. He was at that time only sixteen years old.

Having reached that point he devoted one year and a half to reading. During that time, he did nothing but read and read over again books of logic and philosophy. "Every time I was perplexed in a question," he says, "and I did not find the medium term of a syllogism, I went to the Mosque and prayed and beseeched the author of everything to unveil to me the difficult and closed meaning. At night I came back home; I lit the flambeau in front of me, and I began to read and write. When I was overcome by sleep, I was accustomed to drink a glass of wine which gave me strength. After that I began again to read. Then at the end I fell asleep, and I dreamed about those same questions which had annoyed me during my sitting up, and thus it happened that for several of them I discovered the solution in sleeping."

The young philosopher made a profound study of logic, physics, and mathematic sciences as far as men can reach, and did not make any more progress in these afterward. Then he applied himself to metaphysics. But in spite of his great facility and this wonderful power of work on which he prides himself, not without insisting on it, Aristotle's "Metaphysique" remained long inaccessible to him. "I read that book," said he, "but I did not understand it, and the notion remained obscure to me to such a degree that after having read it forty times I knew it by heart and still did not understand it. At length I despaired and said to myself: This book is incomprehensible. One day I went, at an early hour, to a bookseller, and I met there an agent who had on hands a book which he praised and showed to me. I returned it to him with a bored air, convinced that there was no usefulness in it. But this man said to me: 'Buy it from me; it is a cheap book. I sell it to thee for three dirhems; its owner needs money.' I bought it from him. It was a work of Abou Nasr el Fabis on the intention of Aristotle in the book of metaphysics.

"I went home and hastened to read it. Immediately all that

was obscure in that book was discovered to me, for I knew it by heart already. I conceived a great joy, and the next day I distributed large alms to the poor to thank God."

At that time the sultan of Bokhara was still Nauh, son of Mansour. This prince being ill, Avicenna asked Nauh permission to enter his library. "It was," he said, "an incomparable library composed of several rooms which contained superposed chests, filled up with books. In one room were law books, in another poetry, and so forth." Avicenna discovered there extremely rare books which he had never seen before, and which he never found again later on. This library burned down some time later. Envious people pretended that the philosopher had set it on fire himself to be sure to possess alone, the knowledge he had acquired.

Avicenna was hardly eighteen years when he found that he had finished the cycle of the sciences. "At that moment," he affirms, "I possessed science by heart; now it has ripened in me; but it is always the same science, I have not renewed it since."

He began to write at the age of twenty-one. He wrote ordinarily at the request of different personages, for the most little known. One of his neighbors, called Abu'l Hosein el Aroudi, asked of him for a general book of science; he made it and called it by the name of this man, "Philosophy of Aroudi"; another one asked for a philosophic commentary, and he wrote the treaty of "Resulting and Resulted" as well as a treaty on morals.

At the age of twenty-two our philosopher lost his father and his position changed. He entered political life and was invested with several public functions by the sultan. But necessity compelled him to leave Bokhara and to emigrate to Korkandj. There Abu'l Hosein es-Sahli, who was friend of the sciences, was holding the post of vizier to the emir Ali, son of Mamoun.

Avicenna stayed in this little court in the garb of a lawyer. Then necessity, as he expressed it, compelled him again to leave Korkandj.

He journeyed to Nasa, to Bawerd, to Tous, and to some other cities, and reached finally Djordjan. His intention was to put himself under the protection of the emir Kabous; but



while he was in company of this personage it happens that the emir was made a prisoner by his own soldiers and died.

Avicenna went next to Dihistan, where he was dangerously ill; he came back to Djordjan and became acquainted with Abu Obeid el-Djouzdjani, who attached himself to him. At that moment Avicenna composed, about his situation, a piece of poetry wherein is found this verse. "I am not big, but there is no city which contains me; my price is not high, but I am lacking a buyer."

The situation which he so describes symbolizes very well what was at that time the forlorn and miserable situation of science.







# AL GHAZALI

THE GREATEST DISCIPLE OF MOHAMMED AS SAINT AND TEACHER

1049-1111

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Al Ghazali is often ranked next to Mohammed as a teacher and uplifter of his Arab brethren. He was a native of Khorassan, named Abu Hamid Mohammed. Arab custom, however, seldom designates a noted man by his birth-name. He is most often honored with the distinctive prefix "Al," which means "The," much as we use the word as a superlative. Thus just as Holy Writ speaks of The Nazarene, so Al Ghazali probably means "The Man of Ghazali," the village of his birth, though the name may also be derived from his father's trade in *gzzel* (thread), and so may mean "The Thread Merchant." As a youth Al Ghazali studied much and traveled widely; and his wanderings led, as did those of most men in his day, to Bagdad. Here he became famed as the foremost philosophic teacher of the age.

His own philosophy, however, did not satisfy him. Withdrawing from his official position on the ground of ill-health, he wandered over the world for eleven years, seeking true wisdom. He felt at last that he had found it in the ecstasy of religious faith; and then, resuming his public teaching, he led an earnest reform in Mohammedanism, bringing his people to look more deeply and nobly upon their faith. So convincing were his appeals and explanations that his people called him "The Decisive Argument for the Faith."

Al Ghazali's own search for truth is told in his remarkable little book here given in full, "The Rescuer from Error," in which the "Rescuer" is Mohammed with his Koran. Al Ghazali wrote many other works, religious and philosophical, but none which have so profoundly touched modern readers as this simple, earnest account of himself. It is a "confession" worthy to rank with the "Confessions of Saint Augustine," or any greatest work of its own type. Al Ghazali soon afterward withdrew from public life, hoping to teach men more by his books than by spoken words, and he died in seclusion in his native home.

## THE RESCUER FROM ERROR

IN THE NAME OF THE MOST MERCIFUL GOD

QUOTH the Imam Ghazali:

Glory be to God, whose praise should precede every writing and every speech! May the blessings of God rest on Mohammed, his Prophet and his Apostle, on his family and companions, by whose guidance error is escaped!

You have asked me, O brother in the faith, to expound the aim and the mysteries of religious sciences, the boundaries and depths of theological doctrines. You wish to know my experiences while disentangling truth lost in the medley of sects and divergencies of thought, and how I have dared to climb from the low levels of traditional belief to the top-most summit of assurance. You desire to learn what I have borrowed, first of all from scholastic theology; and secondly from the method of the Ta'limites, who, in seeking truth, rest upon the authority of a leader; and why, thirdly, I have been led to reject philosophic systems; and finally, what I have accepted of the doctrine of the Sufis, and the sum total of truth which I have gathered in studying every variety of opinion. You ask me why, after resigning at Bagdad a teaching post which attracted a number of hearers, I have, long afterward, accepted a similar one at Nishapur. Convinced as I am of the sincerity which prompts your inquiries, I proceed to answer them, invoking the help and protection of God.

Know then, my brothers (may God direct you in the right way), that the diversity in beliefs and religions, and the variety of doctrines and sects which divide men, are like a deep ocean strewn with shipwrecks, from which very few escape safe and sound. Each sect, it is true, believes itself in possession of the truth and of salvation, "each party," as the Koran saith, "rejoices in its own creed"; but as the chief of the apostles, whose word is always truthful, has told us, "My people will be divided into more than seventy sects, of whom only one will be saved." This prediction, like all others of the Prophet, must be fulfilled.

From the period of adolescence, that is to say, previous to reaching my twentieth year to the present time when I have

passed my fiftieth, I have ventured into this vast ocean; I have fearlessly sounded its depths, and like a resolute diver, I have penetrated its darkness and dared its dangers and abysses. I have interrogated the beliefs of each sect and scrutinized the mysteries of each doctrine, in order to disentangle truth from error and orthodoxy from heresy. I have never met one who maintained the hidden meaning of the Koran without investigating the nature of his belief, nor a partisan of its exterior sense without inquiring into the results of his doctrine. There is no philosopher whose system I have not fathomed, nor theologian the intricacies of whose doctrine I have not followed out.

Sufism has no secrets into which I have not penetrated; the devout adorer of Deity has revealed to me the aim of his austerities; the atheist has not been able to conceal from me the real reason of his unbelief. The thirst for knowledge was innate in me from an early age; it was like a second nature implanted by God, without any will on my part. No sooner had I emerged from boyhood than I had already broken the fetters of tradition and freed myself from hereditary beliefs.

Having noticed how easily the children of Christians become Christians, and the children of Moslems embrace Islam, and remembering also the traditional saying ascribed to the Prophet, "Every child has in him the germ of Islam, then his parents make him Jew, Christian, or Zoroastrian," I was moved by a keen desire to learn what was this innate disposition in the child, the nature of the accidental beliefs imposed on him by the authority of his parents and his masters, and finally the unreasoned convictions which he derives from their instructions.

Struck with the contradictions which I encountered in endeavoring to disentangle the truth and falsehood of these opinions, I was led to make the following reflection: "The search after truth being the aim which I propose to myself, I ought in the first place to ascertain what are the bases of certitude." In the next place I recognized that certitude is the clear and complete knowledge of things; such knowledge as leaves no room for doubt nor possibility of error and conjecture, so that there remains no room in the mind for error to find an en-

trancee. In such a case it is necessary that the mind, fortified against all possibility of going astray, should embrace such a strong conviction that, if, for example, any one possessing the power of changing a stone into gold, or a stick into a serpent, should seek to shake the bases of this certitude, it would remain firm and immovable. Suppose, for instance, a man should come and say to me, who am firmly convinced that ten is more than three, "No; on the contrary, three is more than ten, and, to prove it, I change this rod into a serpent," and supposing that he actually did so, I should remain none the less convinced of the falsity of his assertion, and although his miracle might arouse my astonishment, it would not instil any doubt into my belief.

I then understood that all forms of knowledge which do not unite these conditions (imperviousness to doubt, etc.) do not deserve any confidence, because they are not beyond the reach of doubt, and what is not impregnable to doubt can not constitute certitude.

#### THE SUBTERFUGES OF THE SOPHISTS

I then examined what knowledge I possessed, and discovered that in none of it, with the exception of sense-perceptions and necessary principles, did I enjoy that degree of certitude which I have just described. I then sadly reflected as follows: "We can not hope to find truth except in matters which carry their evidence in themselves—that is to say, in sense-perceptions and necessary principles; we must therefore establish these on a firm basis. Is my absolute confidence in sense-perceptions and on the infallibility of necessary principles analogous to the confidence which I formerly possessed in matters believed on the authority of others? Is it only analogous to the reliance most people place on their organs of vision, or is it rigorously true without admixture of illusion or doubt?"

I then set myself earnestly to examine the notions we derive from the evidence of the senses and from sight in order to see if they could be called in question. The result of a careful examination was that my confidence in them was shaken. Our sight, for instance, perhaps the best practiced of all our senses, observes a shadow, and finding it ap-



parently stationary pronounces it devoid of movement. Observation and experience, however, show subsequently that a shadow moves not suddenly, it is true, but gradually and imperceptibly, so that it is never really motionless.

Again, the eye sees a star and believes it as large as a piece of gold, but mathematical calculations prove, on the contrary, that it is larger than the earth. These notions, and all others which the senses declare true, are subsequently contradicted and convicted of falsity in an irrefragable manner by the verdict of reason.

Then I reflected in myself: "Since I cannot trust to the evidence of my senses, I must rely only on intellectual notions based on fundamental principles, such as the following axioms: 'Ten is more than three. Affirmation and negation cannot coexist together. A thing cannot both be created and also existent from eternity, living and annihilated simultaneously, at once necessary and impossible.'" To this the notions I derived from my senses made the following objections: "Who can guarantee you that you can trust to the evidence of reason more than to that of the senses? You believed in our testimony till it was contradicted by the verdict of reason, otherwise you would have continued to believe it to this day. Well, perhaps, there is above reason another judge who, if he appeared, would convict reason of falsehood, just as reason has confuted us. And if such a third arbiter is not yet apparent, it does not follow that he does not exist."

To this argument I remained some time without reply; a reflection drawn from the phenomena of sleep deepened my doubt. "Do you not see," I reflected, "that while asleep you assume your dreams to be indisputably real? Once awake, you recognize them for what they are—baseless chimeras. Who can assure you, then, of the reliability of notions which, when awake, you derive from the senses and from reason? In relation to your present state they may be real; but it is possible also that you may enter upon another state of being which will bear the same relation to your present state as this does to your condition when asleep. In that new sphere you will recognize that the conclusions of reason are only chimeras."

This possible condition is, perhaps, that which the Sufis call "ecstasy" (*hal*), that is to say, according to them, a state in which, absorbed in themselves and in the suspension of sense-perceptions, they have visions beyond the reach of intellect. Perhaps also Death is that state, according to that saying of the prince of prophets: "Men are asleep; when they die, they wake." Our present life in relation to the future is perhaps only a dream, and man, once dead, will see things in direct opposition to those now before his eyes; he will then understand that word of the Koran, "To-day we have removed the veil from thine eyes and thy sight is keen."

Such thoughts as these threatened to shake my reason, and I sought to find an escape from them. But how? In order to disentangle the knot of this difficulty, a proof was necessary. Now a proof must be based on primary assumptions, and it was precisely these of which I was in doubt. This unhappy state lasted about two months, during which I was, not, it is true, explicitly or by profession, but morally and essentially, a thorough-going skeptic.

God at last deigned to heal me of this mental malady; my mind recovered sanity and equilibrium, the primary assumptions of reason recovered with me all their stringency and force. I owed my deliverance, not to a concatenation of proofs and arguments, but to the light which God caused to penetrate into my heart—the light which illuminates the threshold of all knowledge. To suppose that certitude can be only based upon formal arguments is to limit the boundless mercy of God. Some one asked the Prophet the explanation of this passage in the Divine Book: "God opens to Islam the heart of him whom he chooses to direct." "That is spoken," replied the Prophet, "of the light which God sheds in the heart." "And how can man recognize that light?" he was asked. "By his detachment from this world of illusion and by a secret drawing toward the eternal world," the Prophet replied.

On another occasion he said: "God has created his creatures in darkness, and then has shed upon them his light." It is by the help of this light that the search for truth must be carried on. As by his mercy this light descends from time to time among men, we must ceaselessly be on the watch for

it. This is also corroborated by another saying of the Apostle: "God sends upon you, at certain times, breathings of his grace; be prepared for them."

My object in this account is to make others understand with what earnestness we should search for truth, since it leads to results we never dreamed of. Primary assumptions have not got to be sought for, since they are always present to our minds; if we engage in such a search, we only find them persistently elude our grasp. But those who push their investigation beyond ordinary limits are safe from the suspicion of negligence in pursuing what is within their reach.

#### THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH

When God in the abundance of his mercy had healed me of this malady, I ascertained that those who are engaged in the search for truth may be divided into three groups.

I. Scholastic theologians, who profess to follow theory and speculation.

II. The philosophers, who profess to rely upon formal logic.

III. The Sufis, who call themselves the elect of God and possessors of intuition and knowledge of the truth by means of ecstasy.

"The truth," I said to myself, "must be found among these three classes of men who devote themselves to the search for it. If it escapes them, one must give up all hope of attaining it. Having once surrendered blind relief, it is impossible to return to it, for the essence of such belief is to be unconscious of itself. As soon as this unconsciousness ceases it is shattered like a glass whose fragments cannot be again reunited except by being cast again into the furnace and re-fashioned." Determined to follow these paths and to search out these systems to the bottom, I proceeded with my investigations in the following order: Scholastic theology; philosophical systems; and, finally Sufism.

#### THE AIM OF SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY AND ITS RESULTS

Commencing with theological science, I carefully studied and meditated upon it. I read the writings of the authorities in this department and myself composed several treatises. I recognized that this science, while sufficing its own require-

ments, could not assist me in arriving at the desired goal. In short, its object is to preserve the purity of orthodox beliefs from all heretical innovation. God, by means of his apostle, has revealed to his creatures a belief which is true as regards their temporal and eternal interests; the chief articles of it are laid down in the Koran and in the traditions. Subsequently, Satan suggested to innovators principles contrary to those of orthodoxy; they listened greedily to his suggestions, and the purity of the faith was menaced. God then raised up a school of theologians and inspired them with the desire to defend orthodoxy by means of a system of proofs adapted to unveil the devices of the heretics and to foil the attacks which they made on the doctrines established by tradition.

Such is the origin of scholastic theology. Many of its adepts, worthy of their high calling, valiantly defended the orthodox faith by proving the reality of prophecy and the falsity of heretical innovations. But, in order to do so, they had to rely upon a certain number of premises, which they accepted in common with their adversaries, and which authority and universal consent or simply the Koran and the traditions obliged them to accept. Their principal effort was to expose the self-contradictions of their opponents and to confute them by means of the premises which they had professed to accept. Now a method of argumentation like this has little value for one who only admits self-evident truths. Scholastic theology could not consequently satisfy me nor heal the malady from which I suffered.

It is true that in its later development theology was not content to defend dogma; it betook itself to the study of first principles, of substances, accidents and the laws which govern them; but through want of a thoroughly scientific basis, it could not advance far in its researches, nor succeed in dispelling entirely the overhanging obscurity which springs from diversities of belief.

I do not, however, deny that it has had a more satisfactory result for others; on the contrary, I admit that it has; but it is by introducing the principle of authority in matters which are not self-evident. Moreover, my object is to explain my own mental attitude and not to dispute with those

who have found healing for themselves. Remedies vary according to the nature of the disease; those which benefit some may injure others.

PHILOSOPHY.—How far it is open to censure or not—On what points its adherents may be considered believers or unbelievers, orthodox or heretical—What they have borrowed from the true doctrine to render their chimerical theories acceptable—Why the minds of men swerve from the truth—What criteria are available wherewith to separate the pure gold from the alloy in their systems.

I proceeded from the study of scholastic theology to that of philosophy. It was plain to me that, in order to discover where the professors of any branch of knowledge have erred, one must make a profound study of that science; must equal, nay surpass, those who know most of it, so as to penetrate into secrets of it unknown to them. Only by this method can they be completely answered, and of this method I can find no trace in the theologians of Islam. In theological writings devoted to the refutation of philosophy I have only found a tangled mass of phrases full of contradictions and mistakes, and incapable of deceiving, I will not say a critical mind, but even the common crowd. Convinced that to dream of refuting a doctrine before having thoroughly comprehended it was like shooting at an object in the dark, I devoted myself zealously to the study of philosophy; but in books only and without the aid of a teacher. I gave up to this work all the leisure remaining from teaching and from composing works on law. There were then attending my lectures three hundred of the students of Bagdad. With the help of God, these studies, carried on in secret, so to speak, put me in a condition to thoroughly comprehend philosophical systems within a space of two years. I then spent about a year in meditating on these systems after having thoroughly understood them. I turned them over and over in my mind till they were thoroughly clear of all obscurity. In this manner I acquired a complete knowledge of all their subterfuges and subtleties, of what was truth and what was illusion in them.

I now proceed to give a *résumé* of these doctrines. I ascertained that they were divided into different varieties, and that their adherents might be ranged under diverse heads.

All, in spite of their diversity, are marked with the stamp of infidelity and irreligion, although there is a considerable difference between the ancient and modern, between the first and last of these philosophers, according as they have missed or approximated to the truth in a greater or less degree.

CONCERNING THE PHILOSOPHICAL SECTS AND THE STIGMA OF  
INFIDELITY WHICH ATTACHES TO THEM ALL

The philosophical systems, in spite of their number and variety, may be reduced to three: (1) the Materialists; (2) the Naturalists; (3) the Theists.

(1) *The Materialists.* They reject an intelligent and omnipotent Creator and disposer of the universe. In their view the world exists from all eternity and had no author. The animal comes from semen and semen from the animal; so it had always been and will always be; those who maintain this doctrine are atheists.

(2) *The Naturalists.* These devote themselves to the study of nature and of the marvelous phenomena of the animal and vegetable world. Having carefully analyzed animal organs with the help of anatomy, struck with the wonders of God's work and with the wisdom therein revealed, they are forced to admit the existence of a wise Creator who knows the end and purpose of everything. And certainly no one can study anatomy and the wonderful mechanism of living things without being obliged to confess the profound wisdom of him who has framed the bodies of animals and especially of man. But carried away by their natural researches they believed that the existence of a being absolutely depended upon the proper equilibrium of its organism. According to them, as the latter perishes and is destroyed, so is the thinking faculty which is bound up with it; and as they assert that the restoration of a thing once destroyed to existence is unthinkable, they deny the immortality of the soul. Consequently they deny heaven, hell, resurrection, and judgment. Acknowledging neither a recompense for good deeds nor a punishment for evil ones, they fling off all authority and plunge into sensual pleasures with the avidity of brutes. These also ought to be called atheists, for the true faith depends not only on the acknowledgment of God, but of his Apostle and of the

day of judgment. And although they acknowledge God and his attributes, they deny a judgment to come.

(3) Next come the *Theists*. Among them should be reckoned Socrates, who was the teacher of Plato as Plato was of Aristotle. This latter drew up for his disciples the rules of logic, organized the sciences, elucidated what was formerly obscure, and expounded what had not been understood. This school refuted the systems of the two others, *i.e.*, the Materialists and Naturalists; but in exposing their mistaken and perverse beliefs, they made use of arguments which they should not. "God suffices to protect the faithful in war" (Koran, xxxiii, 25).

Aristotle also contended with success against the theories of Plato, Socrates, and the theists who had preceded him, and separated himself entirely from them; but he could not eliminate from his doctrine the stains of infidelity and heresy which disfigure the teaching of his predecessors. We should therefore consider them all as unbelievers, as well as the so-called Mussulman philosophers, such as Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Farabi, who have adopted their systems.

Let us, however, acknowledge that among Mussulman philosophers none has better interpreted the doctrine of Aristotle than the latter. What others have handed down as his teaching is full of error, confusion, and obscurity adapted to disconcert the reader. The unintelligible can neither be accepted nor rejected. The philosophy of Aristotle, all serious knowledge of which we owe to the translation of these two learned men, may be divided into three portions: the first contains matter justly chargeable with impiety, the second is tainted with heresy, and the third we are obliged to reject absolutely. We proceed to details:

#### DIVISIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHIC SCIENCES

These sciences, in relation to the aim we have set before us, may be divided into six sections: (1) Mathematics; (2) Logic; (3) Physics; (4) Metaphysics; (5) Politics; (6) Moral Philosophy.

(1) *Mathematics*. Mathematics comprises the knowledge of calculation, geometry, and cosmography: it has no connection with the religious sciences, and proves nothing for or

against religion ; it rests on a foundation of proofs which, once known and understood, can not be refuted. Mathematics tend, however, to produce two bad results.

The first is this: Whoever studies this science admires the subtlety and clearness of its proofs. His confidence in philosophy increases, and he thinks that all its departments are capable of the same clearness and solidity of proof as mathematics. But when he hears people speak of the unbelief and impiety of mathematicians, of their professed disregard for the Divine Law, which is notorious, it is true that, out of regard for authority, he echoes these accusations, but he says to himself at the same time that, if there was truth in religion, it would not have escaped those who have displayed so much keenness of intellect in the study of mathematics.

Next, when he becomes aware of the unbelief and rejection of religion on the part of these learned men, he concludes that to reject religion is reasonable. How many of such men gone astray I have met whose sole argument was that just mentioned. And supposing one puts to them the following objection: "It does not follow that a man who excels in one branch of knowledge excels in all others, nor that he should be equally versed in jurisprudence, theology, and medicine. It is possible to be entirely ignorant of metaphysics, and yet to be an excellent grammarian. There are past masters in every science who are entirely ignorant of other branches of knowledge. The arguments of the ancient philosophers are rigidly demonstrative in mathematics and only conjectural in religious questions. In order to ascertain this one must proceed to a thorough examination of the matter." Supposing, I say, one makes the above objection to these "apes of unbelief," they find it distasteful. Falling a prey to their passions, to a besotted vanity, and the wish to pass for learned men, they persist in maintaining the pre-eminence of mathematicians in all branches of knowledge. This is a serious evil, and for this reason those who study mathematics should be checked from going too far in their researches. For though far removed as it may be from the things of religion, this study, serving as it does as an introduction to the philosophic systems, casts over religion its malign influence. It is rarely that a man devotes himself



to it without robbing himself of his faith and casting off the restraints of religion.

The second evil comes from the sincere but ignorant Muslim who thinks the best way to defend religion is by rejecting all the exact sciences. Accusing their professors of being astray, he rejects their theories of the eclipses of the sun and moon, and condemns them in the name of religion. These accusations are carried far and wide, they reach the ears of the philosopher who knows that these theories rest on infallible proofs; far from losing confidence in them, he believes, on the contrary, that Islam has ignorance and the denial of scientific proofs for its basis, and his devotion to philosophy increases with his hatred to religion.

It is therefore a great injury to religion to suppose that the defense of Islam involves the condemnation of the exact sciences. The religious law contains nothing which approves them or condemns them, and in their turn they make no attack on religion. The words of the Prophet, "The sun and the moon are two signs of the power of God; they are not eclipsed for the birth or the death of any one; when you see these signs take refuge in prayer and invoke the name of God"—these words, I say, do not in any way condemn the astronomical calculations which define the orbits of these two bodies, their conjunction and opposition according to particular laws. But as for the so-called tradition, "When God reveals himself in anything, he abases himself thereto," it is unauthentic, and not found in any trustworthy collection of the traditions.

Such is the bearing and the possible danger of mathematics.

(2) *Logic*. This science, in the same manner, contains nothing for or against religion. Its object is the study of different kinds of proofs and syllogisms, the conditions which should hold between the premises of a proposition, the way to combine them, the rules of a good definition, and the art of formulating it. For knowledge consists of conceptions which spring from a definition or of convictions which arise from proofs. There is therefore nothing censurable in this science, and it is laid under contribution by theologians as well as by philosophers. The only difference is that the latter use a

particular set of technical formulæ and that they push their divisions and subdivisions further.

It may be asked, What, then, this has to do with the grave questions of religion, and on what ground opposition should be offered to the methods of logic? The objector, it will be said, can only inspire the logician with an unfavorable opinion of the intelligence and faith of his adversary, since the latter's faith seems to be based upon such objections. But, it must be admitted, logic is liable to abuse. Logicians demand in reasoning certain conditions which lead to absolute certainty, but when they touch on religious questions they can no longer postulate these conditions, and ought therefore to relax their habitual rigor. It happens, accordingly, that a student who is enamored of the evidential methods of logic, hearing his teachers accused of irreligion, believes that this irreligion reposes on proofs as strong as those of logic, and immediately, without attempting the study of metaphysics, shares their mistake. This is a serious disadvantage arising from the study of logic.

(3) *Physics*. The object of this science is the study of the bodies which compose the universe: the sky and the stars, and, here below, simple elements such as air, earth, water, fire, and compound bodies—animals, plants, and minerals; the reasons of their changes, developments, and intermixture. By the nature of its researches it is closely connected with the study of medicine, the object of which is the human body, its principal and secondary organs, and the law which governs their changes. Religion having no fault to find with medical science, cannot justly do so with physical, except on some special matters which we have mentioned in the work entitled, "The Destruction of the Philosophers." Besides these primary questions, there are some subordinate ones depending on them, on which physical science is open to objection. But all physical science rests, as we believe, on the following principles: Nature is entirely subject to God; incapable of acting by itself, it is an instrument in the hand of the Creator; sun, moon, stars, and elements are subject to God and can produce nothing of themselves. In a word, nothing whatsoever in nature can act spontaneously and apart from God.

(4) *Metaphysics*. This is the fruitful breeding-ground of the errors of philosophers. Here they can no longer satisfy the laws of rigorous argumentation such as logic demands, and this is what explains the disputes which arise between them in the study of metaphysics. The system most closely akin to the system of the Mohammedan doctors is that of Aristotle as expounded to us by Farabi and Avicenna. The sum total of their errors can be reduced to twenty propositions: three of them are irreligious, and the other seventeen heretical. It was in order to combat their system that we wrote the work, "Destruction of the Philosophers." The three propositions in which they are opposed to all the doctrines of Islam are the following:

(a) Bodies do not rise again; spirits alone will be rewarded or punished; future punishments will be therefore spiritual and not physical. They are right in admitting spiritual punishments, for there will be such; but they are wrong in rejecting physical punishments, and contradicting in this manner the assertions of the Divine Law.

(b) "God takes cognizance of universals, not of specials." This is manifestly irreligious. The Koran asserts truly, "Not an atom's weight in heaven or earth can escape his knowledge" (x. 62).

(c) They maintain that the universe exists from all eternity and will never end.

None of these propositions has ever been admitted by Moslems.

Besides this, they deny that God has attributes, and maintain that he knows by his essence only and not by means of any attribute accessory to his essence. In this point they approach the doctrine of the Mutazilites, doctrines which we are not obliged to condemn as irreligious. On the contrary, in our work entitled, "Criteria of the Differences Which Divide Islam from Atheism," we have proved the wrongness of those who accuse of irreligion everything which is opposed to their way of looking at things.

(5) *Political Science*. The professors of this confine themselves to drawing up the rules which regulate temporal matters and the royal power. They have borrowed their theories on this point from the books which God has revealed to his

prophets and from the sentences of ancient sages, gathered by tradition.

(6) *Moral Philosophy.* The professors of this occupy themselves with defining the attributes and qualities of the soul, grouping them according to genus and species, and pointing out the way to moderate and control them. They have borrowed this system from the Sufis. These devout men, who are always engaged in invoking the name of God, in combating concupiscence and following the way of God by renouncing the pleasures of this world, have received, while in a state of ecstasy, revelations regarding the qualities of the soul, its defects and its evil inclinations. These revelations they have published, and the philosophers making use of them have introduced them into their own systems in order to embellish and give currency to their falsehoods. In the times of the philosophers, as at every other period, there existed some of these fervent mystics. God does not deprive this world of them, for they are its sustainers, and they draw down to it the blessings of heaven according to the tradition: "It is by them that you obtain rain; it is by them that you receive your subsistence." Such were "the Companions of the Cave," who lived in ancient times, as related by the Koran (xviii.). Now this mixture of moral and philosophic doctrine with the words of the Prophet and those of the Sufis gives rise to two dangers, one for the upholder of those doctrines; the other for their opponent.

The danger for their opponent is serious. A narrow-minded man, finding in their writings moral philosophy mixed with unsupported theories, believes that he ought to entirely reject them and to condemn those who profess them. Having only heard them from their mouth he does not hesitate in his ignorance to declare them false because those who teach them are in error. It is as if some one was to reject the profession of faith made by Christians, "There is only one God and Jesus is his prophet," simply because it proceeds from Christians and without inquiring whether it is the profession of this creed or the denial of Mohammed's prophetic mission which makes Christians infidels. Now, if they are only infidels because of their rejection of our Prophet, we are not entitled to reject those of their doctrines which do not wear the stamp

of infidelity. In a word, truth does not cease to be true because it is found among them. Such, however, is the tendency of weak minds: they judge the truth according to its professors instead of judging its professors by the standard of the truth. But a liberal spirit will take as its guide this maxim of the prince of believers, Ali the son of Abu Talib: "Do not seek for the truth by means of men; find first the truth and then you will recognize those who follow it." This is the procedure followed by a wise man. Once in possession of the truth he examines the basis of various doctrines which come before him, and when he has found them true, he accepts them without troubling himself whether the person who teaches them is sincere or a deceiver. Much rather, remembering how gold is buried in the bowels of the earth, he endeavors to disengage the truth from the mass of errors in which it is engulfed. The skilled coin-assayer plunges without hesitation his hand into the purse of the coiner of false money, and relying on experience, separates good coins from bad. It is the ignorant rustic, and not the experienced assayer, who will ask why we should have anything to do with a false coiner. The unskilled swimmer must be kept away from the seashore, not the expert in diving. The child, not the charmer, must be forbidden to handle serpents.

As a matter of fact, men have such a good opinion of themselves, of their mental superiority and intellectual depth; they believe themselves so skilled in discerning the true from the false, the path of safety from those of error, that they should be forbidden as much as possible the perusal of philosophic writings, for though they sometimes escape the danger just pointed out, they cannot avoid that which we are about to indicate.

Some of the maxims found in my works regarding the mysteries of religion have met with objectors of an inferior rank in science, whose intellectual penetration is insufficient to fathom such depths. They assert that these maxims are borrowed from the ancient philosophers, whereas the truth is that they are the fruit of my own meditations, but as the proverb says, "Sandal follows the impress of sandal."<sup>1</sup> Some of them are found in our books of religious law, but the

<sup>1</sup> *I. e.*, "There is nothing new under the sun."

greater part are derived from the writings of the Sufis.

But even if they were borrowed exclusively from the doctrines of the philosophers, is it right to reject an opinion when it is reasonable in itself, supported by solid proofs, and contradicting neither the Koran nor the traditions? If we adopt this method and reject every truth which has chanced to have been proclaimed by an impostor, how many truths we should have to reject! How many verses of the Koran and traditions of the prophets and Sufi discourses and maxims of sages we must close our ears to because the author of the "Treatise of the Brothers of Purity" has inserted them in his writings in order to further his cause, and in order to lead minds gradually astray in the paths of error! The consequence of this procedure would be that impostors would snatch truths out of our hands in order to embellish their own works. The wise man, at least, should not make common cause with the bigot blinded by ignorance.

Honey does not become impure because it may happen to have been placed in the glass which the surgeon uses for cupping purposes. The impurity of blood is due, not to its contact with this glass, but to a peculiarity inherent in its own nature; this peculiarity, not existing in honey, cannot be communicated to it by its being placed in the cupping-glass; it is therefore wrong to regard it as impure. Such is, however, the whimsical way of looking at things found in nearly all men. Every word proceeding from an authority which they approve is accepted by them, even were it false; every word proceeding from one whom they suspect is rejected, even were it true. In every case they judge of the truth according to its professors and not of men according to the truth which they profess, a *ne plus ultra* of error. Such is the peril in which philosophy involves its opponents.

The second danger threatens those who accept the opinions of the philosophers. When, for instance, we read the "Treatise of the Brothers of Purity," and other works of the same kind, we find in them sentences spoken by the Prophet and quotations from the Sufis. We approve these works; we give them our confidence; and we finish by accepting the errors which they contain, because of the good opinion of them with which they have inspired us at the outset. Thus, by insen-

sible degrees, we are led astray. In view of this danger the reading of philosophic writings so full of vain and delusive utopias should be forbidden, just as the slippery banks of a river are forbidden to one who knows not how to swim. The perusal of these false teachings must be prevented just as one prevents children from touching serpents. A snake-charmer himself will abstain from touching snakes in the presence of his young child, because he knows that the child, believing himself as clever as his father, will not fail to imitate him; and in order to lend more weight to his prohibition the charmer will not touch a serpent under the eyes of his son.

Such should be the conduct of a learned man who is also wise. But the snake-charmer, after having taken the serpent and separated the venom from the antidote, having put the latter on one side and destroyed the venom, ought not to withhold the antidote from those who need it. In the same way the skilled coin-assayer, after having put his hand in the bag of the false coiner, taken out the good coins and thrown away the bad ones, ought not to refuse the good to those who need and ask for it. Such should be the conduct of the learned man. If the patient feels a certain dislike of the antidote because he knows that it is taken from a snake whose body is the receptacle of poison, he should be disabused of this fallacy.

If a beggar hesitates to take a piece of gold which he knows comes from the purse of a false coiner, he should be told that his hesitation is a pure mistake which would deprive him of the advantage which he seeks. It should be proved to him that the contact of the good coins with the bad does not injure the former and does not improve the latter. In the same way the contact of truth with falsehood does not change truth into falsehood, any more than it changes falsehood into truth.

Thus much, then, we have to say regarding the inconveniences and dangers which spring from the study of philosophy.

#### SUFISM

When I had finished my examination of these doctrines I applied myself to the study of Sufism. I saw that in order to understand it thoroughly one must combine theory with prac-

tice. The aim which the Sufis set before them is as follows: To free the soul from the tyrannical yoke of the passions, to deliver it from its wrong inclinations and evil instincts, in order that in the purified heart there should only remain room for God and for the invocation of his holy name.

As it was more easy to learn their doctrine than to practice it, I studied first of all those of their books which contain it: "The Nourishment of Hearts," by Abu Talib of Mecca, the works of Hareth el Muhasibi, and the fragments which still remain of Junaid, Shibli, Abu Yezid Bustami, and other leaders (whose souls may God sanctify). I acquired a thorough knowledge of their researches, and I learned all that was possible to learn of their methods by study and oral teaching. It became clear to me that the last stage could not be reached by mere instruction, but only by transport, ecstasy, and the transformation of the moral being.

To define health and satiety, to penetrate their causes and conditions, is quite another thing from being well and satisfied. To define drunkenness, to know that it is caused by vapors which rise from the stomach and cloud the seat of intelligence, is quite a different thing to being drunk. The drunken man has no idea of the nature of drunkenness, just because he is drunk and not in a condition to understand anything, while the doctor, not being under the influence of drunkenness, knows its character and laws. Or if the doctor fall ill, he has a theoretical knowledge of the health of which he is deprived.

In the same way there is a considerable difference between knowing renouncement, comprehending its conditions and causes, and practicing renouncement and detachment from the things of this world. I saw that Sufism consists in experiences rather than in definitions, and that what I was lacking belonged to the domain, not of instruction, but of ecstasy and initiation.

The researches to which I had devoted myself, the path which I had traversed in studying religious and speculative branches of knowledge, had given me a firm faith in three things—God, Inspiration, and the Last Judgment. These three fundamental articles of belief were confirmed in me, not merely by definite arguments, but by a chain of causes, cir-



cumstances, and proofs which it is impossible to recount. I saw that one can only hope for salvation by devotion and the conquest of one's passions, a procedure which presupposes renouncement and detachment from this world of falsehood in order to turn toward eternity and meditation on God. Finally, I saw that the only condition of success was to sacrifice honors and riches and to sever the ties and attachments of worldly life.

Coming seriously to consider my state, I found myself bound down on all sides by these trammels. Examining my actions, the most fair-seeming of which were my lecturing and professorial occupations, I found to my surprise that I was engrossed in several studies of little value, and profitless as regards my salvation. I probed the motives of my teaching and found that, in place of being sincerely consecrated to God, it was only actuated by a vain desire of honor and reputation. I perceived that I was on the edge of an abyss, and that without an immediate conversion I should be doomed to eternal fire. In these reflections I spent a long time. Still a prey to uncertainty, one day I decided to leave Bagdad and to give up everything; the next day I gave up my resolution. I advanced one step and immediately relapsed. In the morning I was sincerely resolved only to occupy myself with the future life; in the evening a crowd of carnal thoughts assailed and dispersed my resolutions. On the one side the world kept me bound to my post in the chains of covetousness, on the other side the voice of religion cried to me, "Up! Up! Thy life is nearing its end, and thou hast a long journey to make. All thy pretended knowledge is naught but falsehood and fantasy. If thou dost not think now of thy salvation, when wilt thou think of it? If thou dost not break thy chains to-day, when wilt thou break them?" Then my resolve was strengthened, I wished to give up all and flee; but the Tempter, returning to the attack, said, "You are suffering from a transitory feeling; don't give way to it, for it will soon pass. If you obey it, if you give up this fine position, this honorable post exempt from trouble and rivalry, this seat of authority safe from attack, you will regret it later on without being able to recover it."

Thus I remained, torn asunder by the opposite forces of

earthly passions and religious aspirations, for about six months from the month Rajab of the year A.D. 1096. At the close of them my will yielded and I gave myself up to destiny. God caused an impediment to chain my tongue and prevented me from lecturing. Vainly I desired, in the interest of my pupils, to go on with my teaching, but my mouth became dumb. The silence to which I was condemned cast me into a violent despair; my stomach became weak; I lost all appetite; I could neither swallow a morsel of bread nor drink a drop of water.

The enfeeblement of my physical powers was such that the doctors, despairing of saving me, said, "The mischief is in the heart, and has communicated itself to the whole organism; there is no hope unless the cause of his grievous sadness be arrested."

Finally, conscious of my weakness and the prostration of my soul, I took refuge in God as a man at the end of himself and without resources. "He who hears the wretched when they cry" (Koran, xxvii. 63) deigned to hear me; He made easy to me the sacrifice of honors, wealth, and family. I gave out publicly that I intended to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, while I secretly resolved to go to Syria, not wishing that the Caliph (may God magnify him) or my friends should know my intention of settling in that country. I made all kinds of clever excuses for leaving Bagdad with the fixed intention of not returning thither. The Imams of Irak criticized me with one accord. Not one of them could admit that this sacrifice had a religious motive, because they considered my position as the highest attainable in the religious community. "Behold how far their knowledge goes!" (Koran, liii. 31). All kinds of explanations of my conduct were forthcoming. Those who were outside the limits of Irak attributed it to the fear with which the Government inspired me. Those who were on the spot and saw how the authorities wished to detain me, their displeasure at my resolution and my refusal of their request, said to themselves, "It is a calamity which one can only impute to a fate which has befallen the Faithful and Learning!"

At last I left Bagdad, giving up all my fortune. Only, as lands and property in Irak can afford an endowment for pious

purposes, I obtained a legal authorization to preserve as much as was necessary for my support and that of my children; for there is surely nothing more lawful in the world than that a learned man should provide sufficient to support his family. I then betook myself to Syria, where I remained for two years, which I devoted to retirement, meditation, and devout exercises. I only thought of self-improvement and discipline and of purification of the heart by prayer in going through the forms of devotion which the Sufis had taught me. I used to live a solitary life in the Mosque of Damascus, and was in the habit of spending my days on the minaret after closing the door behind me.

From thence I proceeded to Jerusalem, and every day secluded myself in the Sanctuary of the Rock.<sup>2</sup> After that I felt a desire to accomplish the pilgrimage, and to receive a full effusion of grace by visiting Mecca, Medina, and the tomb of the Prophet. After visiting the shrine of the Friend of God (Abraham), I went to the Hedjaz. Finally, the longings of my heart and the prayers of my children brought me back to my country, although I was so firmly resolved at first never to revisit it. At any rate I meant, if I did return, to live there solitary and in religious meditation; but events, family cares, and vicissitudes of life changed my resolutions and troubled my meditative calm. However irregular the intervals which I could give to devotional ecstasy, my confidence in it did not diminish; and the more I was diverted by hindrances, the more steadfastly I returned to it.

Ten years passed in this manner. During my successive periods of meditation there were revealed to me things impossible to recount. All that I shall say for the edification of the reader is this: I learned from a sure source that the Sufis are the true pioneers on the path of God; that there is nothing more beautiful than their life, nor more praiseworthy than their rule of conduct, nor purer than their morality. The intelligence of thinkers, the wisdom of philosophers, the knowledge of the most learned doctors of the law would in vain combine their efforts in order to modify or improve their doctrine and morals; it would be impossible. With the Sufis, repose and movement, exterior or interior, are illumined with

<sup>2</sup> In the Mosque of Omar.

the light which proceeds from the Central Radianee of Inspiration. And what other light could shine on the face of the earth? In a word, what can one criticize in them? To purge the heart of all that does not belong to God is the first step in their cathartic method. The drawing up of the heart by prayer is the key-stone of it, as the cry "*Allahu Akbar*" (God is great) is the key-stone of prayer, and the last stage is the being lost in God. I say the last stage, with reference to what may be reached by an effort of will; but, to tell the truth, it is only the first stage in the life of contemplation, the vestibule by which the initiated are privileged to enter.

From the time that they set out on this path, revelations commence for them. They come to see in the waking state angels and souls of prophets; they hear their voices and wise counsels. By means of this contemplation of heavenly forms and images they rise by degrees to heights which human language cannot reach, which one cannot even indicate without falling into great and inevitable errors. The degree of proximity to Deity which they attain is regarded by some as intermixture of being (*haloul*), by others as identification (*ittihad*), by others as intimate union (*wasl*). But all these expressions are wrong, as we have explained in our work entitled, "The Chief Aim." Those who have reached that stage should confine themselves to repeating the verse—

What I experience I shall not try to say;  
Call me happy, but ask me no more.

In short, he who does not arrive at the intuition of these truths by means of ecstasy, knows only the *name* of inspiration. The miracles wrought by the saints are, in fact, merely the earliest forms of prophetic manifestation. Such was the state of the Apostle of God, when, before receiving his commission, he retired to Mount Hira to give himself up to such intensity of prayer and meditation that the Arabs said: "Mohammed is become enamored of God."

This state, then, can be revealed to the initiated in ecstasy, and to him who is incapable of ecstasy, by obedience and attention, on condition that he frequents the society of Sufis till he arrives, so to speak, at an imitative initiation. Such is

the faith which one can obtain by remaining among them, and intercourse with them is never painful.

But even when we are deprived of the advantage of their society, we can comprehend the possibility of this state (revelation by means of ecstasy) by a chain of manifest proofs. We have explained this in the treatise entitled "Marvels of the Heart," which forms part of our work, "The Revival of the Religious Sciences." The certitude derived from proofs is called "knowledge"; passing into the state we describe is called "transport"; believing the experience of others and oral transmission is "faith." Such are the three degrees of knowledge, as it is written, "The Lord will raise to different ranks those among you who have believed and those who have received knowledge from him" (Koran, lviii. 12).

But behind those who believe comes a crowd of ignorant people who deny the reality of Sufism, hear discourses on it with incredulous irony, and treat as charlatans those who profess it. To this ignorant crowd the verse applies: "There are those among them who come to listen to thee, and when they leave thee, ask of those who have received knowledge, 'What has he just said?' These are they whose hearts God has sealed up with blindness and who only follow their passions."

Among the number of convictions which I owe to the practice of the Sufi rule is the knowledge of the true nature of inspiration. This knowledge is of such great importance that I proceed to expound it in detail.

#### THE REALITY OF INSPIRATION: ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE HUMAN RACE

The substance of man at the moment of its creation is a simple monad, devoid of knowledge of the worlds subject to the Creator, worlds whose infinite number is only known to him, as the Koran says: "Only thy Lord knoweth the number of his armies."

Man arrives at this knowledge by the aid of his perceptions; each of his senses is given him that he may comprehend the world of created things, and by the term "world" we understand the different species of creatures. The first sense revealed to man is touch, by means of which he perceives a cer-

tain group of qualities—heat, cold, moist, dry. The sense of touch does not perceive colors and forms, which are for it as though they did not exist. Next comes the sense of sight, which makes him acquainted with colors and forms; that is to say, with that which occupies the highest rank in the world of sensation. The sense of hearing succeeds, and then the senses of smell and taste.

When the human being can elevate himself above the world of sense, toward the age of seven, he receives the faculty of discrimination; he enters then upon a new phase of existence and can experience, thanks to this faculty, impressions, superior to those of the senses, which do not occur in the sphere of sensation.

He then passes to another phase and receives reason, by which he discerns things necessary, possible, and impossible; in a word, all the notions which he could not combine in the former stages of his existence. But beyond reason and at a higher level by a new faculty of vision is bestowed upon him, by which he perceives invisible things, the secrets of the future and other concepts as inaccessible to reason as the concepts of reason are inaccessible to mere discrimination and what is perceived by discrimination to the senses. Just as the man possessed only of discrimination rejects and denies the notions acquired by reason, so do certain rationalists reject and deny the notion of inspiration. It is a proof of their profound ignorance; for, instead of argument, they merely deny inspiration as a sphere unknown and possessing no real existence. In the same way, a man blind from birth, who knows neither by experience nor by information what colors and forms are, neither knows nor understands them when some one speaks of them to him for the first time.

God, wishing to render intelligible to men the idea of inspiration, has given them a kind of glimpse of it in sleep. In fact, man perceives while asleep the things of the invisible world either clearly manifest or under the veil of allegory to be subsequently lifted by divination. If, however, one was to say to a person who had never himself experienced these dreams that, in a state of lethargy resembling death and during the complete suspension of sight, hearing, and all the senses, a man can see the things of the invisible world, this

person would exclaim, and seek to prove the impossibility of these visions by some such argument as the following: "The sensitive faculties are the causes of perception. Now, if one cannot perceive certain things when one is in full possession of these faculties, how much more is their perception impossible when these faculties are suspended."

The falsity of such an argument is shown by evidence and experience. For in the same way as reason constitutes a particular phase of existence in which intellectual concepts are perceived which are hidden from the senses, similarly, inspiration is a special state in which the inner eye discovers, revealed by a celestial light, mysteries out of the reach of reason. The doubts which are raised regarding inspiration relate (1) to its possibility, (2) to its real and actual existence, (3) to its manifestation in this or that person.

To prove the possibility of inspiration is to prove that it belongs to a category of branches of knowledge which cannot be attained by reason. It is the same with medical science and astronomy. He who studies them is obliged to recognize that they are derived solely from the revelation and special grace of God. Some astronomical phenomena only occur once in a thousand years; how then can we know them by experience?

We may say the same of inspiration, which is one of the branches of intuitional knowledge. Further, the perception of things which are beyond the attainment of reason is only one of the features peculiar to inspiration, which possesses a great number of others. The characteristic which we have mentioned is only, as it were, a drop of water in the ocean, and we have mentioned it because people experience what is analogous to it in dreams and in the sciences of medicine and astronomy. These branches of knowledge belong to the domain of prophetic miracles, and reason cannot attain to them.

As to the other characteristics of inspiration, they are only revealed to adepts in Sufism and in a state of ecstatic transport. The little that we know of the nature of inspiration we owe to the kind of likeness to it which we find in sleep; without that we should be incapable of comprehending it, and consequently of believing in it, for conviction results from comprehension. The process of initiation into Sufism exhibits this likeness to inspiration from the first. There is in

it a kind of ecstasy proportioned to the condition of the person initiated, and a degree of certitude and conviction which cannot be attained by reason. This single fact is sufficient to make us believe in inspiration.

We now come to deal with doubts relative to the inspiration of a particular prophet. We shall not arrive at certitude on this point except by ascertaining, either by ocular evidence or by reliable tradition, the facts relating to that prophet. When we have ascertained the real nature of inspiration and proceed to the serious study of the Koran and the traditions, we shall then know certainly that Mohammed is the greatest of prophets. After that we should fortify our conviction by verifying the truth of his preaching and the salutary effect which it has upon the soul. We should verify in experience the truth of sentences such as the following: "He who makes his conduct accord with his knowledge receives from God more knowledge"; or this, "God delivers to the oppressor him who favors injustice"; or again, "Whosoever when rising in the morning has only one anxiety (to please God), God will preserve him from all anxiety in this world and the next."

When we have verified these sayings in experience thousands of times, we shall be in possession of a certitude on which doubt can obtain no hold. Such is the path we must traverse in order to realize the truth of inspiration. It is not a question of finding out whether a rod has been changed into a serpent, or whether the moon has been split in two.<sup>3</sup> If we regard miracles in isolation, without their countless attendant circumstances, we shall be liable to confound them with magic and falsehood, or to regard them as a means of leading men astray, as it is written, "God misleads and directs as he chooses" (Koran, xxxv. 9); we shall find ourselves involved in all the difficulties which the question of miracles raises. If, for instance, we believe that eloquence of style is a proof of inspiration, it is possible that an eloquent style composed with this object may inspire us with a false belief in the inspiration of him who wields it. The supernatural should be only one of the constituents which go to form our belief, without our placing too much reliance on this or that detail. We

<sup>3</sup> A miracle ascribed to Mohammed.



should rather resemble a person who, learning a fact from a group of people, cannot point to this or that particular man as his informant, and who, not distinguishing between them, cannot explain precisely how his conviction regarding the fact has been formed.

Such are the characteristics of scientific certitude. As to the transport which permits men to see the truth and, so to speak, to handle it, it is only known to the Sufis. What I have just said regarding the true nature of inspiration is sufficient for the aim which I have proposed to myself. I may return to the subject later, if necessary.

I pass now to the causes of the decay of faith and show the means of bringing back those who have erred and of preserving them from the dangers which threaten them. To those who doubt because they are tinctured with the doctrine of the Ta'limites, my treatise entitled, "The Just Balance," affords a sufficient guide; therefore it is unnecessary to return to the subject here.

As to the vain theories of the Ibahat, I have grouped them in seven classes, and explained them in the work entitled, "Alchemy of Happiness." For those whose faith has been undermined by philosophy, so far that they deny the reality of inspiration, we have proved the truth and necessity of it, seeking our proofs in the hidden properties of medicines and of the heavenly bodies. It is for them that we have written this treatise, and the reason for our seeking for proofs in the sciences of medicine and of astronomy is because these sciences belong to the domain of philosophy. All those branches of knowledge which our opponents boast of—astronomy, medicine, physics, and divination—provide us with arguments in favor of the Prophet.

As to those who, professing a lip-faith in the Prophet, adulterate religion with philosophy, they really deny inspiration, since in their view the Prophet is only a sage whom a superior destiny has appointed as guide to men, and this view belies the true nature of inspiration. To believe in the Prophet is to admit that there is above intelligence a sphere in which are revealed to the inner vision truths beyond the grasp of intelligence, just as things seen are not apprehended by the sense of hearing, nor things understood by that of touch. If

our opponent denies the existence of such a higher region, we can prove to him, not only its possibility, but its actuality. If, on the contrary, he admits its existence, he recognizes at the same time that there are in that sphere things which reason cannot grasp; nay, which reason rejects as false and absurd. Suppose, for instance, that the fact of dreams occurring in sleep were not so common and notorious as it is, our wise men would not fail to repudiate the assertion that the secrets of the invisible world can be revealed while the senses are, so to speak, suspended.

Again, if it were to be said to one of them, "Is it possible that there is in the world a thing as small as a grain, which being carried into a city can destroy it and afterward destroy itself so that nothing remains either of the city or of itself?" "Certainly," he would exclaim, "it is impossible and ridiculous." Such, however, is the effect of fire, which would certainly be disputed by one who had not witnessed it with his own eyes. Now, the refusal to believe in the mysteries of the other life is of the same kind.

As to the fourth cause of the spread of unbelief—the decay of faith owing to the bad example set by learned men—there are three ways of checking it.

(1) One can answer thus: "The learned man whom you accuse of disobeying the divine law knows that he disobeys, as you do when you drink wine or exact usury, or allow yourself in evil-speaking, lying, and slander. You know your sin and yield to it, not through ignorance, but because you are mastered by concupiscence. The same is the case with the learned man. How many believe in doctors who do not abstain from fruit and cold water when strictly forbidden them by a doctor! That does not prove that those things are not dangerous, or that their faith in the doctor was not solidly established. Similar errors on the part of learned men are to be imputed solely to their weakness."

(2) Or again, one may say to a simple and ignorant man: "The learned man reckons upon his knowledge as a viaticum for the next life. He believes that his knowledge will save him and plead in his favor, and that his intellectual superiority will entitle him to indulgence; lastly, that if his knowledge increases his responsibility, it may also entitle

him to a higher degree of consideration. All that is possible; and even if the learned man has neglected practice, he can at any rate produce proofs of his knowledge. But you, poor, witless one, if, like him, you neglect practice, destitute as you are of knowledge, you will perish without anything to plead in your favor."

(3) Or one may answer, and this reason is the true one: "The truly learned man only sins through carelessness, and does not remain in a state of impenitence. For real knowledge shows sin to be a deadly poison, and the other world to be superior to this. Convinced of this truth, man ought not to exchange the precious for the vile. But the knowledge of which we speak is not derived from sources accessible to human diligence, and that is why progress in mere worldly knowledge renders the sinner more hardened in his revolt against God."

True knowledge, on the contrary, inspires in him who is initiated in it more fear and more reverence, and raises a barrier of defense between him and sin. He may slip and stumble, it is true, as is inevitable with one encompassed by human infirmity, but these slips and stumbles will not weaken his faith. The true Moslem succumbs occasionally to temptation, but he repents and will not persevere obstinately in the path of error.

I pray God the Omnipotent to place us in the ranks of his chosen, among the number of those whom he directs in the path of safety, in whom he inspires fervor lest they forget him; whom he cleanses from all defilement, that nothing may remain in them except himself; yea, of those whom he indwells completely, that they may adore none beside him.

END OF "THE RESCUER FROM ERROR"







# ABELARD

THE CELEBRATED LOVER; THE CHIEF TEACHER OF MEDIEVAL  
EUROPE

1079-1142

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Unreliable, indeed, are the vagaries of earthly fame. Abelard is remembered in our day chiefly as a lover, yet as a lover he showed himself but of feeble and wavering type. His fame as a thinker and teacher is almost forgotten, yet he was truly the greatest thinker and teacher of the Middle Ages. We might almost say that modern independence of thought rests on Abelard's shoulders. His great philosophic books, which aroused the most bitter and universal controversy in his own day, have been long neglected and forgotten. But his one piece of personal writing, his open letter confessing in self-abasement his tragic love affair, this still survives among us as a treasured classic.

It is this classic "confession" of Abelard which is here given to the reader. It tells its own story. As to the sequel, the unhappy, deserted Heloise was prompted by Abelard's public letter to write once more opening her devoted heart to the husband who had abandoned her. Her letters were of tenderest pathos; but Abelard had resolutely devoted himself to monkhood and rejected all her advances. After his death Heloise secured his body and at her own death was buried by his side.

As to his public career, Abelard was a French youth of such power both physically and mentally that before he was thirty he had become the leading teacher of his day. Scholars flocked to him by thousands and all other lecturers were deserted. He became a canon of the cathedral of Notre Dame and taught in Paris. The basis of all his teaching was intellectual: "Understand, so that you may believe"; or in fuller words, learn to believe in God by intellectually weighing and realizing the wonder and the wisdom of His created world. In the year 1115, not long after his unhappy love affair, Abelard's religious opponents secured his punishment for heresy, and he withdrew to a hermit's life in his celebrated retreat at Paraclete. But here again thousands of pupils insisted on following him, so that soon he was conducting a great school in a wilderness.

At length the greatest churchman of the age, Saint Bernard, gathered all the powers of the Church against Abelard. Bernard was a mystic, the preacher of the Crusades, the enthusiastic upholder of the obverse of Abelard's teaching, his constant cry being that men must believe first, so that by the light of belief they could understand. It was the old, old strife of the heart against the head, the emotions against the intellect. A Church council upheld the side of the emotions with Bernard; Abelard was again condemned. In the shadow of that condemnation he died while journeying to Rome to appeal to the Pope.

One of Abelard's ablest books was a treatise called "Yes and No," in which he quotes from the writings of earlier churchmen passages both supporting and denying almost every possible belief. This sarcastic depicting of the shadowy foundations of belief held a large part in his condemnation. At present, however, we are interested in the great rationalist, not as a thinker, but in his picture of himself as a man and a lover.

## AN OPEN LETTER

### ABELARD TO A FRIEND

THE last time we were together, dear brother, you gave me a melancholy account of your misfortunes; I was sensibly touched with the relation, and like a true friend bore a share in your griefs. What did I not say to stop your tears? I laid before you all the reasons philosophy could furnish, which I thought might anyways soften the strokes of fortune. But all these endeavors have proved useless; grief, I perceive, has wholly seized your spirits, and your prudence, far from assisting, seems to have forsaken you. But my skillful friendship has found out an expedient to relieve you. Attend to me a moment, hear but the story of my misfortunes, and yours, dear friend, will be nothing as compared with those of the loving and unhappy Abelard. Observe, I beseech you, at what expense I endeavor to serve you; and think this no small mark of my affection; for I am going to present you with the relation of such particulars as it is impossible for me to recollect without piercing my heart with the most sensible affliction.

You know the place where I was born, but not, perhaps, that I was born with those complexional faults which strangers charge upon our nation—an extreme lightness of temper, and great inconstancy. I frankly own it, and shall be as free



to acquaint you with those good qualities which were observed in me. I had a natural vivacity and aptness for all the polite arts. My father was a gentleman and a man of good parts; he loved the wars, but differed in his sentiments from many who follow that profession. He thought it no praise to be illiterate, but in the camp he knew how to converse at the same time with the Muses and Bellona. He was the same in the management of his family, and took equal care to form his children to the study of polite learning as to their military exercises. As I was his eldest, and consequently his favorite son, he took more than ordinary care of my education. I had a natural genius for study, and made extraordinary progress in it. Smitten with the love of books, and the praises which on all sides were bestowed upon me, I aspired to no other reputation than that of learning. To my brothers I leave the glory of battles and the pomp of triumphs; nay, more, I yielded them up my birthright and patrimony. I knew necessity was the great spur to study, and was afraid I should not merit the title of learned if I distinguished myself from others by nothing but a more plentiful fortune. Of all the sciences logic was the most to my taste. Such were the arms I chose to profess. Furnished with the weapons of reasoning I took pleasure in going to public disputations to win trophies; and wherever I heard that this art flourished, I ranged, like another Alexander, from province to province, to seek new adversaries with whom I might try my strength.

The ambition I had to become formidable in logic led me at last to Paris, the center of politeness, and where the science I was so smitten with had usually been in the greatest perfection. I put myself under the direction of one Champeaux, a professor who had acquired the character of the most skillful philosopher of his age, but by negative excellencies only as being the least ignorant! He received me with great demonstrations of kindness, but I was not so happy as to please him long; for I was too knowing in the subjects he discoursed upon, and I often confuted his notions. Frequently in our disputations I pushed a good argument so home that all his subtlety was not able to elude its force. It was impossible he should see himself surpassed by his scholar without resent-

ment. It is sometimes dangerous to have too much merit.

Envy increased against me in proportion to my reputation. My enemies endeavored to interrupt my progress, but their malice only provoked my courage. Measuring my abilities by the jealousy I had raised, I thought I had no further need for Champeaux's lectures, but rather that I was sufficiently qualified to read to others. I stood for a post which was vacant at Melun. My master used all his artifice to defeat my hopes, but in vain; and on this occasion I triumphed over his cunning as before I had done over his learning. My lectures were always crowded, and my beginnings so fortunate, that I entirely obscured the renown of my famous master. Flushed with these happy conquests, I removed to Corbeil to attack the masters there, and so establish my character of the ablest logician. The rush of traveling threw me into a dangerous distemper, and not being able to recover my health, my physicians, who perhaps were in league with Champeaux, advised me to remove to my native air. Thus I voluntarily banished myself for some years. I leave you to imagine whether my absence was not regretted by the better sort. At length I recovered my health, when I received news that my greatest adversary had taken the habit of a monk; you may think it was an act of penitence for having persecuted me; quite the contrary, 'twas ambition; he resolved to raise himself to some church dignity, therefore fell into the beaten track and took on him the garb of feigned austerity; for this is the easiest and shortest way to the highest ecclesiastical dignities. His wishes were successful and he obtained a bishopric; yet did he not quit Paris and the care of his schools: he went to his diocese to gather in his revenues, but returned and passed the rest of his time in reading lectures to those few pupils which followed him. After this I often engaged with him, and may reply to you as Ajax did to the Greeks:—

“If you demand the fortune of that day  
 When stak'd on this right hand your honors lay,  
 If you did not oblige the foe to yield,  
 Yet did I never basely quit the field.”

About this time my father, Beranger, who to the age of sixty had lived very agreeably, retired from the world and

shut himself up in a cloister, where he offered up to Heaven the languid remains of a life he could make no further use of. My mother, who was yet young, took the same resolution. She turned a Religious, but did not entirely abandon the satisfactions of life; her friends were continually at the grate, and the monastery, when one has an inclination to make it so, is exceedingly charming and pleasant. I was present when my mother was professed. At my return I resolved to study divinity, and inquired for a director in that study. I was recommended to one Anselm, the very oracle of his time, but, to give you my own opinion, one more venerable for his age and his wrinkles than for his genius or learning. If you consulted him upon any difficulty, the sure consequence was to be much more uncertain in the point. They who only saw him admired him, but those who reasoned with him were extremely dissatisfied. He was a great master of words and talked much, but meant nothing. His discourse was a fire, which, instead of enlightening, obscured everything with its smoke; a tree beautified with variety of leaves and branches, but barren of fruit. I came to him with a desire to learn, but found him like the fig tree in the Gospel, or the old oak to which Lucan compares Pompey. I continued not long underneath his shadow. I took for my guides the primitive Fathers and boldly launched into the ocean of the Holy Scriptures. In a short time I had made such progress that others chose me for their director. The number of my scholars was incredible, and the gratuities I received from them were proportionate to the great reputation I had acquired. Now I found myself safe in the harbor, the storms were passed, and the rage of my enemies had spent itself without effect. Happy had I known to make a right use of this calm! But when the mind is most easy 'tis most exposed to love, and even security is here the most dangerous state.

And now, my friend, I am going to expose to you all my weaknesses. All men, I believe, are under a necessity of paying tribute at some time or other to Love, and it is vain to strive to avoid it. I was a philosopher, yet this tyrant of the mind triumphed over all my wisdom; his darts were of greater force than all my reasonings, and with a sweet constraint he led me wherever he pleased. Heaven, amidst an abundance

of blessings with which I was intoxicated, threw in a heavy affliction. I became a most signal example of its vengeance, and the more unhappy because, having deprived me of the means of accomplishing satisfaction, it left me to the fury of my criminal desires. I will tell you, my dear friend, the particulars of my story, and leave you to judge whether I deserved so severe a correction.

I had always an aversion for those light women whom 'tis a reproach to pursue; I was ambitious in my choice, and wished to find some obstacles, that I might surmount them with the greater glory and pleasure.

There was in Paris a young creature formed in a prodigality of nature to show mankind a finished composition; dear Heloise, the reputed niece of one Fulbert, a canon. Her wit and her beauty would have stirred the dullest and most insensible heart, and her education was equally admirable. Heloise was the mistress of the most polite arts. You may easily imagine that this did not a little help to captivate me; I saw her, I loved her, I resolved to make her love me. The thirst of glory cooled immediately in my heart, and all my passions were lost in this new one. I thought of nothing but Heloise; everything brought her image to my mind. I was pensive and restless, and my passion was so violent as to admit of no restraint. I was always vain and presumptive; I flattered myself already with the most bewitching hopes. My reputation had spread itself everywhere, and could a virtuous lady resist a man who had confounded all the learned of the age? I was young—could she show an insensibility to those vows which my heart never formed for any but herself? My person was advantageous enough, and by my dress no one would have suspected me for a doctor; and dress, you know, is not a little engaging with women. Besides, I had wit enough to write a *billet-doux*, and hoped, if ever she permitted my absent self to entertain her, she would read with pleasure those breathings of my heart.

Filled with these notions I thought of nothing but the means to speak to her. Lovers either find or make all things easy. By the offices of common friends I gained the acquaintance of Fulbert; and can you believe it, dear friend, he allowed me the privilege of his table, and an apartment in

his house? I paid him, indeed, a considerable sum, for persons of his character do nothing without money. But what would I not have given! You, my friend, know what love is; imagine then what a pleasure it must have been to a heart so inflamed as mine to be always so near the dear object of desire! I would not have exchanged my happy condition for that of the greatest monarch upon earth. I saw Heloise, I spoke to her—each action, each confused look told her the trouble of my soul. And she, on the other side, gave me ground to hope for everything from her generosity. Fulbert desired me to instruct her in philosophy; by this means I found opportunities of being in private with her, and yet I was surely of all men the most timorous in declaring my passion.

As I was with her one day alone, "Charming Heloise," said I, blushing, "if you know yourself you will not be surprised with the passion you have inspired me with. Uncommon as it is, I can express it but with the common terms—I love you, adorable Heloise! Till now I thought philosophy made us masters of all our passions, and that it was a refuge from the storms in which weak mortals are tossed and shipwrecked; but you have destroyed my security and broken this philosophic courage. I have despised riches; honor and its pageantries could never wake a weak thought in me, beauty alone has stirred my soul; happy if she who raised this passion kindly receives this declaration; but if it is an offense?—"

"No," replied Heloise, "she must be very ignorant of your merit who can be offended at your passion. But for my own repose I wish either that you had not made this declaration, or that I were at liberty not to suspect your sincerity."

"Ah, divine Heloise," said I, flinging myself at her feet, "I swear by yourself—" I was going on to convince her of the truth of my passion, but heard a noise, and it was Fulbert: there was no avoiding it, I had to do violence to my desire and change the discourse to some other subject. After this I found frequent opportunities to free Heloise from those suspicions which the general insincerity of men had raised in her; and she too much desired that what I said might be true not to believe it. Thus there was a most happy understanding

between us. The same house, the same love, united our persons and our desires. How many soft moments did we pass together! We took all opportunities to express to each other our mutual affection, and were ingenious in contriving incidents which might give us a plausible occasion of meeting. Pyramus and Thisbe's discovery of the crack in the wall was but a slight representation of our love and its sagacity. In the dead of night, when Fulbert and his domestics were in a sound sleep, we improved the time proper with the sweets of love; not contenting ourselves, like those unfortunate lovers, with giving insipid kisses to a wall, we made use of all the moments of our charming interviews. In the place where we met we had no lions to fear, and the study of philosophy served us for a blind. But I was so far from making any advances in the sciences that I lost all my taste for them, and when I was obliged to go from the sight of my dear mistress to my philosophical exercises, it was with the utmost regret and melancholy. Love is incapable of being concealed; a word, a look, nay, silence, speaks it. My scholars discovered it first; they saw I had no longer that vivacity of thought to which all things are easy; I could now do nothing but write verses to soothe my passion. I quitted Aristotle and his dry maxims to practice the precepts of the more ingenious Ovid. No day passed in which I did not compose amorous verses; love was my inspiring Apollo. My songs were spread abroad and gained me frequent applause. Those who were in love as I was took a pride in learning them, and by luckily applying my thoughts and verses they obtained favors which perhaps they would not otherwise have gained. This gave our amours such an *éclat* that the lives of Heloise and Abelard were the subject of all conversations.

The town talk at last reached Fulbert's ears; it was with great difficulty he gave credit to what he heard, for he loved his niece, and was prejudiced in my favor; but upon closer examination he began to be less credulous. He surprised us in one of our more tender conversations. How fatal sometimes are the consequences of curiosity! The anger of Fulbert seemed too moderate on this occasion, and I feared in the end some more heavy revenge. It is impossible to express the grief and regret which filled my soul when I was obliged to

leave the Canon's house and my dear Heloise. But this separation of our persons the more firmly united our minds; and the desperate condition we were reduced to made us capable of attempting anything.

My intrigues gave me but little shame, so lovingly did I regard the occasion; think what the gay young divinities said when Vulcan caught Mars and the Goddess of Beauty in his net, and impute it all to me. Fulbert surprised me with Heloise, but what man that had a soul in him would not have borne any ignominy on the same conditions? The next day I provided myself with a private lodging near the loved house, being resolved not to abandon my prey. I abode some time without appearing publicly. Ah! how long did those few days seem to me! When we fall from a state of happiness with what impatience do we bear our misfortunes!

It being impossible that I could live without seeing Heloise, I endeavored to engage her servant in my interest. This young woman was brown, well-shaped, and a person superior to her rank; her features were regular and her eyes sparkling, fit to raise love in any man whose heart was not prepossessed by another passion. I met her alone and entreated her to have pity on a distressed lover. She answered she would undertake anything to serve me, but there was a reward. At these words I opened my purse and showed the shining metal which puts to sleep guards, forces a way through rocks, and softens the heart of the most obdurate fair.

"You are mistaken," said she, smiling and shaking her head, "you do not know me; could gold tempt me, a rich abbot takes his nightly station and sings under my window; he offers to send me to his abbey, which, he says, is situated in the most pleasant country in the world. A courtier offers me a considerable sum and assures me I need have no apprehension, for if our amours have consequences he will marry me to his gentleman and give him a handsome employment. To say nothing of a young officer who patrols about here every night and makes his attacks in all sorts of imaginable forms. It must be love only which could oblige him to follow me, for I have not, like your great ladies, any rings or jewels to tempt him. Yet, during all his siege of love, his feathers

and his embroidered coat have not made any breach in my heart. I shall not quickly be brought to capitulate, I am too faithful to my first conqueror."

She looked earnestly at me, and I said I did not understand.

"For a man of sense and gallantry," she replied, "you are slow of apprehension. I am in love with you, Abelard; I know you adore Heloise, and I do not blame you, I desire only to enjoy the second place in your affections. I have a tender heart as well as my mistress; you may without difficulty make returns to my passion. Do not perplex yourself with scruples; a prudent man should love several at the same time, then if one should fail he is not left unprovided."

You can imagine, my friend, how much I was surprised at these words: so entirely did I love Heloise that, without reflecting whether the serving-maid spoke reasonably or not, I immediately left her. When I had gone a little way from her I looked back and saw her biting her nails in a rage of disappointment; this made me fear some fatal consequences. She hastened to Fulbert and told him the offer I had made her, but I suppose concealed the other part of the story. The Canon never forgave this affront; I afterwards perceived he was more deeply concerned for his niece than I had at first imagined. Let no lover hereafter follow my example, for a woman rejected is an outrageous creature. The servant was at her window night and day on purpose to keep me away from her mistress, and so she gave her gallants every opportunity to display their abilities.

I was infinitely perplexed what course to take; at last I applied myself to Heloise's singing-master. The shining metal, which had no effect on the serving-maid, charmed him: he was excellently qualified for conveying a *billet* with the greatest dexterity and secrecy. He delivered one of mine to Heloise, who, according to my appointment, met me at the end of the garden, I having sealed the wall with a ladder of ropes. I confess to you all my failings, dear friend; how would my enemies Champeaux and Anselm have triumphed had they seen this redoubted philosopher in such a wretched condition. Well! I met my soul's joy—my Heloise! I shall not transcribe our transports, they were not long, for the



first news Heloise acquainted me with plunged me into a thousand distractions. A floating Delos was to be sought for, where she might be safely delivered of a burden she began already to feel. Without losing much time in debating, I made her presently quit the Canon's house and at break of day depart for Brittany; where she, like another goddess, gave the world another Apollo, which my sister took care of.

This carrying off of Heloise was sufficient revenge on Fulbert. It filled him with the deepest concern, and had like to have deprived him of the small share of wits which Heaven had allowed him. His sorrow and lamentation gave the censorious an occasion of suspecting him for something more than the uncle of Heloise.

In short, I began to pity his misfortune, and to think this robbery which love had made me commit was a sort of treason. I endeavored to appease his anger by a sincere confession of all that was past, and by hearty engagements to marry Heloise secretly. He gave me his consent, and with many protestations and embraces confirmed our reconciliation. But what dependence can be made on the word of an ignorant devotee? He was only plotting a cruel revenge, as you will see by what follows.

I took a journey into Brittany in order to bring back my dear Heloise, whom I now considered my wife. When I had acquainted her with what had passed between the Canon and me I found she was of a contrary opinion to me. She urged all that was possible to divert me from marriage—that it was a bond always fatal to a philosopher; that the cries of children and the cares of a family were utterly inconsistent with the tranquillity and application which study require. She quoted to me all that was written on the subject by Theophrastus, Cicero, and, above all, insisted on the unfortunate Socrates, who quitted life with joy because by that means he left Xanthippe.

“Will it not be more agreeable to me,” said she, “to see myself your mistress than your wife? And will not love have more power than marriage to keep our hearts firmly united? Pleasures tasted sparingly and with difficulty have always a higher relish, whilst everything that is easy and common grows stale and insipid.”

I was unmoved by all this reasoning, so Heloise prevailed upon my sister to speak to me. Lucilla (for that was her name) therefore took me aside and said,—

“What do you intend, brother? Is it possible that Abelard should in earnest think of marrying Heloise? She seems, indeed, to deserve a perpetual affection; beauty, youth and learning, all that can make a person valuable, meet in her. You may adore all this if you please, but not to flatter you, what is beauty but a flower which may be blasted by the least fit of sickness? When those features with which you have been so captivated shall be sunk, and those graces lost, you will too late repent that you have entangled yourself in a chain from which death alone can free you. I shall see you reduced to the married man’s only hope of survivorship. Do you think that learning makes Heloise more amiable? I know she is not one of those affected females who are continually oppressing you with fine speeches, criticizing looks, and deciding upon the merit of authors. When such a one is in the rush of her discourse, husband, friends and servants all fly before her. Heloise has not this fault, yet ’tis troublesome not to be at liberty to use the least improper expression before a wife which you hear with pleasure from a mistress. But you say you are sure of the affection of Heloise; I believe it; she has given you no ordinary proofs. But can you be sure marriage will not be the tomb of her love? The name of husband and master is always harsh, and Heloise will not be the Phœnix you now think her. Will she not be a woman? Come, come, the head of a philosopher is less secure than those of other men!”

My sister grew warm in the argument, and was going on to give me a hundred more reasons of this kind, but I angrily interrupted her, telling her only that she did not know Heloise.

A few days after we departed together from Brittany and came to Paris, where I completed my project. It was my intent my marriage should be kept secret, and therefore Heloise retired among the nuns of Argenteuil.

I now thought Fulbert’s anger disarmed; I lived in peace; but alas! our marriage proved but a weak defense against his revenge. Observe, Philintus, to what a barbarity he pur-

sued it! He bribed my servants; an assassin came into my bed-chamber by night, with a razor in his hand, and found me in a deep sleep. I suffered the most shameful punishment that the revenge of an enemy could invent; in short, without losing my life, I lost my manhood. So cruel an action escaped not justice, the villain suffered the same mutilation, poor comfort for so irretrievable an evil. I confess to you that shame more than any sincere penitence made me resolve to hide myself from the sight of men, yet could I not separate myself from my Heloise. Jealousy took possession of my mind, and at the very expense of her happiness I decreed to disappoint all rivals. Before I put myself in a cloister I obliged her to take the habit and retire into the nunnery of Argenteuil. I remember somebody would have opposed her making such a cruel sacrifice of herself, but she answered in the words of Cornelia after the death of Pompey the Great,—

“O my loved lord, our fatal marriage draws  
On thee this doom, and I the guilty cause!  
Then whilst thou goest th’ extremes of fate to prove,  
I’ll share that fate and expiate thus my love.”

Speaking these verses she marched up to the altar and took the veil with a constancy which I could not have expected in a woman who had so high a taste of pleasures which she might still enjoy. I blushed at my own weakness, and without deliberating a moment longer I buried myself in a cloister and resolved to vanquish a useless passion. I now reflected that God had chastised me thus grievously that He might save me from that destruction in which I had like to have been swallowed up. In order to avoid idleness, the unhappy incendiary of those criminal flames which had ruined me in the world, I endeavored in my retirement to put those talents to a good use which I had before so much abused. I gave the novices rules of divinity agreeable to the Holy Fathers and Councils. In the meanwhile the enemies that my new fame had raised up,—and especially Alberic and Lotulf, who, after the death of their masters Champeaux and Anselm, assumed the sovereignty of learning,—began to attack me. They loaded me with the falsest imputations, and, notwithstanding all my defense, I had the mortification to see my books condemned by a

Council and burnt. This was a cutting sorrow, and, believe me, Philintus, the former calamity I suffered by the cruelty of Fulbert was nothing in comparison to this.

The affront I had newly received and the scandalous debaucheries of the monks obliged me to banish myself, and retire near to Nogent. I lived in a desert where I flattered myself I should avoid fame and be secure from the malice of my enemies. I was again deceived. The desire of being taught by me drew crowds of auditors even hither. Many left the towns and their houses, and came and lived in tents; for herbs, coarse fare and hard lodging, they abandoned the delicacies of a plentiful table and an easy life. I looked like the prophet in the wilderness attended by his disciples. My lectures were perfectly clear from all that had been condemned. Happy had it been if our solitude had been inaccessible to envy! With the considerable gratuities I received I built a chapel, and dedicated it to the Holy Ghost by the name of the Paraclete. The rage of my enemies now awakened again and forced me to quit this retreat. This I did without much difficulty, but first the Bishop of Troyes gave me leave to establish there a nunnery, and commit it to the care of my dear Heloise. When I had settled her there, can you believe it, I left her without taking leave.

I did not wander long without any settled habitation, for the Duke of Brittany, informed of my misfortunes, named me to the Abbey of St. Gildas, where I now am, and where I suffer every day fresh persecutions.

I live in a barbarous country, the language of which I don't understand; I have no conversation but with the rudest people. My walks are on the inaccessible shore of a sea which is always stormy. My monks are known only for their dissoluteness, and live without any rule or order. Could you see the abbey, dear friend, you would not recognize it for one: the doors and walls are without any ornament save the heads of wild boars and the feet of hinds, which are nailed up, and the hides of frightful animals. The cells are hung with the skins of deer; the monks have not so much as a bell to wake them, the cocks and dogs supply that defect. In short, they pass their time in hunting, and I would to God that were their greatest fault! Their pleasures do not terminate there,

and I try in vain to recall them to their duty; they all combine against me, and I only expose myself to continual vexations and dangers. I imagine I see every moment a naked sword hang over my head. Sometimes they surround me and load me with infinite abuses; sometimes they abandon me, and I am left alone to my own tormenting thoughts. I make it my endeavor to merit by my sufferings and so appease an angry God. Sometimes I grieve for the loss of the house of the Paraclete and wish to see it again. Ah, my brother! does not the love for Heloise yet burn in my heart! I have not yet triumphed over that unhappy passion. In the midst of my retirement I sigh, I weep, I pine, I speak the dear name of Heloise, and delight to hear the sound! I complain of the severity of Heaven; but oh! let us not deceive ourselves, I have not yet made a right use of grace. I am thoroughly wretched; I have not yet torn from my heart the deep roots which vice has planted in it, for if my conversion were sincere, how could I take pleasure in relating my past faults? Could I not more easily comfort myself in my afflictions: could I not turn to my advantage those words of God Himself—"If they have persecuted Me they will also persecute you; if the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me also." Come, brother, let us make a strong effort, turn our misfortunes to our advantage, make them meritorious, or at least wipe out our offenses: let us receive without murmuring what comes from the hand of God, and let us not oppose our will to His. Adieu; I give you advice which, could I myself follow, I should be happy.

END OF ABELARD'S LETTER









# FRA SALIMBENE

THE FRANKEST OF THE MONKISH CHRONICLERS

1221-1288

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

This startling old manuscript, chance preserved, has been called the most remarkable autobiography of the Middle Ages. The writer was an Italian monk who, looking out upon the world from the comparative security of his profession, pictured the remainder of humanity as a horde of savage wolves, unspeakable monsters devouring and devoured. The picture is the more impressive for its very unconsciousness. Salimbene seldom sees his world as terrible. He mentions murders, massacres and tortures quite casually as matters of course. As for falsehood, the good Salimbene takes for granted that the world is built on it, and if the deceit but serves some pious end, he tells of it with childish simplicity of approval. We have no other book so clearly revealing the minds of the masses of the people during the Middle Ages. Emotion ruled all, and the emotions were very kindly where affection was appealed to, but were almost unspeakably vindictive when animosity was aroused.

Salimbene was a Franciscan friar who, after a busy manhood of forty toiling years, sits down as a retired priest of sixty to jot down his life, or, so he tells us, merely for the interest and instruction of a beloved niece, a nun of his own order. There is but little literary form to his work; he seems just to be rambling along, thinking aloud, indulging idly in that dearest pleasure of age, retrospection, with a sympathetic listener.

Let us quote an explanatory passage, not from the beginning of the "chronicle" where it might naturally belong, but from somewhere midway in its rambling course: "In writing divers chronicles I have used a simple and intelligible style, that my niece for whom I wrote might understand as she read; nor have I been anxious and troubled about ornaments of words, but only about the truth of my story. For my niece Agnes is my brother's daughter, who, having come to her fifteenth year, entered the order of St. Clare, and continues in the service of

Jesus Christ even to this present day, A.D. 1284, wherein I write these words. Now this Sister Agnes, my niece, had an excellent understanding in Scripture, and a good understanding and memory, together with a delightful tongue and ready of speech."

Such a writer had obviously small thought of how his tale might one day weigh on you and me.

## THE CHRONICLE OF BROTHER SALIMBENE

### I

My father was Guido di Adamo, a comely man and a valiant in war, who once crossed the seas for the succor of the Holy Land, in the days of Baldwin, Count of Flanders, before my birth. And I have heard from him that, whereas other Lombards in the Holy Land enquired of diviners concerning the state of their houses at home, my father would never enquire of them; and, on his return, he found all in comfort and peace at home; but the others found evil, as the diviners had spoken. Furthermore, I have heard from my father that his charger, which he had brought with him to the Holy Land, was commended for its beauty and worth above those of all the rest who were of his company. Again, I have heard from him that, when the Baptistery of Parma was founded, he laid stones in the foundations for a sign and a memorial thereof, and that on the spot whereon the Baptistery is built had been formerly the houses of my kinsfolk, who after the destruction of their houses, went to Bologna.

I was born in Parma the year before the Great Earthquake in Lombardy. The common folk, when their first panic was over, became so hardened by the earthquake that, when a pinnacle of a tower or a house fell, they would gaze thereon with shouts and laughter. My mother hath told me how at the time of that earthquake I lay in my cradle, and how she caught up my two sisters, one under each arm, for they were but babes as yet. So, leaving me in my cradle, she ran to the house of her father and mother and brethren, for she feared (as she said), lest the Baptistery should fall on her, since our house was hard by. Wherefore I never since loved her so dearly, seeing that she should have cared more for me, her son, than for her daughters. But she herself used to say

that they were easier for her to carry, being better grown than I.

My mother was named the Lady Imelda, a humble lady and devout, fasting much and gladly dispensing alms to the poor. Never was she seen to be wroth; never did she smite any of her maidservants with her hand. In winter, she would ever have with her, for the love of God, some poor woman from the mountains, who found in the house both lodging and food and raiment all winter long; and yet my mother had other maids who did the service of the house. Wherefore Pope Innocent [the IVth, who knew her personally] gave me letters at Lyons that she might be of the order of St. Clare, and the same he gave another time to Brother Guido, my blood-brother, when he was sent on a mission from Parma to the Pope. She lieth buried in the convent of the ladies of St. Clare; may her soul rest in peace! Her mother, that is, my grandmother, was called the Lady Maria, a fair lady and a full-fleshed, sister to the Lord Aicardo, son to Ugo Amerigi, who were judges in Parma, rich men and powerful, and dwelt hard by the church of St. George.

My father's mother was the Lady Ermengarda. She was a wise lady, and was a hundred years old when she went the way of all flesh. With her I dwelt fifteen years in my father's house; how often she taught me to shun evil company and follow the right, and to be wise, and virtuous, and good, so often may God's blessing light upon her! For oft-times she taught me thus. She lieth buried in the aforesaid sepulcher, which was common to us and to the rest of our house.

My mother was daughter to the Lord Gerardo di Cassio, a comely old man, who died (as I think) at the age of one hundred years. He had three sons; the Lord Gerardo, who wrote the *Book of Composition*, for he was an excellent writer of the more noble style; the Lord Bernardo, who was a man of no learning, but simple and pure; and the Lord Ugo, who was a man of learning, judge and assessor. He was a man of great mirth, and went ever with the Podestas to act as their advocate. My brother Guido was a married man in his worldly life, and a father, and a judge; and afterwards he became a priest and a preacher in the Order of the Friars Minor. His wife was of the Baratti, who boast that they are of the

lineage of the Countess Matilda, and that in the service of the Commune of Parma forty knights of their house go forth to war.

My second brother Nicholas died while he was yet a child, as it is written, "while I was yet growing he cut me off." The third am I, Brother Salimbene, who entered the Order of the Friars Minor, wherein I have lived many years, as priest and preacher, and have seen many things, and dwelt in many provinces, and learnt much. And in my worldly life I was called by some *Balian of Sidon*, by reason of the above-mentioned lord who held me at the sacred font. But by my comrades and my family I was called *Ognibene (All-good)*, by which name I lived as a novice in our Order for a whole year long.

Lo here I have written the genealogy of my kinsfolk beyond that I had purposed; yet, for brevity's sake, I have omitted to describe many men and women, both present and past. But since I had begun, it seemed good to me to finish the same, for five reasons. First, for that my niece, Sister Agnes, who is in the convent of the nuns at St. Clare in Parma, wherein she enclosed herself for Christ's sake while she was yet a child, hath begged me to write it by reason of her father's grandmother, of whom she could obtain no knowledge. Now therefore she may learn from this genealogy who are her ancestors both on the father's and on the mother's side. Moreover, my second reason for writing this genealogy was, that Sister Agnes might know for whom she ought to pray to God. The third reason was the custom of men of old time, who wrote their genealogies; whence it is written of certain folk in the book of Nehemiah that they were cast forth from the priesthood, for that they could not find the writings of their genealogies. The fourth reason was, that by reason of this genealogy I have said certain good and profitable words which otherwise I should not have said. The fifth and last was, that the truth of those words of the Apostle James might be shown, wherein he saith, "For what is your life? It is a vapor which appeareth for a little while and afterwards shall vanish away." The truth of which saying may be shown in the case of many whom death hath carried off in our days; for within the space of sixty years mine own eyes have seen

all but a few of those whom I have written in the table of my kindred, and now they have departed from us and are no longer in the world. I have seen in my days many noble houses destroyed, in different parts of the world. To take example from near at hand, in the city of Parma my mother's house of the Cassi is wholly extinct in the male branch; the house of the Pagani, whom I have seen noble, rich, and powerful, is utterly extinct; likewise the house of the Stefani, whom I have seen in great multitude, rich men and powerful. Consider now that we shall go to the dead rather than they shall return to us, as David saith, speaking of his dead son. Let us therefore be busy about our own salvation while we have time, lest it be said of us as shall be said of those of whom Jeremiah speaketh, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Of which matter I have written above at sufficient length.

## II

IN my twelfth year occurred the great religious revival which was called *The Alleluia*. This Alleluia, which endured for a certain season, was a time of peace and quiet, wherein all weapons of war were laid aside; a time of merriment and gladness, of joy and exultation, of praise and rejoicing. And men sang songs of praise to God; gentle and simple, burghers and country folk, young and maidens, old and young with one accord. This devotion was held in all the cities of Italy; and they came from the villages to the town with banners, a great multitude of people; men and women, boys and girls together, to hear the preaching and to praise God. And they sang God's songs, not man's; and all walked in the way of salvation. And they bare branches of trees and lighted tapers; and sermons were made at evening and in the morning and at midday, according to the word of the Prophet, "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice." And men held stations in the churches and the open places, and lifted up their hands to God, to praise and bless Him forever and ever; and they might not cease from the praises of God, so drunken were they with His love; and blessed was he who could do most to praise God. No wrath was among them, no trouble nor hatred, but all

was done in peace and kindliness; for they had drunken of the wine of the sweetness of God's spirit, whereof if a man drink, flesh hath no more savor to him. Wherefore it is commanded to preachers, "Give strong drink to them that are sad, and wine to them that are grieved in mind. Let them drink and forget their want, and remember their sorrow no more."

And forasmuch as the Wise Man saith, "Where there is no governor, the people shall fall," lest it be thought that these had no leader, let me tell now of the leaders of those congregations. First came Brother Benedict to Parma, who was called the Brother of the Horn, a simple man and unlearned, and of holy innocence and honest life, whom also I saw and knew familiarly, both at Parma and afterwards at Pisa. This man had joined himself unto no religious congregation, but lived after his own conscience, and busied himself to please God; and he was a close friend of the Friars Minor. He was like another John the Baptist to behold, as one should go before the Lord and make ready for him a perfect people. He had on his head an Armenian cap, his beard was long and black, and he had a little horn of brass, wherewith he trumpeted; terribly did his horn bray at times, and at other times it would make duleet melody. He was girt with a girdle of skin, his robe was black as sackcloth of hair, and falling even to his feet. His rough mantle was made like a soldier's cloak, adorned both before and behind with a red cross, broad and long, from the collar to the foot, even as the cross of a priest's chasuble. Thus clad he went about with his horn, preaching and praising God in the churches and the open places; and a great multitude of children followed him, oft-times with branches of trees and lighted tapers. Moreover I myself have oft-times seen him preaching and praising God, standing upon the wall of the Bishop's Palae, which at that time was a-building. And thus he began his praises, saying in the vulgar tongue, "Praised and blessed and glorified be the Father." Then would the children repeat in a loud voice that which he had said. And again he would repeat the same words, adding "be the Son;" and the children would repeat the same, and sing the same words. Then for the third time he would repeat the same words, adding "be the Holy Ghost";

and then "Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!" Then would he sound with his trumpet; and afterwards he preached, adding a few good words in praise of God. And lastly, at the end of his preaching, he would salute the blessed Virgin after this fashion:—

"Ave Maria, clemens et pia."

Then there was Brother Leo of Milan, who was a famous and mighty preacher, and a great persecutor and confuter and conqueror of heretics. He was so bold and stout-hearted that once he went forward alone, standard in hand, before the army of Milan which was marching against the Emperor; and, crossing the stream by a bridge, he stood long thus with the standard in his hands, while the Milanese shrank from crossing after him, for fear of the Emperor's battle-array. This Brother Leo once confessed the lord of a certain hospital at Milan, who was a man of great name and much reputed for his sanctity. While he was at his last gasp, Brother Leo made him promise to return and tell him of his state after his death, which he willingly promised. His death was made known through the city about the hour of vespers. Brother Leo therefore prayed two Brethren, who had been his special companions while yet he was Minister Provincial, to watch with him that night in the gardener's cell at the corner of the garden. While, therefore, they all three watched, a light sleep fell upon Brother Leo; and, wishing to slumber, he prayed his comrades to awake him if they heard anything. And lo! they suddenly heard one who came wailing with bitter grief; and they saw him fall swiftly from heaven like a globe of fire, and swoop upon the roof of the cell as when a hawk stoops to take a duck. At this sound, and at the touch of the brethren, Brother Leo awoke from his sleep and inquired how it stood with him, forever he wailed with the same woe-ful cries. He therefore answered and said that he was damned, because in his wrath he had suffered baseborn children to die unbaptized when they had been laid at the hospital door, seeing to what travail and cost the spital was exposed by such desertion of children. When, therefore, Brother Leo inquired of him why he had not confessed that sin, he answered either that he had forgotten it, or that he

thought it unworthy of confession. To whom the Brother replied, "Seeing that thou hast no part or lot with us, depart from us and go thine own way!" so the soul departed, crying and wailing as it went.

After Leo came Brother Gerard of Modena, one of the first Brethren of our Order, yet not one of the Twelve. He was an intimate friend of St. Francis, and at times his traveling-companion. He was of noble birth, strict morals, and great eloquence, though his learning was small. He it was who, in the year 1238, prayed Brother Elias to receive me into the Order, and I was once his traveling-companion. When I call him to mind, I always think of that text, "He that hath small understanding and feareth God is better than one that hath much wisdom, and transgresseth the law of the Most High." With him I also lay sick at Ferrara of that sickness whereof he died; and he went about New Year's tide to Modena, where he gave up the ghost. He was buried in the church of the Brethren Minor, in a tomb of stone; and through him God hath deigned to work many miracles, which, for that they be written elsewhere, I here omit for brevity's sake.

One thing I must not omit, namely that, at the time of the aforesaid devotion, these solemn preachers were sometimes gathered together in one place, where they would order the matter of their preachings; that is, the place, the day, the hour, and the theme thereof. And one would say to the other, "Hold fast to that which we have ordered"; and this they did without fail, as they had agreed among themselves. Brother Gerard therefore would stand, as I have seen with mine own eyes, in the Piazza Communale of Parma, or where-soever else it pleased him, on a wooden stage which he had made for his preaching; and, while the people waited, he would cease from his preaching, and draw his hood deep over his face, as though he were meditating some matter of God. Then, after a long delay, as the people marveled, he would draw back his hood and open his mouth in such words as these: "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard our beloved brother, John of Vicenza, who was preaching at Bologna on the shingles of the river Reno, and he had before him a great concourse of people; and this was the beginning of his sermon: Blessed are the people whose God is the



Lord Jehovah, and blessed are the folk that he hath chosen to him to be his inheritance." So also would he speak of Brother Giacomino; so spake they also of him. The bystanders marveled and, moved with curiosity, some sent messengers to learn the truth of these things that were reported. And having found that they were true, they marveled above measure, and many, leaving their worldly business, entered the Orders of St. Francis or St. Dominic. And much good was done in divers ways and divers places at the time of that devotion, as I have seen with mine own eyes.

Yet there were also at the time many deceivers and buffoons who would gladly have sought to bring a blot upon the Elect. Among whom was Buoncompagno of Florence, who was a great master of grammar in the city of Bologna. This man, being a great buffoon, as is the manner of the Florentines, wrote a certain rime in derision of Brother John of Vicenza, whereof I remember neither the beginning nor the end, for that it is long since I read it, nor did I even then fully commit it to memory, seeing that I cared not greatly for it. But therein were these words following, as they come to my memory:—

John, in his Johannine way  
 Dances all and every day.  
 Caper freely, skip for joy,  
 Ye who hope to reach the sky!  
 —Dancers left and dancers right,  
 Thousands, legions infinite—  
 Noble ladies dance in rhythm,  
 Doge of Venice dances with 'em, etc.

Furthermore, this master Buoncompagno, seeing that Brother John took upon himself to work miracles, would take the same upon himself; wherefore he promised to the men of Bologna that, in the sight of all, he would presently fly. In brief, the report was noised abroad through Bologna, and on the appointed day the whole city, men and women, boys and old men, were gathered together at the foot of the hill which is called Santa Maria in Monte. He had made for himself two wings, and stood now looking down upon them from the summit of the mountain. And when they had stood thus a long while gazing one at the other, he opened his mouth and spake,

“Go ye hence with God’s blessing, and let it suffice you that ye have gazed on the face of Buoncompagno!” Wherefore they withdrew, knowing that they were mocked of him.

Indeed, in the Alleluia year, John had come to such a pitch of madness by reason of the honors which were paid him, and the grace of preaching which he had, that he believed himself able in truth to work miracles, even without God’s help. And when he was rebuked by the Brethren for the many follies which he did, then he answered and spake unto them: “I it was who exalted your Dominic, whom ye kept twelve years hidden in the earth, and, unless ye hold your peace, I will make your saint to stink in men’s nostrils and will publish your doings abroad.” For [at the time of the Alleluia] the blessed Dominic was not yet canonized, but lay hidden in the earth, nor was there any whisper of his canonization; but, by the travail of this aforesaid Brother John, who had the grace of preaching in Bologna at the time of that devotion, his canonization was brought about. To this canonization the Bishop of Modena gave his help; for he, being a friend of the Friars Preachers, importuned them, saying, “Since the Brethren Minor have a saint of their own, ye too must so work as to get yourselves another, even though ye should be compelled to make him of straw.” So, hearing these words of Brother John, they bore with him until his death, for they knew not how they might rise up against him. This man, coming one day to the house of the Brethren Minor, and having his beard shaved by our barber, took it exceeding ill that the brethren gathered not the hairs of his beard, to preserve them as relics. But Brother Diotisalve, a Friar Minor of Florence, who was an excellent buffoon after the manner of the Florentines, did most excellently answer the fool according to his folly, lest he should be wise in his own conceit. For, going one day to the convent of the Friars Preachers, when they had invited him to dinner, he said that he would in no wise abide with them, except they should first give him a piece of the tunic of Brother John, who at that time was there in the house, that he might keep it for a relic. So they promised, and gave him indeed a great piece of his tunic, which, after his dinner, he put to the vilest uses, and cast it at last into a cesspool. Then cried he aloud say-

ing, "Alas, alas! help me, brethren, for I seek the relie of your saint, which I have lost among the filth." And when they had come at his call and understood more of this matter, they were put to confusion; and, seeing themselves mocked of this buffoon, they blushed for shame. This same Brother Diotisalve once received an Obedience (i.e., command) to go and dwell in the province of Penna, which is in Apulia. Whereupon he went to the infirmary and stripped himself naked, and, having ripped open a feather bed, he lay hidden therein all day long among the feathers (Lat. *in pennis*), so that, when he was sought of the brethren, they found him there, saying that he had already fulfilled his Obedience; wherefore for the jest's sake he was absolved from his Obedience and went not thither. . . .

## III

IN the year 1238, at the age of sixteen years and a few months, I slipped away from father's home and was admitted that same evening as a novice among the Franciscans of Parma. Brother Elias, the powerful Minister-General of the Order, was at that moment passing through Parma. We found the great man on a bed of down in the guesten-hall. Brother Elias had a goodly fire before him, and an Armenian cap on his head: nor did he rise or move from his place when the Podesta entered and saluted him, as I saw with mine own eyes: and this was held to be great churlishness on his part, since God Himself saith in Holy Scripture, "Rise up before the hoary head, and honor the person of the aged man." Here, though I had supped magnificently in my father's house, they set an excellent meal before me again. But in course of time they gave me cabbages, which I must needs eat all the days of my life: yet in the world I had never eaten cabbages—nay, I abhorred them so sore that I had never even eaten the flesh stewed with them. So afterward I remembered that proverb which was often in men's mouths: "The kite said to the chicken as he carried him off—"You may squeak now, but this isn't the worst." And again I thought of Job's words, "The things which before my soul would not touch, now through anguish are my meats."

My father was sore grieved all the days of his life at my

entrance into the Order of the Friars Minor, nor would he be comforted, since he had now no son to succeed him. Wherefore, he made complaint to the Emperor, who had come in those days to Parma, that the Brethren Minor had robbed him of his son. Then the Emperor wrote to Brother Elias, Minister-General of the Order, saying that, as he loved his favor, he should hearken to him and give me back to my father. Then my father journeyed to Assisi, where Brother Elias was, and laid the Emperor's letter in the general's hand, whereof the first words were as follows: *To comfort the sighing of our trusty and well-beloved Guido di Adamo, etc.* Brother Illuminato, who in those days was scribe and secretary to Brother Elias, and who was wont to write in a book, apart by themselves, all the fair letters which were sent by princes of the world to the Minister-General, showed me that letter, when in process of time I dwelt with him in the convent of Siena. Wherefore Brother Elias, having read the Emperor's letter, wrote forthwith to the Brethren of the convent of Fano, where I then dwelt, bidding them, if I were willing, to give me back to my father without delay, in virtue of holy obedience; but if they found me unwilling to return, then should they keep me as the apple of their eye.

Thereupon many knights came with my father to the house of the Brethren in the city of Fano, to see the issue of this matter. To them I was made a gazing-stock; and to myself a cause of salvation. For when the Brethren and the laymen had assembled in the chapter-house, and many words had been bandied to and fro, my father brought forth the letter of the Minister-General, and showed it to the Brethren. Whereupon Brother Jeremiah the Custode, having read it, replied to my father, "My Lord Guido, we have compassion for your grief, and are ready to obey the letters of our father. But here is your son: he is of age, let him speak for himself. Enquire ye of him: if he is willing to go with you, let him go in God's name. But if not, we cannot do him violence, that he should go with you."

My father asked therefore whether I would go with him, or not. To whom I answered, "No; for the Lord saith, 'No man, putting his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'"

And my father said to me: "Thou hast no care then for thine own father and mother, who are afflicted with divers pains for thy sake?"

To whom I made answer, "No care have I in truth, for the Lord saith, 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.' Thou, therefore, father, shouldst have a care for Him, Who for our sake hung on a tree, that He might give us eternal life. For He it is Who saith, 'For I came to set a man at variance against his father.'" And the Brethren marveled and rejoiced that I spake thus to my father.

Then said he to the Brethren, "Ye have bewitched and deceived my son, lest he should obey me. I will complain to the Emperor again concerning you, and to the Minister-General. Yet suffer me to speak with my son secretly and apart; and ye shall see that he will follow me without delay."

So the Brethren suffered me to speak alone with my father, since they had some small confidence in me because of my words that I had even now spoken. Yet they listened behind the partition to hear what manner of talk we had: for they quaked as a rush quakes in the water, lest my father by his blandishments should change my purpose. And they feared not only for the salvation of my soul, but also lest my departure should give occasion to others not to enter the Order. My father, therefore, said to me: "Beloved son, put no faith in these filthy drivellers who had deceived thee, but come with me, and all that I have will I give unto thee."

And I answered and spake to my father: "Hence, hence, father: the Wise Man saith in his Proverbs, in the third chapter, 'Hinder not from well-doing him who hath the power: if thou art able, do good thyself also.'" And my father answered even weeping, and said to me, "What then, my son, can I say to thy mother, who mourneth for thee night and day?" And I spake unto him: "Say unto her for my part, Thus saith thy son: 'When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'"

My father, hearing all this, and despairing of my return, threw himself upon the earth in the sight of the Brethren and the layfolk who had come with him, and cried, "I commit thee to a thousand devils, accursed son, together with thy

brother who is here with thee, and who also hath helped to deceive thee. My curse cleave to thee through all eternity, and send thee to the devils of hell!" And so he departed, troubled beyond measure; but we remained in great consolation, giving thanks unto God, and saying to Him, "Though they curse, yet bless Thou. For He who is blessed above the earth, let him be blessed in God. Amen."

So the layfolk departed, much edified at my constancy: and the Brethren also rejoiced greatly that the Lord had wrought manfully through me His little child; and they knew that the words of the Lord are true, Who saith, "Lay it up therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before how you shall answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay."

In the following night the Blessed Virgin rewarded me. For methought I lay prostrated in prayer before the altar, as is the wont of the Brethren, when they arise to matins: and I heard the voice of the Blessed Virgin calling unto me. And, raising my face, I saw her sitting upon the altar, in that place where the Host and the chalice are set. And she had her little Child in her lap, Whom she held out to me, saying, "Draw thou nigh without fear, and kiss my Son Whom thou has confessed yesterday before men." And when I feared, I saw that the Child opened His arms gladly, awaiting my coming. Trusting, therefore, in the cheerfulness and innocence of the Child, no less than in this so liberal favor of His mother, I came forward and embraced and kissed Him; and His gracious mother left Him to me for a long space. And since I could not take my fill of Him, at length the Holy Virgin blessed me, saying: "Depart, beloved son, and take thy rest, lest the Brethren should rise to matins, and find thee here with us." I obeyed, and the vision disappeared: but in my heart remained so great sweetness as tongue could never tell. In very truth I avow, that never in this world had I such sweetness as that. And then I knew the truth of that scripture which saith, "To him who hath tasted of the spirit, there is no taste in any flesh."

At that time, while I was still in the city of Fano, I saw in a dream that the son of Thomas degli Armari, of the city of Parma, slew a monk; and I told the dream to my brother.

And after a few days there came through the city of Fano Amizo degli Amici, going into Apulia to fetch gold from thence; and he came unto the house of the Brethren, where he saw us: for he was our acquaintance and friend and neighbor. And then, beginning from another matter, we enquired how it might be with Such-an-one (now his name was Gerard de' Senzanesi), and he said to us: "It is ill with him, for the other day he slew a monk." Then we knew that at times dreams are true.

Furthermore, at that time also, when first my father passed through the city of Fano, journeying towards Assisi, the Brethren hid me many days, together with my brother, in the house of the Lord Martin of Fano, who was a Master of Laws, and his palace was hard by the seaside. And at times he would come to us and speak to us of God and of the Holy Scriptures, and his mother ministered unto us. Afterwards he entered the Order of the Friars Preachers, wherein he ended his life with all praise. While then he was yet in that Order, he was chosen Bishop of his own city: but the Preachers would not suffer him to accept it, for they were not willing to lose him. He would have entered our Order, but he was dissuaded therefrom by Brother Taddeo Buonconte, who was himself thereof. For our Brethren lay sore upon Taddeo that he should return all ill-gotten gains, if he would be received among us: and he said to the Lord Martin, "So will they do with thee also, if thou enter the Order." So he feared, and entered the Order of Preachers, which perchance was better for him and for us. From my very earliest noviciate at Fano in the March of Ancona, I learned theology from Brother Umile of Milan, who had studied at Bologna under Brother Aymo, the Englishman; which same Aymo, in his old age, was chosen Minister-General of our Order, and held that office three years, even to his death. And in the first year of my entrance into the Order I studied Isaiah and Matthew as Brother Umile read them in the schools: and I have not ceased since then to study and learn in the schools. And as the Jews said to Christ, "Six and forty years was this temple in building," so may I also say: for it is 46 years to-day, Saturday the Feast of St. Gilbert, in the year 1284, whereon I write these words, since I entered the Order

of Friars Minor. And I have not ceased to study since then: yet not even so have I come to the wisdom of my ancestors.

## IV

Now I went to dwell in Tuscany, and passed through the city of Castello. There I found in an hermitage a certain Brother of noble birth, ancient and fulfilled of days and of good works, who had four sons, knights, in the world. This was the last Brother whom the blessed Francis robed and received into the Order, as he himself related to me. He, hearing that I was called All-good, was amazed, and said to me, "Son, there is none good but One, that is, God. From henceforth be thou called no more *Ognibene* but Brother *Salimbene* (Leap-into-good), for thou hast well leapt, in that thou hast entered into a good Order." And I rejoiced, knowing that he was moved with a right spirit, and seeing that a name was laid upon me by so holy a man.

Yet had I not the name which I coveted: for I would fain have been called Dionysius, not only on account of my reverence for that most excellent doctor, who was the disciple of the Apostle Paul, but also because on the Feast of St. Dionysius I was born into this world. And thus it was that I saw the last Brother whom the blessed Francis received in the Order, after whom he received and robed no other. I have seen also the first, to wit, Brother Bernard of Quintavalle, with whom I dwelt for a whole winter in the Convent of Siena. And he was my familiar friend; and to me and other young men he would recount many marvels concerning the blessed Francis; and much good have I heard and learnt from him.

Now at Pisa I was yet a youth, and one day I was led to beg for bread by a certain lay-brother, filthy and vain of heart (whom in process of time the Brethren drew out of a well into which he had thrown himself, in a fit of I know not what folly or despair. And a few days later, he disappeared so utterly that no man in the world could find him: wherefore the Brethren suspected that the devil had carried him off: let him look to it!). So when I was begging bread with him in the city of Pisa, we came upon a certain courtyard, and entered it together. Therein was a living vine,



overspreading the whole space above, delightful to the eye with its fresh green, and inviting us to rest under its shade. There also were many leopards and other beasts from beyond the seas, whereon we gazed long and gladly, as men love to see strange and fair sights. For youths and maidens were there in the flower of their age, whose rich array and comely features caught our eyes with manifold delights, and drew our hearts to them. And all held in their hands viols and lutes and other instruments of music, on which they played with all sweetness of harmony and grace of motion. And indeed their song was strange and fair both in its words and in the variety and melody of its air, so that our hearts were rejoiced above measure. They spake no word to us, nor we to them, and they ceased not to sing and to play while we stayed there: for we lingered long in that spot, scarce knowing how to tear ourselves away. I know not (I speak the truth in God), how we met with so fair and glad a pageant, for we had never seen it before, nor could we see any such hereafter. So when we had gone forth from that place, a certain man met me whom I knew not, saying that he was of the city of Parma: and he began to upbraid and rebuke me bitterly with harsh words of scorn, saying: "Hence, wretch, hence! Many hired servants in thy father's house have bread and flesh enough and to spare, and thou goest from door to door begging from those who lack bread of their own, whereas thou mightest thyself give abundantly to many poor folk. Thou shouldst even now be caracoling through the streets of Parma on thy charger, and making sad folk merry with tournaments, a fair sight for the ladies, and a solace to the minstrels. For thy father wasteth away with grief, and thy mother well-nigh despaireth of God for love of thee, whom she may no longer see." To whom I answered: "Hence, wretch, hence thyself! For thou savorest not the things which are of God, but the things which are of fleshly men: for what thou sayest, flesh and blood hath revealed it to thee, not our Father which is in heaven."<sup>1</sup> Hearing this, he withdrew in confusion, for he wist not what to say.

<sup>1</sup>Salimbene here, as usual, reinforces his speech with several other texts.

So, when we had finished our round [of begging], that evening I began to turn and ponder in my mind all that I had seen and heard, considering within myself that if I were to live fifty years in the Order, begging my bread in this fashion, not only would the journey be too great for me (I Kings xix, 7), but also shameful toil would be my portion, and more than my strength could bear. When, therefore, I had spent almost the whole night without sleep, pondering these things, it pleased God that a brief slumber should fall upon me, wherein He showed me a vision wondrous fair, which brought comfort to my soul, and mirth and sweetness beyond all that ear hath heard. And then I knew the truth of that saying of Eusebius, "Needs must God's help come when man's help ceases:" for I seemed in my dream to go begging bread from door to door, after the wont of the Brethren; and I went through the quarter of St. Michael of Pisa, in the direction of the Visconti; because in the other direction the merchants of Parma had their lodging, which the Pisans call *Fondaco*; and that part I avoided both for shame's sake, since I was not yet fully strengthened in Christ, and also fearing lest I might chance to hear words from my father which might shake my heart. Forever my father pursued me to the day of his death, and still he lay in wait to withdraw me from the Order of St. Francis; nor was he ever reconciled to me, but persisted still in his hardness of heart.

So as I went down the Borgo San Michele towards the Arno, suddenly I lifted my eyes and saw how the Son of God came from one of the houses, bearing bread and putting it into my basket. Likewise also did the Blessed Virgin, and Joseph the child's foster-father, to whom the Blessed Virgin had been espoused. And so they did until my round was ended and my basket filled. For it is the custom in those parts to cover the basket over with a cloth and leave it below; and the friar goes up into the house to beg bread and bring it down to his basket. So when my round was ended and my basket filled, the Son of God said unto me: "I am thy Savior, and this is My Mother, and the third is Joseph who was called My father. I am He Who for the salvation of mankind left My home and abandoned Mine inheritance and gave My beloved soul into the hands of its enemies."

Moreover in my vision I spake again to the Lord Christ, saying: "Lord, the Jews who live among us Christians learn our grammar and Latin letters, not that they may love Thee and believe in Thee, but that they may carp at Thee and insult us Christians who adore the crucifix; and they cite that scripture of Esaias, 'They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven work, and pray unto a god that cannot save.' "

After this vision aforesaid, I had such comfort in Christ, that when jongleurs or minstrels came at my father's bidding to steal my heart from God, then I cared as little for their words as for the fifth wheel of a wagon. For upon a day one came to me and said, "Your father salutes you and says thus: 'Your mother would fain see you one day; after which she would willingly die on the morrow.' " Wherein he thought to have spoken words that would grieve me sore, to turn my heart away; but I answered him in wrath: "Depart from me, wretch that thou art; for I will hear thee no more. My father is an Amorite unto me, and my mother a daughter of Heth." And he withdrew in confusion, and came no more.

My father hoped to procure from Pope Innocent my egress from the Order; but he was prevented by death. For my father, dwelling hard by the Cathedral Church, was well known to Pope Innocent, who had been a canon of Parma and was a man of great memory. Furthermore, my father had married his daughter Maria to the Lord Azzo, who was akin to the Lord Guarino, the Pope's brother-in-law; wherefore he hoped, what with the Pope's nephews and what with his own familiar knowledge of him, that the Pope would restore me to my home, especially since my father had no other sons. Which, as I believed, the Pope would never have done; but perchance to solace my father he might have given me a Bishopric or some other dignity: for he was a man of great liberality.

Thus did I, Brother Salimbene, and my Brother Guido di Adamo destroy our house in all hope of male or female issue by entering into Religion, that we might build it in Heaven. Which may He grant us Who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost forever and ever. Amen.

## V

BUT here, that you may know the labyrinth of affairs, I must not omit to tell how the Church party in Modena was driven forth from the city, while the Imperial party held it. So it was also in Reggio; and so also, in process of time, in Cremona. Therefore in those days was most cruel war, which endured many years. Men could neither plow, nor sow, nor reap, nor till vineyards, nor gather the vintage, nor dwell in the villages: more especially in the districts of Parma and Reggio and Modena and Cremona. Nevertheless, hard by the town walls, men tilled the fields under guard of the city militia, who were mustered quarter by quarter according to the number of the gates. Armed soldiers thus guarded the peasants at their work all day long: for so it must needs be, by reason of the ruffians and bandits and robbers who were multiplied beyond measure. For they would take men and lead them to their dungeons, to be ransomed for money; and the oxen they drove off to devour or to sell. Such as would pay no ransom they hanged up by the feet or the hands, and tore out their teeth, and extorted payment by laying toads in their mouths, which was more bitter and loathsome than any death. For these men were more cruel than devils, and one wayfarer dreaded to meet another by the way as he would have dreaded to meet the foul fiend. For each ever suspected that the other would take and lead him off to prison, that "the ransom of a man's life might be his riches." And the land was made desert, so that there was neither husbandman nor wayfarer. For in the days of Frederick, and specially from the time when he was deposed from the Empire [by the Pope], and when Parma rebelled and lifted her head against him, "the paths rested, and they that went by them walked through bye-ways."

The wild beasts and fowls multiplied and increased beyond all measure,—pheasants and partridges and quails, hares and roebucks, fallow deer and buffaloes and wild swine and ravening wolves. For they found no beasts in the villages to devour according to their wont: neither sheep nor lambs, for the villages were burned with fire. Wherefore the wolves gathered together in mighty multitudes round the

city moats, howling dismally for exceeding anguish of hunger; and they crept into the cities by night and devoured men and women and children who slept under the porticoes or in wagons. Nay, at times they would even break through the house-walls and strangle the children in their cradles. No man could believe, but if he had seen it as I have, the horrible deeds that were done in those days, both by men and by divers beasts. For the foxes multiplied so exceedingly that two of them even climbed one Lenten-tide to the roof of our infirmary at Faenza, to take two hens which were perched under the roof-tree: and one of them we took in that same convent, as I saw with mine own eyes.

This curse of wars invaded and destroyed the whole of Romagna in the days when I dwelt there. Moreover, while I dwelt at Imola, a certain layman told me how he had taken 27 great and fair cats with a snare in certain villages that had been burnt, and had sold their hides to the furrers: which had doubtless been house-cats in those villages in times of peace. In those days "there was no king in Israel;" but every one did that which seemed right to him. For under Brother Elias many lay brethren wore the clerical tonsure, as I have seen with mine own eyes when I dwelt in Tuscany, and yet they could not read a single letter; some dwelt in cities, hard by the churches of the Brethren, wholly enclosed in hermits' cells, and they had a window through which they talked with women; and the lay-brethren were useless to hear confessions or to give counsel; this have I seen at Pistoia and elsewhere also. Moreover, some would dwell alone, without any companion, in hospitals; this have I seen at Siena, where a certain Brother Martin of Spain, a little shriveled old lay-brother, used to serve the sick in the hospital, and went alone all day through the city wheresoever he would, without any Brother to bear him company; so also have I seen others wandering about the world. Some also have I seen who ever wore a long beard, as do the Armenians and Greeks, who foster and keep their beard; moreover they had no girdle; some wore not the common cord, but one fantastically woven of threads and curiously twisted, and happy was he who could get himself the gayest girdle. Many other things I saw likewise, more than I can relate here, which were most un-

becoming to the decency of the Franciscan habit. Moreover laymen were sent as deputies to the Chapter, and thither also a mighty multitude of other laymen would come, who had no proper place there whatsoever. I myself saw in a general chapter held at Sens a full 300 brethren, among whom the laymen were in the greater number, yet they did nought but eat and sleep. And when I dwelt in the province of Tuscany, which had been joined together out of three provinces, the lay-brethren were not only equal in number to the clerics, but even exceeded them by four. Ah God! Elias, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy." It would be a long and weary labor to relate the rude customs and abuses which I have seen; perchance time and parchment would fail me, and it would be rather a weariness to my hearers than a matter of edification. If a lay-brother heard any youth speaking in the Latin tongue, he would forthwith rebuke him, saying, "Ha! wretch! wilt thou abandon holy simplicity for thy book-learning?" But I for my part would answer them thus from St. Jerome, "Holy selfishness profiteth itself alone; and howsoever it may edify Christ's Church with the excellence of its life, by so much it worketh harm if it resist not them who would destroy her."

In truth, as saith the proverb, an ass would fain make asses of all that he seeth. For in those days not only were laymen set above priests, but in one hermitage, where all were laymen save one scholar and one priest, they made the priest work his day in the kitchen in turn with the rest. So it chanced on a season that the Lord's day came to the priest's turn; wherefore, entering the kitchen and diligently closing the door after him, he set himself to cook the potherbs as best he could. Then certain secular folk, Frenchmen, passed that way and earnestly desired to hear Mass, but there was none to celebrate. The lay-brethren therefore came in haste and knocked at the kitchen door that the priest might come out and celebrate. But he answered and spake unto them, "Go ye and sing Mass, for I am busied in the work of the kitchen, which ye have refused." Then were they sore ashamed, perceiving their own boorishness. For it was boorish folly to pay no reverence to the priest who confessed them; wherefore in process of time the lay-brethren were brought to nought, as

they deserved, for their reception was almost utterly forbidden, since they comprehended not the honor paid them, and since the Order of Friars Minor hath no need of so great a multitude of laymen, for they were ever lying in wait for us [clerics]. For I remember how, when I was in the convent of Pisa, they would have sent to the Chapter to demand that, whensoever one cleric was admitted to the Order, one lay-brother should be admitted at the same time, but they were not listened to—nay, they were not even heard to the end—for their demand was most unseemly. Yet in the days when I entered the Order, I found there men of great sanctity, mighty in prayer and devotion and contemplation and learning; for there was this one good in Brother Elias, that he fostered the study of theology in the Order.

Another powerful friend I had was the Cardinal Ottaviano, a goodly man to see, and of noble birth; for he was of the sons of Ubaldino da Mugello in the Bishopric of Florence; he was of great repute among the Imperial party; but for his own honor's sake, he sometimes wrought to the profit of the Church, knowing that thereto he had been sent. When he was Legate at Bologna, I oft-times ate with him, and he set me ever at the head of his board, so that none sat betwixt me and him but the friar my comrade; and he himself took the third place from the head of the table. Then I did as the Wise Man saith in Proverbs: "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee and set a knife to thy throat": and this was right and proper, for the whole hall of this palace was full of guests. Yet we had food in plenty and with all decency, and choice wine was set before us, and all delicacies. Then began I to love the Cardinal, as it is written in Proverbs: "Many will intreat the favor of the prince; and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts." But the Cardinal invited me and my comrade to go and eat daily with him; but I thought best to do as Ecclesiasticus teacheth: "When thou art bidden of a more powerful man than thou, depart, for thus will he bid thee all the more." Moreover, it was said of this same Cardinal that he was the son of the Lord Pope Gregory IX; perchance for that he had loved him with special love.

I have also seen the daughter of this Cardinal, a nun in

a certain convent: and she invited and prayed me instantly to be her spiritual father, (*devotus*) and she my spiritual daughter (*devota*). She knew not whose daughter she was, nor what a father she had. But I knew well, and answering said to her, "I will not have thee for a friend, for the poet Patecchio saith, 'It is a weariness when I cannot speak with her,' meaning to say, 'It is a weariness to have a lady-friend to whom her friend cannot speak,' as thou art, being enclosed in a convent."

And she said to me, "Even if we may not converse together, at least let us love each other in heart, and pray mutually for each other's salvation, as St. James saith in his last chapter (v. 16)." And I thought within myself that she would have drawn me in little by little, and entangled me, that I might love her: so I told her the example of the blessed Arsenius.

It happened at this time that the poor nuns of Turin were driven from their convent, and sought other refuges. One only, the last of all, was brought to the rich convent of Lavagna; yet the Abbess, in her hardness of heart and avarice and folly, refused to receive a fresh inmate, and drove the poor refugee from her door. Hereupon an ancient and devout Sister of the convent cast herself down before the altar and appealed against the Abbess to God, Who presently answered, "I have heard thy prayer, and she shall be no more Abbess." So they sent a swift messenger forthwith to learn what had befallen that Abbess, and he found her dead and cursed and excommunicated and unabsolved, for even while the messenger was yet on his way, she began to be grievously sick and to fail for very faintness, and after divers torments she sank down on her bed and was at the point of death, crying, "Sisters, I die! Hasten! Help! Bring me some remedy!" The Sisters came forthwith, pitying their Abbess, as was right. No mention was made of the salvation of her soul, not a word was spoken of confession. Her throat so closed that she could scarce breathe; and now, seeing death at hand, she said to the Sisters who were gathered round her, "Go and take in that lady! Go and take in that lady! Go and take in that lady! For her sake hath God smitten me! For her sake hath God smitten me! For her sake has God smitten



me!" And with these words she yielded up her spirit, but it returned not to God Who gave it. For woman, whensoever she may, doth take gladly dominion to herself, as may be seen in Semiramis who invented the wearing of breeches. . . . Blessed be God Who hath brought me to the end of this matter!

I dwelt at this time in Lucca, and the Lord Nazzaro Gherardini of Lucca was Podesta of Reggio, when he built the bridge and the Porta Bernone. His statue was set up in marble on the Porta Bernone which he made, and there he sits on his marble horse in the city of Reggio. He was a comely knight and exceedingly rich, my acquaintance and friend when I dwelt in the convent at Lucca. The Lady Fior d'Oliva, his wife, was a fair lady, plump and full-fleshed, and my familiar friend and spiritual daughter (*devota*). She was of Trent, the wife of a certain notary, by whom she had two daughters, most fair ladies. But the Lord Nazzaro, when he was Podesta of Trent, took her from her husband and brought her, not unwilling, to the city of Lucca; and his own wife, who was still alive, he sent to a castle of his, where she dwelt till her death.<sup>1</sup> The Lord Nazzaro died childless, and gave great riches to this lady, who, in course of time was beguiled (as she herself told me) into another marriage in the city of Reggio. He who took her to wife was Henry, son of Antonio da Musso, and she liveth yet in this year 1283 wherein I write. Both the Lord Nazzaro and the Lady Fior d'Oliva did much to comfort the Friars Minor of Lucca when the Abbess of the Clarisses at Gatharola stirred up the whole city of Lucca against the brethren, laying a blot on the elect, for that Brother Jacopo da Iseo would fain have deposed her because she bare herself ill in her office. For she was the daughter of a baker-woman of Genoa, and her rule was most shameful and cruel, and dishonest to boot, and she would fain have kept her rule by force, that she might still be Abbess. Wherefore, the better to hold her office, she lavished gifts on youths and men and worldly ladies, but especially on those who had any of near kin in her convent. And to such she would say, "This is why the Friars Minor would fain depose me, for that I will not suffer

<sup>1</sup> *Pinguis et carnosus*. This is always high praise from Salimbene.

them to sin with our daughters and sisters;" and so, as has been said, she would have laid a blot on the elect, for she lied in her teeth. Yet for all that she was deposed, and the Friars recovered their honor and good report, and the city had rest from her troubling. I have therefore shown plainly how shameful is the dominion of women.

In the year of our Lord 1239 there was an eclipse of the sun, wherein the light of day was horribly and terribly darkened, and the stars appeared. And it seemed as though night had come, and all men and women had sore fear, and went about as if bereft of their wits, with great sorrow and trembling. And many, smitten with terror, came to confession, and made penitence for their sins, and those who were at discord made peace with each other. And the Lord Manfred da Cornazano, who was at that time Podesta, took the Cross in his hands and went in procession through the streets of Lucca, with the Friars Minor and other men of religion and clerks. And the Podesta himself preached of the Passion of Christ, and made peace between those who were at enmity. This I saw with mine own eyes, for I was there, and my brother Guido di Adamo with me. The See of Rome was vacant from the year 1241 to 1243, for the cardinals were dispersed and at discord, and Frederick had so straitly guarded all the roads that many men were taken, for he feared lest any should pass through to be made Pope. Yea, and I myself also was often taken in those days; and then I learned and invented the writing of letters after divers fashions in cypher.

## VI

In 1246 Tebaldo Francesco and many other barons of Apulia rebelled against the deposed Emperor Frederick; and after a long siege they were taken in the castle of Cappelio, and miserably tormented, both men, women, and little children. In the year following, Ezzelino laid waste the whole diocese of Parma, on this side of the Lencia toward the castle of Bersello:—and the Mantuans for their part burnt the whole diocese of Cremona from Torricella downwards. For it was a fierce war, and tangled, and perilous.

In the year of our Lord 1247, a few banished knights, dwelling at Piacenza, who were valiant, vigorous, and strong,

and most skilled in war—these men were in bitterness of spirit, both because their houses in Parma had been torn to the ground, and because it is an evil life to wander as guest from house to house—for they were exiles and banished men, having great households and but little money, for they had left Parma suddenly lest the Emperor should catch them in his toils—these men, I say, came from Piacenza and entered Parma, and expelled the Emperor's party on the 15th day of June, slaying the Podesta of Parma, who was my acquaintance and friend, and dearly beloved of the Brethren Minor.

Now there were many reasons why these banished men were easily able to take the city. . . . The third reason is that on that day the Lord Bartolo Tavernario gave his daughter in marriage to a certain Lord of Brescia, who had come to Parma to fetch her; and those who met the exiles as they came to attack the city had eaten at that banquet, so that they were full of wine and over-much feasting; and they arose from table and fondly thought to overthrow all at the first onset. Seeing therefore that they were as men drunk with wine, their enemies slew and scattered them in flight. The fourth is that the city of Parma was wholly unfenced, and open in all directions. The fifth is that those who came to invade the city folded their hands on their breasts, thus making the sign of the Cross to all whom they met, saying, "For the Love of God and the Blessed Virgin His Mother, who is our Lady in this city, may it please you that we return to our own city, whence we were expelled and banished without fault of our own; and we come back with peace to all nor are we minded to do harm to any man." The men of Parma who had met them unarmed along the street, hearing this, were moved to pity by their humility, and said to them, "Enter the city in peace, in the name of the Lord, for our hand also shall be with you in all these things." The sixth is that they who dwelt in the city did not concern themselves with these matters, for they neither held with those who had come in, nor did they fight for the Emperor; but bankers or money-changers sat at their tables, and men of other arts worked still at their posts as though nought were.

When King Enzo heard that the Guelf exiles had entered Parma by force, leaving the siege of Quinzano, he came by

a forced night march, not singing but groaning inwardly, as is the wont of an army returning from a rout. I lived in those days in the convent of the Friars Minor at Cremona, wherefore I knew all these things well. For at early dawn the men of Cremona were assembled forthwith with the King to a Council, which lasted even to high tierce (*i.e.* past 9 o'clock); after which they ate hurriedly and went forth to the very last man, with the Carroccio in their van. There remained not in Cremona one man who was able to march and fight in battle; and I am fully persuaded that if they had marched without delay to Parma and quitted themselves like men, they would have recovered the city. For if one enemy knew how it fared in all things with his enemy, he might oft-times smite him; but by the will of God King Enzo halted with the army of Cremona by the Taro Morto, and came not to Parma, that the Lord might bring evil upon them. For he wished to wait there until his father should come from Turin. Meanwhile succor came daily from all parts to the men of Parma who had entered the city: and the citizens made themselves a ditch and a palisade, that their city might be shut in against the enemy. Then the Emperor, all inflamed with wrath and fury at that which had befallen him, came to Parma; and in the district called Grola, wherein is great plenty of vineyards and good wine (for the wine of that land is most excellent), he built a city, surrounded with great trenches, which also he called Victoria, as an omen of that which should come to pass. And the moneys which he minted there were called *Victorini*; and the great church was called after St. Vietor.

So there Frederick lodged with his army, and King Enzo with the army of Cremona; and the Emperor summoned all his friends to come in haste to his succor. And the first who came was the Lord Ugo Boterio, a citizen of Parma, sister's son to Pope Innocent IV; who, being Podesta of Pavia at that time, came with all the men of Pavia whom he deemed fit for war. Neither by prayers nor by promises could the Pope tear away this nephew of his from the love of Frederick; and yet the Pope loved his mother best of all his three sisters—for the other two were likewise married in Parma.

After him came Ezzelino da Romano, who in those days was

Lord of the Mark of Treviso, and he brought with him a vast army. This Ezzelino was feared worse than the devil: he held it of no account to slay men, women, and children, and he wrought such cruelty as men have scarce heard. On one day he caused 11,000 men of Padua to be burnt in the field of Saint George in the city of Verona; and when fire had been set to the house in which they were being burnt, he jousted as if in sport around them with his knights. It would be too long to relate his cruelties, for they would fill a great book. I believe most certainly that as the Son of God wished to have one specially whom He might make like unto Himself, namely St. Francis, so the Devil chose Ezzelino. It was of the blessed Francis that it was written that to one servant He gave five talents; for never was there but one man in this world, namely the blessed Francis, on whom Christ impressed the five wounds in likeness of Himself. For, as was told me by Brother Leo, his comrade, who was present when he was washed for burial, he seemed in all things like a man crucified and taken down from the cross.

Furthermore, after Ezzelino many nations came to Frederick's succor, as the men of Reggio and Modena, who were for the Emperor in their several cities, the men of Bergamo also, and other cities, as well of Tuscany as of Lombardy, and other parts of the world which held rather with the Emperor than with the Church. And they came from Burgundy and Calabria and Apulia and Sicily, and from Terra di Lavoro; and Greeks, Saracens from Nocera, and well-nigh from every nation under the sun. Wherefore that word of Esaias might have been said to him, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and hast not increased the joy": and this for many reasons. First, with the aid of his whole host he could but beset that one road from Parma to Borgo San Donnino; while the rest of the city felt nothing of the siege. Again, whereas the Emperor thought in his heart utterly to destroy the city and to transfer it to the city of Victoria which he had founded, and to sow salt in token of barrenness over the destroyed Parma; then the women of Parma, learning this, (and especially the rich, the noble, and the powerful), betook themselves with one accord to pray for the aid of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she might help to free their city; for her name and title

were held in the greatest reverence by the Parmese in their cathedral church. And, that they might the better gain her ear, they made a model of the city in solid silver, which I have seen, and which was offered as a gift to the Blessed Virgin; and there were to be seen the greatest and chiefest buildings of the city, fashioned of solid silver, as the cathedral church, the Baptistery, the Bishop's palace, the Palazzo Comunale, and many other buildings which showed forth the image of the city. The Mother prayed her Son: the Son heard the Mother, to whom of right He could deny nothing, according to the word which is figuratively contained in Holy Scripture, "My mother, ask: for I must not turn away thy face." These are the words of Solomon to his mother. And when the Mother of Mercy had prayed her Son to free her city of Parma from that multitude of nations which was gathered together against it, and when the night was now close at hand, the Son said to His Mother, "Hast thou seen all this exceeding great multitude? Behold, I will deliver them into thy hand this day, that thou mayest know that I am the Lord."

Men went out daily from either side to fight: crossbowmen, archers, and slingers, as I saw with mine own eyes: and ruffians also daily scoured the whole diocese of Parma, plundering and burning on all sides: and likewise did the men of Parma to those of Cremona and Reggio. The Mantuans also came in those days and burnt Casalmaggiore to the ground, as I saw with mine own eyes. And every morning the Emperor came with his men, and beheaded three or four, or as many more as seemed good to him, of the men of Parma and Modena and Reggio who were of the Church party, and whom he kept in bonds: and all this he did on the shingles by the riverside within sight of the men of Parma who were in the city, that he might vex their souls.

The Emperor put many innocent men to an evil death, as we see in the case of the Lord Andrea di Trego, who was a noble knight of Cremona, and of Conrad di Berecto, who was a clerk, and valiant in arms, whom he tortured in divers manners with fire and water and manifold torments. The Emperor was wont to slay of these captives at his will; and especially when he made assault with outrageous words against

the city, and when the battle went against him, then would he refresh his soul in the blood of these captives.

At one time also certain knights of the Mark of Ancona deserted the Emperor, and fled to Parma; because at the beginning of the rebellion the Emperor caused many knights of the Mark to be put in ward as hostages in the city of Cremona. And a messenger came from the Emperor bidding five of these knights, even as they washed their hands before supper, to mount their horses forthwith and ride with him to the Emperor. And when they were come to a certain field called Mosa, which is without the city of Cremona, he led them to the gallows, and they were hanged. And these butchers said, "This is the Emperor's command, for ye are traitors"; yet they had come to his succor. On the day following the Brethren Minor came and took them down and buried them; and scarce could they drive away the wolves from eating them while they yet hung on the gallows. All this I saw, for I lived at Cremona in those days, and in Parma likewise.

It would be too long to recount all those of the Church party whom he slew and caused to be slain in those days. For he sent the Lord Gerardo di Canale of Parma into Apulia, and caused him to be drowned in the depths of the sea with a mill-stone at his neck; and yet he had been at first one of his nearest friends, and had held many offices from him; and ever he remained with him in the army without Parma. And the Emperor had but this one cause of suspicion against him that the tower of his mansion in Parma was not destroyed. Wherefore the Emperor would sometimes say to him, laughing in false and feigned jest, "The men of Parma love us much, my Lord Gerard, for that whereas they tore down in their city the other Ghibelline buildings, they have as yet destroyed neither your tower, nor my palace on the Arena." Wherein he spoke ironically, but the Lord Gerard understood him not. When therefore I left Parma to go into France, I passed through the village wherein the Lord Gerard then lived; and he saw me gladly, saying that he was of much profit to the citizens of Parma. And I said to him, "Since the Emperor is besieging Parma, be ye wholly with him or wholly with the citizens, and halt not between two opinions, for it is not to your profit." Yet he hearkened not unto me; wherefore we

may say of him with the Wise man, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsels."

And note that the Lord Bernard, son of Rolando Rossi of Parma, who was of kindred with the Lord Pope Innocent IV (for he had the Pope's sister to wife), better understood the Emperor's ironical speech than did the Lord Gerard di Canale. For when, as he rode one day with the Emperor, his horse stumbled, then the Emperor said to him, "My Lord Bernard, ye have an evil horse, but I hope and promise you that within a few days I will give you a better, which shall not stumble." And the Lord Bernard understood that he spake of hanging him on the gallows: wherefore he was inflamed with indignation against the Emperor, and fled from before his face. Yet the Lord Bernard was the Emperor's gossip and most intimate friend, and well-beloved of him, and when he would enter into his chamber, no man ever denied him the door. But the Emperor could keep no man's friendship; nay, rather, he boasted that he had never nourished a pig, but that at last he had its grease, which was as much as to say that he had never raised any to riches and honor but that in the end he had drained his purse or his treasure. Which was a most churlish saying, yet we see an example thereof in Pier delle Vigne, who was the greatest counselor and writer of State papers in the Emperor's court, and was called by the Emperor his chancellor. And yet the Emperor had raised him from the dust; and afterwards he returned him to the same dust, for he found an occasion of a word and a calumny against him, which was as follows: The Emperor had sent the judge Taddeo and Pier delle Vigne, whom he loved above all, and who stood above all others in his court, and certain others he had sent with them to Lyons to Pope Innocent IV, to hinder the said Pope from hastening to depose him; for he had heard that to this end the Council was being gathered together. And he had straitly charged them that none should speak with the Pope without his fellow, or without the presence of others. But after they were returned, his comrades accused Pier delle Vigne that he had often had familiar colloquy with the Pope without them. The Emperor therefore sent and caused him to be taken and slain by an



evil death, saying in the words of Job, "They that were sometime my counselors have abhorred me: and he whom I loved most is turned against me." For in those days the Emperor was easily troubled in his mind, because he had been deposed from the Empire, and Parma had fostered the spirit of rebellion against him.

So Frederick's affliction and cursedness wherewith he was inflamed against Parma, endured from the end of the month of June 1247 to Tuesday the 18th of February 1248, on which day his city of Victoria was taken. For the men of Parma went forth from their city, knights and commons side by side, fully harnessed for war; and their very women and girls went out with them; youths and maidens, old men and young together. They drove the Emperor by force from Victoria with all his horse and foot; and many were slain there, and many taken and led to Parma. And they freed their own captives, whom the Emperor kept in bonds in Victoria. And the Carroccio of Cremona, which was in Victoria, they brought to Parma, and placed it in triumph in the Baptistery. But those who loved not the men of Cremona, (as the Milanese, and Mantuans, and many others whom the men of Cremona had offended,) when they came to see the Baptistery, and saw the Carroccio of their enemies, carried off the ornaments of "Berta" (for so was that Carroccio called) to keep them as relics. So the wheels alone and the framework of the carriage remained on the pavement of the Baptistery: and the mast or pole for the standard stood upright against the wall. Moreover the men of Parma spoiled the Emperor of all his treasure—for he had a mighty treasure of gold and silver and precious stones, vessels and vestments. And they took all his ornaments and his imperial crown, which was of great weight and value, for it was all of gold, inlaid with precious stones, with many images of goldsmith's work standing out, and much graven work. It was as great as a cauldron, for it was rather for dignity and for great price than as an ornament for his head; for it would have hidden all his head, face and all, had it not been raised to stand higher by means of a cunningly disposed piece of cloth. This crown I have held in my hands, for it was kept in the sacristy of the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin in the city of Parma. It was found

by a little man of mean stature, who was called ironically Cortopasso (*Short-step*), and who bore it openly on his fist as men bear a falcon, showing it to all who could see it, in honor of the victory they had gained, and to the eternal disgrace of Frederick. For whatsoever each could seize became his own, nor did any dare to tear aught away from another: nor was a single contentious or injurious word heard there, which was a great marvel. So the aforesaid crown was bought by the men of Parma from this their fellow-citizen, and they gave him for it £200 Imperial, and a house near the Church of Santa Christina, where of old days had been a pool to wash horses. And they made a statute that whosoever had aught of the treasure of Victoria should have the half for himself, and should give half to the community: wherefore poor men were marvelously enriched with the spoil of so rich a prince.

Now the Emperor's special effects which appertained to war, as his pavilions and things of that kind, were taken by the Legate, Gregorio da Montelungo; but the images and the relics which he possessed were placed in the sacristy of the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin, to be kept there. And note that of the treasures which were found in Victoria little remained in Parma; for merchants came from divers parts to buy them, and had them good cheap, and carried them away—namely, gold and silver vessels, gems, unions, pearls and precious stones, garments of purple and silk, and of all things known that are for the use and ornament of men. Note also that many treasures in gold and silver and precious stones remained hidden in jars, chests, and sepulchers, in the spot where the city of Victoria was, and are there even unto these days although their hiding-places are unknown. Note also that, after the destruction of Victoria, each man recognized so clearly the place in which aforesaid he had had his vineyard, that no word of contention or quarrel arose among them. Moreover, at that time when Frederick was put to flight by the men of Parma, the Scripture was fulfilled which saith "As a tempest that passeth, so the wicked shall be no more."

## VII

IN the year 1249 the Podesta of Genoa came to our convent on the day of Pentecost to hear Mass. And I was there; and the sacristan was Brother Pentecost, a holy, honest, and good man, who would have rung the bell for the Podesta's coming: but he said, "Hear first my tidings, for the men of Bologna have taken King Enzo, with a great multitude of the men of Cremona and Modena, and German soldiers." Now this King Enzo was a valiant man, and bold and stout-hearted; and doughty in arms, and a man of solace when he would, and a maker of songs: and in war he was wont to expose himself most boldly to perils. He was a comely man, of middle height; many years the men of Bologna kept him in prison, even to the end of his life. And when one day the jailers would not give him to eat, Brother Albertino of Verona, who was a mighty Preacher in our Order, went and besought them to give him to eat for God's love and his. And when they gave no ear to his petition, he said to them, "I will play at dice with you, and if I win, I may then bring him meat." So they played, and he won, and gave the king meat, and remained in familiar converse with him: and all who heard this commended the friar's charity, courtesy and liberality.

Moreover, the Lord Guido da Sesso, who was the chief of the Emperor's party in the city of Reggio, perished in the flight [of Enzo's army], for he was smothered with his war-horse in the cesspool of the leper-house of Modena. He was a most bitter enemy of the Church party, so that once when many had been taken by the King and doomed to the gallows, and would fain have confessed their sins, he would grant them no respite, saying, "Ye have no need to confess; for, being of the Church party, ye are saints, and will go forthwith to Paradise:" so they were hanged unshriven. Moreover, in those days he would enter with other malefactors into the convent of the Friars Minor; and calling together the Brethren in the Chapter-house he would demand of each in turn whence he came; and he let write their names by his notary, saying to each, "Go thou thy ways, and thou likewise go thy ways, and never dare to appear again in this

convent or this city." And so they expelled all but a few who kept the convent, and even these, as they went begging through the city for their daily needs, were reviled and slandered by him and his men, as though they carried false letters, and were traitors to the Emperor.

Neither the Friars Minor nor the Preachers dared to enter the cities of Modena or Reggio or Cremona on their journeys, and if ever any had chanced to enter unwittingly, they were led to the Palazzo Communale and kept in ward; and having been fed with the bread of affliction and the water of anguish for certain days, they were opprobriously driven out, east forth and tormented, or even slain. For many were tortured in Cremona and in Borgo San Donnino. In Modena they took the Friars Preachers who had iron molds for making holy wafers, and led them with many indignities to the Palazzo Communale, saying that they bore stamps to coin false and counterfeit money. Nor did they spare even the Brethren of their own party whose kin were said to be wholly on the Emperor's side, and who themselves also persevered therein; for Brother Jacopo of Pavia was expelled and thrust forth with ignominy, and Brother John of Bibbiano and Brother Jacopo of Bersello among others; and, in a word, all in the convent of Cremona who were of the Church party, were dismissed: and I was present in that year. Moreover, they kept Brother Ugolino da Cavazza long waiting in ward at the gate of the city of Reggio, and would not suffer him to enter in, though he had several blood-brethren of the Emperor's party in the city.

To speak shortly, they were men of Satan, the chief of whom in malice was one Giuliano da Sesso, a man grown old in evil days, who caused some of the Fogliani family to be hanged, and many others to be slain because they were of the Church party; and he gloried in these things, saying to his fellows, "See how we treat these bandits." This Giuliano was in truth a limb of the fiend; wherefore God struck him with palsy, so that he was wholly withered up on one side, and his eye started from his head, yet without leaving its socket, but jutting forth outwardly like an arrow, which was loathsome to see. Moreover, he became so stinking that none dared come near him for his superfluity of nastiness, except a

certain German damsel whom he kept as a leman, and whose beauty was so great that he who beheld her without pleasure was held most austere. This Giuliano said in full assembly that it were better to eat quicklime than to have peace with the Church party, though he himself fed on good capons, while the poor were dying of hunger. Yet the prosperity of the wicked endureth not long in this world: for presently the Church party began to prosper; and then this wretch was driven forth and carried secretly from the city, and died a mass of corruption, excommunicate and accursed; unhou-seled, disappointed, unaneled. He was buried in a ditch in the town of Campagnola.

In 1250 Frederick gained a great victory driving back the Parmese in such headlong rout that his men would have entered the city pell-mell with the fugitives, had not the Blessed Virgin intervened by breaking the bridge and drowning Guelfs and Ghibellines together in the moat. As it was, the Ghibellines took the Parmese Carroccio with 3,000 prisoners. They bound their captives on the gravel of the River Taro, as the Lord Ghiaratto told me, who was bound there himself; and they led them to Cremona and cast them chained into dungeons. There for vengeance sake, and to extort ransom, they practiced many outrages on them, hanging them up in the dungeons by their hands and their feet, and drawing out their teeth in terrible and horrible wise, and laying toads in their mouths. For in those days were inventors of new torments, and the men of Cremona were most cruel to the captives of Parma. But the Parmese of the Emperor's party were still worse, for they slew many; but in process of time the Church party in Parma avenged themselves wondrously.

More evil even than these was the Lord Ezzelino. He once slaughtered in cold blood a crowd of twelve thousand prisoners. I believe in truth that no such wicked man has been from the beginning of the world unto our own days: for all men trembled at him as a rush quivers in the water, and not without cause: for he who lived to-day was not sure of the morrow. The father would seek out and slay his son, and the son his father, or any of his kinsfolk, to please this man: he would submit ladies to the foulest mutilations, and cast them into prison with their sons and daughters to perish of

hunger. Scarcely less devilish was his brother Alberigo. He was indeed a limb of Satan and a son of iniquity, but he died an evil death with his sons and daughters. For those who slew them tore the legs and arms of his little sons from their living bodies, in the sight of their parents, and therewith they smote the fathers' and mothers' mouths. Afterwards they bound his wife and daughters to stakes and burned them, though they were noble maidens, and the fairest in the world, and guiltless: yet men so hated their parents that they would not spare their innocence. For the father and mother had brought terrible evil and horrible affliction on the Mark of Treviso: wherefore men came to Alberigo with pincers, and there in the market-place each tore a piece from his living flesh; thus they destroyed his body in mockery and scorn and grievous torments. For he had slain this man's cousin, that man's brother, another's father or son; moreover, he had laid so grievous taxes and fines on that land that they must needs tear down their own houses and lay the boards and beams and chests and casks and barrels on barges, and send them for sale to Ferrara, that they might have money to pay the taxes and redeem themselves. This I saw with my own eyes. And he feigned to be at war with his own brother Ezzelino, that he might the more securely do these evil deeds: nor did he spare to slay his own fellow-citizens.

Moreover, in one day he hanged 25 of the greatest men of Treviso, who had in no wise offended or harmed him: but, because he feared they might harm him, therefore he removed them from before his face by basely hanging them. And at the same time he caused 30 noble ladies, their wives and daughters and sisters, to come and see them and to be seen of them while they were hanged; moreover, he would have cut off the ladies' noses, but this was spared them by the grace of one whom he called his bastard son, but who was not. Yet, even so, their garments were cut away in the most foul and shameful wise; and they were thus shown to the men who were to be hanged. And these were hanged so near to the ground that the ladies were driven among their feet: and they in the bitterness of their soul smote the ladies' faces as they died with their legs and feet: whose life was pain and anguish to them for this foul mockery. After this, Alberigo

caused them to be ferried over the river Sila, that they might go whither they would; and with the shreds of garments which were left they bound themselves about the middle like wild folk; and all that day they went 15 miles through an untilled land, among thorns and briars and nettles and burrs and pricks and thistles, while the flies stung their bare bodies; and thus they went weeping, as indeed they had cause; and withal they had nought to eat.

But God's help comes, as we see in the story of Susanna, and in the case of Esaias who, while he was being sawn asunder with a wood-saw and was in vehement thirst, and his tormentors would give him no water to drink at his request, the Lord sent water from on high which flowed into his mouth. So these ladies came that day, about nightfall, to the lagoons of the Venetian Sea: and behold! they were aware all at once of a fisher alone in his little boat, to whom they cried for help: but he was sore afraid, thinking to see some diabolical illusion, or a crew of spirits, or monsters of the sea at least; but at last by God's grace, and for their instant prayers, he came to them. So when they had told their whole story and all their woes, he said, "I pity you sore, nor will I leave you till God give you help: yet, since my little boat may bear but one at a time, therefore will I bring you one by one and set you down on dry land in Saldino; for if ye should stay here this night the wolves would devour you. Then on the morrow, before daybreak, I will get me a greater boat and bring you to St. Mark's church at Venice; where I hope God will give you help." In brief, he brought all over but one, the last, whom he led to his fisher's hut and fed to her heart's content, and treated her with all kindness and courtesy and humanity and charity and honesty: and on the morrow he exactly fulfilled all his promises. So when he had brought them into St. Mark's church, he came to the Lord Ottaviano, Cardinal of the Roman Court and Legate in Lombardy, who at that time was at Venice; to whom he told the whole tale of these ladies and of their misfortunes, and where they now were. So the Cardinal came forthwith to them and gave them to eat; and he sent word throughout the whole city that all should come to him swiftly and hastily without delay in the church of St. Mark: both men and women, small

and great, young men and maidens, old men and young: for he would tell them (he said) such things as they had never heard, and show them such sights as they had never seen. What then? swifter than the tale may be told, the whole city of Venice was gathered together to him on the Piazza of St. Mark, and from his lips they heard all the aforesaid story: and when he had finished speaking, he brought forward those ladies, in such foul array and such nakedness as that accursed Alberigo had devised to their dishonor; and this he did to provoke the citizens unto the greater hatred against that tyrant, and pity towards these ladies. So when the Venetians heard the story, and saw the ladies as naked as I have said, then they raised a great shout and cried, "Let him die! let that accursed man die! Let him and his wife be burnt alive, and his whole seed be rooted out from this world." Then, by the common consent of the whole city, both men and women, he preached a crusade against that accursed Alberigo. So they went with one mind against Alberigo and wrought him much evil, yet they destroyed him not utterly: howbeit within a short time after that crusade he was utterly destroyed with all his seed, and suffered justly the aforesaid mockery and torments and woes. For one day, having lost his hawk, and being under the open sky, he made so foul and boorish a gesture at the heaven, in sign of mockery and contumely and derision, thinking thereby to take vengeance on God, as may scarcely be told: moreover, when he was come home, he went forthwith into the church and defiled God's altar in unspeakable wise, at the very spot where the Lord's Body is consecrated. Moreover his wife would call other noble ladies and matrons harlots and such like names, nor did her husband ever rebuke her and say, "Wherefore sayest thou thus?" Nay rather, but he heeded it not, and she took heart from his heedlessness: so that was a just vengeance which the men of Treviso wreaked upon them. But after the Cardinal had ended his sermon to the Venetians, then he commended those ladies to the citizens as he would have commended himself: and they succored them most liberally both in food and in clothing: moreover the men of Treviso spared that man by whose grace the ladies had not lost their noses, and they suffered him to live and did much kindness, whereof he was worthy; for he



ofttimes restrained those tyrants from many iniquities which they would have done.

## VIII

IN that year 1247, while my own city of Parma was beleaguered by the deposed Emperor Frederick, I went to Lyons, and arrived there on the Feast of All Saints. And forthwith the Pope sent for me and spake familiarly with me in his chamber. For since my departure from Parma, even until that day, he had seen no messenger nor received no letters. And he was very gracious unto me; that is, he heard the voice of my petition, being indeed a most courteous man, and a liberal.

The bystanders were there in such multitudes that they lay hard one on the other's shoulders in their eagerness to hear tidings of Parma; when therefore they who stood by heard me end my speech thus, they marveled, and in my own hearing they said to each other, "All the days of our life we have seen no friar so void of fear, and speaking so plainly." This they said partly because they saw me sitting between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Guardian, (for the Guardian had invited me to sit down, and I thought not fit to spurn and contemn such an honor;) and also because they saw and heard me speak so of so great a man, and in the presence of such an assembly. For in those days I was a deacon, and a young man of 25 years old.

After the Feast of All Saints I set out for France. And when I had come to the first convent beyond Lyons, on that same day arrived Brother John di Piano Carpine, returning from the Tartars, whither the Pope had sent him. This Brother John was friendly and spiritual and learned, and a great speaker, and skilled in many things. He showed us a wooden goblet which he bore as a gift to the Pope, in the bottom whereof was the likeness of a most fair queen, as I saw with mine own eyes; not wrought there by art or by a painter's cunning, but impressed thereon by the influence of the stars: and if it had been cut into a hundred parts, it would always have borne the impress of that image. Moreover, lest this seem incredible, I can prove it by another example. For the Emperor Frederick gave the Brethren a

certain Church in Apulia, which was ancient and ruined and forsaken of all men. And, on the spot where of old the altar had stood, grew now a vast walnut-tree, which when cut open showed in every part the image of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross; and if it had been cut a hundred times, so often would it have shown the image of the Crucifix. This was miraculously shown by God, since that tree had grown up on the very spot whereon the Passion of the spotless Lamb is represented in the Host of Salvation and the Adorable Sacrifice; yet some assert that such impressions can be made by the influence of the stars.

I remember how, when I dwelt at Cremona, Brother Gabriel, who was a most learned and holy man, told me that Auxerre had more plenty of vineyards and wine than Cremona and Parma and Reggio and Modena together; whereat I marveled and thought it incredible. But when I dwelt myself at Auxerre, I saw how he had said the truth; for not only are the hillsides covered with vineyards, but the level plain also, as I have seen with mine own eyes. For the men of that land sow not, nor do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn; but they send wine to Paris by the river which flows hard by; and there they sell it at a noble price. And I myself have encompassed the diocese of Auxerre three times on foot; once with a certain Brother who preached and gave men the Cross for the Crusade of St. Louis; another time with another Brother who, on the day of the Lord's Supper, preached to the Cistercians in a most fair Abbey; and we kept the Feast of Easter with a certain Countess, who gave us for dinner (or rather, who gave to her whole court) twelve courses or diversities of food—and if the Count, her husband, had been there, then still greater plenty would have been served. The third time I journeyed with Brother Stephen, and saw and heard many noteworthy things, which I omit here for brevity's sake. And note that in the Province of France are eight custodies of our Order, whereof four drink beer, and four drink wine. Note also that there are three parts of France which give great plenty of wine,—namely, La Rochelle, Beaune, and Auxerre. Note that the red wines are held in but small esteem, for they are not equal to the red wines of Italy. Note likewise that the wines of Auxerre are

white, and sometimes golden, and fragrant, and comforting, and of strong and excellent taste, and they turn all who drink them to cheerfulness and merriment; wherefore of this wine we may rightly say with Solomon, "Give strong wine to them that are sad, and wine to them that are grieved in mind: Let them drink and forget their want, and remember their sorrow no more." And know that the wines of Auxerre are so strong that, when they have stood awhile, tears gather on the outer surface of the jar. Note also that the French are wont to tell how the best wine should have three B's and seven F's. For they themselves say in sport

"Et bon et bel et blanc  
Fort et fier, fin et franc,  
Froid et frais et frétilant."

The General soon afterward sent for me and my comrade, and said, "My sons, I hope soon to leave you, for I purpose to go to Spain; wherefore choose for yourselves any convent soever, except Paris, and in the whole Order, and take the space of this night to ponder and make your choice, and tell me to-morrow." On the morrow he said, "What have ye chosen?" So I answered, "In this matter we have done nothing, lest it should become an occasion of mourning to us; but we leave it in your choice to send us whithersoever it may seem good, and we will obey." Whereat he was edified, and said, "Go therefore to the convent of Genoa, where ye shall dwell with Brother Stephen the Englishman. Moreover, I will write to the Minister and Brethren there, commending you to their favor even as myself; and that thou, Brother Salimbene, mayest be promoted to the priesthood, and thy comrade to the diaconate. And when I come thither, if I find you satisfied, I shall rejoice; and if not, I will console you again." And so it was. Moreover, that same day the General said to Brother Hugh his friend, "What say ye, shall we go to Spain, and fulfill the Apostle's desire?" And Brother Hugh answered him, "Go ye, Father; for my part I would fain die in the land of my fathers." So we brought him forthwith to his ship, which lay ready on the Rhone: and he went that day to St.-Gilles, but we went by sea to Marseilles, whence we sailed to Hyères to Brother Hugh's convent. There I dwelt

with my comrade from the Feast of St. Francis until All Saints; rejoicing to be with Brother Hugh, with whom I conversed all day long of the doctrine of Abbot Joachim: for he had all his books. But I lamented that my comrade grew grievously sick, almost to death; and he would not take care of himself, and the weather grew daily worse for sailing as the winter drew on.

That country was most unwholesome; by night I could scarce breathe, even as I lay in the open air. And I heard wolves crying and howling in the night in great multitudes, and this not once or twice only. So I said to my comrade, who was a most wayward youth, "Thou wilt not guard thyself from things contrary to thy health, and art ever relapsing into sickness. But I know that this country is most unwholesome, and I would fain not die yet, for I would fain live to see the things foretold by Brother Hugh. Wherefore know thou, that if fitting fellowship of our Brethren shall come hither, I will go with them." And he said, "What thou sayest pleases me. I also will go with thee." For he hoped that none of the Brethren would come at that time. And behold, by the will of the Lord forthwith there came one Brother Ponce, a holy man, who had been with us in the Convent of Aix; and he was going to Nice, of which Convent he had been made Guardian. And he rejoiced to see us; and I said to him, "We will go with you, for we must needs come to Genoa to dwell there." And he answered and said, "It is most pleasing to me. Go therefore and procure us a ship." So on the morrow after dinner we went to the ship, which was a mile from our Convent, but my comrade would not come, until, seeing that I was straitly purposed to depart, he took leave of the Guardian, and came after us. And when I gave him my hand to raise him up into the ship, he abhorred it, and said, "God forbid that thou shouldst touch me, for thou hast not kept faith and good comradeship with me." To whom I said, "Wretched man! know now God's goodness towards thee. For the Lord hath revealed to me that if thou hadst stayed here, thou wouldst doubtless have died." Yet he believed me not, until "vexation did make him understand what he heard"; for all that winter he could not shake off the sickness which he had taken in Provence. And when on the

Feast of St. Matthew following I again visited Hyères, I found six Brethren of that convent dead and buried, the first of whom was the Guardian, who had accompanied my comrade to the ship. So when I was come back to Genoa and had told my comrade of these deaths, he thanked me that I had snatched him from the jaws of death.

It would have been a pity if he had died young: for he went afterwards as a missionary to the Christian captives in Egypt after the disastrous failure of St. Louis' second crusade, for the merit of salutary obedience and for the remission of all his sins. For he himself did much good to those Christians, and was the cause of much more; and he saw an Unicorn and the Balsam Vine,<sup>1</sup> and brought home Manna in a vessel of glass, and water from St. Mary's Well (with which alone the Balsam Vine can be watered so as to bear fruit): and Balsam wood he brought home with him, and many such things which we had never seen, which he was wont to show to the Brethren: and he would tell also how the Saracens keep Christians in bonds and make them to dig the trenches of their fortifications and to carry off the earth in baskets, and how each Christian receives but three small loaves a day. So he was present at the General Chapter in Strasburg [A.D. 1282]; and on his way thence he ended his days at the first convent of the brethren this side of Strasburg [*i.e.* Colmar], and shone with the glory of miracles. So lived and died Brother Giovannino dalle Olle, who was my comrade in France, in Burgundy, in Provence, and in the convent at Genoa: a good writer and singer and preacher; an honest and good and profitable man: may his soul rest in peace! In the convent wherein he died was a brother incurably diseased, for all that the doctors could do, of a long-standing sickness; yet when he set himself wholly to pray God that He would make him whole for love of Brother Giovannino, then was he forthwith freed from his sickness, as I heard from Brother Paganino of Ferrara, who was there present.

<sup>1</sup> For this Balsam see Sir John Mandeville (chap. v), who gives an equally miraculous, though quite different account of its methods of fructification. It grows only near Cairo, and in "India the Greater, in that desert where the trees of the sun and moon spake to Alexander. But I have not seen it, for I have not been so far upward, because there are too many perilous passages."

There was in the city of Genoa a certain Corsican Bishop, who had been a Black Monk of St. Benedict, and whom King Enzo or Frederick, in their hatred of the Church, had expelled from Corsica. He now dwelt at Genoa and copied books with his own hand for a livelihood; and daily he came to the Mass of the Friars Minor, and afterwards he heard Brother Stephen the Englishman teach in our Schools.

This Bishop consecrated me priest in the church of Sant' Onorato, which is now in the convent of the Friars Minor at Genoa. But in those days it was not so—nay, rather, a certain priest had and held it just over our convent, though he had no folk for his parishioners. And when the Brethren came back from Matins to rest in their cells, this good man troubled their rest with his church-bells; and thus he did every night. Wherefore the Brethren grew weary, and so wrought with Pope Alexander IV that they took that church from him. This Pope had canonized St. Clare, and at the very hour whereat he celebrated the first Mass of St. Clare, when he had said his prayer, the priest drew near and said, "I beseech you, Father, for love of the Blessed Clare, not to take from me the church of Sant' Onorato." But the Pope took up his parable and began to say, in the vulgar tongue, "For the love of the Blessed Clare I will that the Brethren Minor have it." And thus he said many times over, so that he seemed almost mad (*infatuatus*) to repeat it so often, and that the priest groaned to hear it and departed from him."

It pleased Brother Nantelmo my Minister to send me to the Minister-General for the business of the Province. So I put to sea, and came in four days to Brother Hugh's convent at Hyères. And he rejoiced to see me; and, being Guardian for the time being, he ate familiarly with me and my comrade and none else but the Brethren who served us. He gave us a magnificent dinner of sea-fish and other meats, for we were at the beginning of Lent; and not only my comrade from Genoa, but even the Brethren of that convent marveled at his great familiarity and complaisance with me: for in those days Brother Hugh was not wont to eat with any, perchance because Lent was at hand. And we spake much of God during that dinner, and of the doctrine of Abbot Joachim, and of what should come to pass in the world. When I left

Genoa there was an almond-tree in blossom hard by our sacristy, and in Provence I found the fruit of this tree already big with green husk. I found also broad beans fresh grown in their pods. After dinner I went on my way to the Minister-General, whom I presently found at Avignon on his return from Spain; for he had been recalled by the Pope to go among the Greeks, of whom there was hope that by the mediation of Vatatzes they might be reconciled to the Roman Church. Thence I went to Lyons with the Minister-General, and at Vienne we found the messenger of Vatatzes, who was of our Order, and was called Brother Salimbene, even as I. He was Greek of one parent, and Latin of another, and spoke Latin excellently, though he had no clerical tonsure. And when the General had come to the Pope, the Holy Father received him and vouchsafed to kiss him on the mouth, and said to him, "God forgive thee, son, for thou hast delayed long. Why didst thou not come on horseback, to be with me the sooner?" To whom Brother John answered, "Father, I came swiftly enough when I had seen thy letters; but the Brethren by whom I have passed have kept me on the way." To whom the Pope said, "We have prosperous tidings, namely that the Greeks are willing to be reconciled with the Church of Rome; wherefore I will that thou go to them with good fellowship of Brethren of thy Order, and it may be that by thy mediation God will deign to work some good. Receive therefore from me every favor which thou mayest desire." So the Minister-General departed from Lyons when Easter week was passed.

I found at Lyons Brother Ruffino, Minister of Bologna, who said to me, "I sent thee into France to study for my Province, and thou hast gone to dwell in the convent of Genoa. Know therefore that I take this very ill, since I bring students together for the honor of my Province." And I said, "Forgive me, Father, for I knew not that you would take it ill." Then he answered, "I forgive under this condition, that thou write forthwith an Obedience whereby thou mayest return to my Province whence thou hast come, with thy comrade who is now in Genoa." So I did, and the Minister-General knew not of this Obedience when he was at Lyons. So I went on my way to Vienne, and thence through Grenoble

and the valley of the Count of Savoy, where I heard of the fall and ruin of the mountain. For the year before, in the valley of Maurienne—between Grenoble and Chambéry—there is a plain called the valley of Savoy proper, a league distant from Chambéry, over which rose a great and lofty mountain, which fell one night and filled the whole valley; the ruin whereof is a whole league and a half in breadth: under which ruin seven parishes were overwhelmed, and 4000 men were slain. I heard tell of this ruin at Genoa; and in this year following I passed through that country, that is, through Grenoble, and understood it with more certainty; and many years after, at the convent of Ravenna, I inquired of the fall of this mountain from Brother William, Minister of Burgundy, who was passing through that city on his way to a Chapter General: and I have written it faithfully and truly as I heard it from his mouth. On this journey I entered a certain church dedicated to St. Gerard, which was all full of children's shirts.<sup>2</sup> Thence I passed on to Embrun, where was an Archbishop born of Piacenza, who daily gave dinner to two Friars Minor, and ever set places for them at his table, and portions of all his dishes before them. So if any came, they had this dinner; but if not, he caused it to be given to other poor folk.

Thereupon came the Guardian and said to me, "Brother, may it please thee to go and eat with the Archbishop, who will take it in excellent good part; for it is long since the Brethren have eaten with him, because they are wearied to go thither so often." But I said, "Father, forgive me, and take it not ill: for I must depart without delay after meat; but the Archbishop, hearing that I was from the Court, would hinder my journey by asking after tidings." Then the Guardian held his peace, but I said softly to my comrade, "I have bethought me that it is well to finish our journey while we have fair weather and good letters, that we may quickly answer those who sent us, and also lest the Minister-General come before us to the convent of Genoa; for our own Minister would not take our journey in so good part:" and that which I said and did pleased my comrade. So we de-

<sup>2</sup>No doubt as thanksgiving offerings for cures: perhaps the church was that of Gières by Grenoble.



parted therefore and passed through the lands of the Count Dauphin, and so came to Susa. On the morrow we went from Alessandria to Tortona, which is ten miles' journey: and next day to Genoa, which is a far journey. And the Brethren rejoiced to see me, for I was come from afar, and brought good tidings.

## IX

IN the year 1259, a great pestilence fell upon men and women, so that at the office of Vespers we had two dead together in our church. This curse began in Passion-week, so that in the whole Province of Bologna the Friars Minor could not hold their services on Palm-Sunday, for they were hindered by a sort of numbness. And this lasted many months: whereof three hundred and more died in Borgo San Donnino, and in Milan and Florence many thousands; nor did men toll the bells, lest the sick should be afraid. Famine and pestilence led to a great religious revival. The Flagellants came through the whole world; and all men, both small and great, noble knights and men of the people, scourged themselves naked in procession through the cities, with the Bishops and men of Religion at their head; and peace was made in many places, and men restored what they had unlawfully taken away, and they confessed their sins so earnestly that the priests had scarce leisure to eat. And in their mouths sounded words of God and not of man, and their voice was as the voice of a multitude: and men walked in the way of salvation, and composed godly songs of praise in honor of the Lord and the Blessed Virgin: and these they sang as they went and scourged themselves. And on the Monday, which was the Feast of All Saints, all those men came from Modena to Reggio, both small and great; and all of the district of Modena came, and the Podesta and the Bishop with the banners of all the Gilds; and they scourged themselves through the whole city, and the greater part passed on to Parma on the Tuesday following. So on the morrow all the men of Reggio made banners for each quarter of the town, and held processions around the city, and the Podesta went likewise scourging himself. And the men of Sassuolo at the beginning of this blessed time took me away with the

leave of the Guardian of the convent of the Friars Minor at Modena, where I dwelt at that time, and brought me to Sassuolo, for both men and women loved me well; afterwards they brought me to Reggio and then to Parma. And when we were come to Parma this Devotion was already there, for it flew as "an eagle flying to the prey," and lasted many days in our city, nor was there any so austere and old but that he scourged himself gladly. Moreover, if any would not scourge himself, he was held worse than the Devil, and all pointed their finger at him as a notorious man and a limb of Satan: and what is more, within a short time he would fall into some mishap, either of death or of grievous sickness. Pallavicino only, who was then Lord of Cremona, avoided this blessing and this Devotion with his fellow-citizens of Cremona; for he caused gallows to be set up by the bank of the River Po, in order that if any came to the city with this manner of scourging he might die on the gibbet: for he loved the good things of this life better than the salvation of souls, and the world's glory better than the glory of God. Nevertheless many brave youths of Parma were fully resolved to go thither, for they were glad to die for the Catholic Faith, and for God's honor and the remission of their sins. And I was then at Parma in the Podesta's presenee, who said "His heart is blinded, and he is a man of malice, who knoweth not the things of God. Let us therefore give him no occasion of ill-doing, for he loved cursing, and it shall come unto him: and he would not have blessing, and it shall be far from him." And he said, "How seemeth it to you, my Brethren? Say I well?" Then I answered and said, "You have spoken wisely and well, my Lord." Then the Podesta sent heralds throughout the city of Parma, forbidding under the heaviest penalties lest any man of Parma should dare to cross the Po: so their purpose ceased. And this was the year wherein that age should have begun which was foretold by Abbott Joachim, who divideth the world into three states: and they say that this last state of the world began with these Flagellants of the year 1260, who cried with God's words and not with men's.

I was one of the two friars selected as peacemakers between the cities of Modena and their exiled enemies. They

answered me most courteously and kindly, that they were most willing to make peace with their fellow-citizens. But there was a want of good faith on both sides, and the war blazed up again. I have little trust of peace among Lombards: for their peacemakings are like the boys' game when they lay hand above hand upon their knees: and each, seeking to get the better of the other, withdraws his hand from below and strikes it upon the hand above, and thus each thinks to have the better: but oftentimes we see the conqueror conquered in his turn.

Under pretext of the peace above-mentioned the siege of Modena was raised and the men escaped; yet peace was never made, but the men of Gesso did worse than before, plundering and spoiling the villages of the Bishopric of Reggio, and taking prisoners, whom they tortured with divers exquisite torments to extort money for their ransom. And they who did thus were hireling soldiers of Bergamo and Milan and other ruffians from Liguria. Once they took a poor man who had never harmed them; nay, who would have served them if he had been able; whom they led away captive to Gesso and said to him, "Tax thyself," which was as much as to say, "Let us hear what thou canst give us." And when he answered that he had nought to give, forthwith they smote him in the mouth with a flint-stone, with which one blow six of his teeth were smitten out, and the seventh was ready to fall. Likewise also they did to many others. For some men's heads they bound with a cord and lever, and strained it with such force that their eyes started from their sockets and fell upon their cheeks: others they bound by the right or left thumb only, and thus lifted the whole weight of their body from the ground: others again they racked with yet more foul and horrible torments which I blush to relate: others they would hang by the little toe of one foot, or seat them with their hands bound behind their back and lay under their feet a pot of live coals, blowing with the bellows to stir them yet more; with others again they would bind the great toe of their right foot with a bowstring to one tooth, and then prick their backs with a goad that they might tear out their own teeth; or they bound their hands and legs together round a spit (as a lamb is carried to the butcher) and kept

them thus hanging on that pole all day long, without food or drink: or again with a hard and rough piece of wood they would rub and grate their shins until the bare bone appeared, which was a misery and sore pity even to behold. And when the chief men of Gesso rebuked them, saying that it was horrible to see such things practiced on Christian folk, then these ruffians waxed wroth and threatened to depart from them if they suffered not such things; wherefore the chief men must needs suffer them whether they would or not. Many other torments they invented and inflicted, which I have omitted for brevity's sake; but these I have written that it may be known how some men are more cruel than beasts: wherefore it is nought but just that they who do such things should be tormented with such devils in hell.

In this year, at the Carnival season, the men of Reggio sported themselves not after the fashion of other Christian people, who all and in every place revel and play the fool at that season (*stultizant et infatuantur*); but rather they kept silence as though they mourned their dead. But in the season of Lent, when the time is sacred to God, then began they to play; yet this is the acceptable time and the day of salvation, a time for giving alms and doing works of piety, moreover a time for confession and hearing of sermons, and visiting of churches, of praying, and fasting, and weeping, as the church lessons tell us. So in the solemn Lenten season the men of Reggio wrought not the aforesaid works of piety or devotion; and although the Lord forbiddeth a man to use women's apparel they heeded this not, but walked after their own inventions. For many of them borrowed garments from ladies, wherein they clothed themselves and began to play and wander through the city as in a tournament. And, that they might the better resemble women, they painted white masks wherewith they covered their faces, caring nought for the penalty promised for such deeds. Much also might I say against the city of Parma for its hardness and merelessness towards the poor servants of God: and therefore I, Brother Salimbene of Parma, have been 48 years in the Order of Friars Minor, yet never would I dwell at Parma by reason of the indevotion which its citizens show and practice towards God's servants. For they care not to

do them kindness, though at times they could easily help them if they would: for they are most liberal in largesse to play-actors and minstrels and buffoons. Certainly if a city so great as Parma were in France, then 100 Friars Minor would be settled to dwell there in all decency and comfort, and abundantly supplied with all things needful.

In the year 1283 was discovered the body of the Magdalene, whole save for one leg, near Aix in Provence, where I dwelt in the year when the King of France went on his Crusade, for I was of the convent there. When this body was found, her epitaph could scarce be read with a crystal glass, for the antiquity of the writing. And it pleased King Charles that the body should be displayed abroad and exalted and honored, and that a solemn feast should be made in her honor. And so it was: wherefore the contentions and contradictions and cavils and abuses and falsehoods which were of old concerning her body are henceforth ended. For the men of Sinigaglia had formerly claimed to possess it, and the men of Vézelay had it likewise, as they said, and had even a legend thereof: but it is manifest that the body of the same woman cannot be in three places. (For this same cause there is a bitter quarrel at Ravenna concerning the body of St. Apollinare, for the men of Chiassi, which was once a city, say that they possess it: and the citizens of Ravenna claim to possess it too.) Now the Magdalene's cave, wherein she did penitence thirty years, is five miles distant from Marseilles, and I slept there one night immediately after her feast. It is in a high rocky mountain, and great enough, if I remember well, to contain a thousand men. There are three altars and a dropping well of water like unto the well of Siloa, and a most fair road to it, and without is a church hard by the cave, where dwells a priest; and above the cave the mountain is as high again as the height of the Baptistery of Parma, and the cave itself is so far raised above the level ground that three towers like that of the Asinelli of Bologna could not reach it, if I remember aright: so that great trees which grow below show like nettles or bushes of sage; and since this region is utterly uninhabited and desolate, therefore the women and noble ladies of Marseilles when they come thither for devotion's sake bring with them asses laden with bread and wine,

and pasties and fish, and such other meats as they desire. Here then is a miracle for the confirmation of the Invention of the Magdalene's body; which miracle the Lord showed through her to prove that it is hers indeed. In those days a young butcher was going upon the road, and an acquaintance asked him whence he came. He answered, "From the town of St. Maximin, where the body of the blessed Mary Magdalene has been newly found; and I kissed her leg." The other answered, "Thou hast kissed no leg of hers, but rather the leg of an ass or a mare, which the clergy show to the simple for lucre's sake." When therefore a great contention had arisen between these two concerning this matter, the undevout man who believed not in the Magdalene smote the devout man with many blows of his sword, yet he with the Magdalene's help took no hurt. Then he who was devoted to the Magdalene smote the undevout man but once, and there needed no more; for he straightway lost his life and found his death. So the champion of the Magdalene, grieving that he had slain a man, even in self-defense, and fearing to be taken by the kinsfolk of the deceased, fled to the city of Arles and thence to St.-Gilles, that he might be safe there, and give place unto wrath. But the father of the slain man, by a bribe to a traitor, caused the slayer of his son to be cast into prison, for he was already condemned to be hanged.

The night before his execution, as he lay in his cell, the Magdalene appeared to him and said, "Fear not, my servant, defender and champion of mine honor, for thou shalt not die: I will help thee in due time, that all men who see may marvel and give thanks to God our Creator, Who worketh marvels, and to me, His servant. But when thou shalt be free, remember this kindness that I have done thee, and give the reward of this good fortune to God thy liberator, to the benefit of thine own soul." With these words the Magdalene disappeared, and left the man comforted. Next day, when he was hanged on the gallows, yet his body felt neither harm nor pain; and suddenly, in the sight of all who had come to see, there flew swiftly down from heaven a dove, dazzling white as snow, and alighted on the gallows, and loosed the knot round the neck of the hanged man, its own devotee, and laid him on the earth wholly unhurt. But when the officials

and men of justice, at the instigation of the dead man's relatives, would have hanged him again, he escaped by the goodwill of the butchers, of whom a very great band was there, ready armed with swords and staves; for he had been their comrade and friend, and they had also seen this stupendous miracle. Therefore when he had told all men how he had slain the man unwillingly to defend his own life and the Magdalene's honor, and how the Saint had promised him in his dungeon that she would free him when the time came, then they held themselves satisfied, and praised God and the blessed Magdalene who had freed him. And the Count of Provence, hearing these things, desired to see the man and hear it from his own lips, and to keep him about his person at the court all the days of his life. Yet he answered that if any should offer him the lordship of the whole world he would not end his life anywhere but in the service of the Magdalene, in the town of St. Maximin, in the place wherein her body was newly found in this year 1283.

In this aforesaid year, on the Feast of St. Clare I ate for the first time *ravioli* without any crust of pastry; and this I say to show how subtle is human gluttony in this appetite of bodily meats in comparison of earlier men, who were content with the food created by nature, whereof Ovid saith in the first book of his *Metamorphoses*, "And, contented with the meats created of nature's own free will, they picked arbutus berries and beechnuts from the mountains, and cornels and blackberries clinging to the rough brambles, and acorns fallen from the spreading tree of Jove."

In the year of our Lord 1285, it was ordained in full council of the citizens of Reggio, that fishmongers should sell no fish from the beginning of Lent until after Easter, under penalty of £25 Bolognese, and that none should buy of them under pain of £10 Bolognese; and this statute was most strictly kept. Now the cause thereof was that, when knights or judges would inquire of some fishermen, "At what price wilt thou sell this fish?" the latter, though asked twice or thrice, would disdain to answer; nay, rather, he would turn away his face, and speak with his partner, saying: "Gossip, put the barrel or the chest in that place!" according to the Proverb, "A servant will not be corrected by words: because

he understands what thou sayest, and will not answer." Moreover, they demanded three or four *grossi* for a single small tench or eel. When therefore the fishermen and fish-mongers saw how strictly and steadfastly men kept the statute made against them, and that they lost much thereby (for all their fish were numbered and placed in stewponds until after Easter) then they came to the Friars Minor and besought them to beg of the Podesta and the Captain and the Ancients and the whole council some relaxation of that statute: in which case they for their part would promise to sell reasonably and discreetly and courteously and good cheap to all who desired to buy their fish. Yet not even so was the statute relaxed, as the Apostle saith of Esau, "for he found no place of repentance, although with tears he had sought it." Moreover, the citizens threatened to deal in like manner with the butchers at Eastertide, unless they sold their flesh in the shambles both courteously and reasonably. But the butchers hearing this did after the Wise Man's counsel, "The wicked man being scourged, the fool shall be wiser."

About the Feast of St. Lucy in 1285, died Bernabo di Regina, a native of Reggio, expiring suddenly in his bed without warning of illness. He was a dear friend of mine, and his words were the joy of canons, cardinals, and all prelates, with knights and barons and all who loved mirth; for he spake most excellently in the French and Tuscan and Lombard tongues, and in divers other fashions. He could speak childishly, as children speak with each other; or as women speak with women, discussing their own affairs in familiar speech with their gossips; and he could imitate the fashion of address of the ancient preachers, as they held forth in the days of the Alleluia, when they took upon themselves to work miracles, as I saw with mine own eyes in those days.

In this year perished also the family of Ghiberto da Gente, Podesta of Parma for many years. He became so unpopular that he was finally driven from the city, but kept a country villa not far off, at Campagine. His sons became even more unpopular than the father: so that the whole race was driven forth utterly by the citizens in this year 1285, and their villa destroyed. For thou must know that Ghiberto had a son named Pino, whose wicked deeds provoked the men of Parma



in many ways against Ghiberto's heirs: for first he attacked and took Guastalla, and would have held it in spite of Parma; then he married a wife whom he afterwards caused to be murdered; from which crime, by God's providence, much evil came afterwards upon him. Now his father Ghiberto was at first desirous to take this same lady to wife, when he dwelt in exile at Ancona after his expulsion from Parma: but Pinotto forestalled his father and secretly stole her away, for greed of her wealth and for the allurements of her comeliness.

She was called the Lady Beatrice; and she had much treasure and was comely, alert and merry and liberal and courtly; and she was exceedingly well skilled in the games of chess and hazard, and dwelt with Pino her husband at Bianello, which had once been a castle of the Countess Matilda. Oftentimes she would come to the convent of the Friars Minor at Montefalcone in the days when I dwelt there, for the sake of recreation and of speaking with the Brethren: and she related to me in familiar converse that men would have slain her; and I knew of whom she spoke, and had compassion on her, and taught her that she should confess her sins and ever order her life well, that she might be ever ready to meet death. In those days her husband Pino departed in great wrath against the Lord Guido his cousin, as I saw with mine own eyes, and he took his wife with him to the village of Correggio, wherein he caused her to be smothered with a featherbed by a squire named Martinello, and in that same village she was buried; and he had by her three daughters who are most comely damsels. And, seeing it is written that "the soul of the wounded hath cried out, and God doth not suffer it to pass unrevenged," and therefore I must say somewhat of the misfortunes which befell her husband. First he became hateful, not only to the men of Parma, but even to his cousins and nephews: secondly he was taken by the ruffians of Sassuolo, who took from him for ransom his horses and £200 Imperial: thirdly, on a time when he would have avenged himself by plundering a wayfarer on the highway leading to Parma, the citizens sent to the village of Campagine, wherein he had his possessions, and plowed up all his crops and green corn, and razed to the ground fourteen or twenty of his houses in the village: fourthly, the lady whom

he took to wife after the murder of his first spouse could never be his lawful wife, since there was many hindrances on either side. She was named the Lady Beatrice even as his first wife, and was most comely, and daughter to the Lord Jacobino da Palude; he espoused her in her widowhood of her first husband the Lord Atto da Sesso. Fifthly and lastly, once again he took certain men and cast them into chains in his dungeons, and would take no ransom for them, though they had never offended him nor owed him any obedience: wherefore the men of Parma, seeing that he was already outlawed and yet ceased not from evil, cast forth both Pino and all the heirs of Ghiberto da Gente from their village of Campagine. This Pinotto was named likewise the Lord Jacobino, and was a comely man and of great courage, bold and careless, and most haughty, as is the manner of the men of Parma.

Next year the cousin Guido was himself murdered. For he was journeying from Reggio to Bianello with his kinswoman, the Lady Giovannina, wife to his brother Bonifazio, which brother followed without attendants at a distance of three miles; and these three had only a few hackneys with them, and they were unarmed and without escort. The murderers of these two brethren were, first, one Scarabello da Canossa, who threw the Lord Guido from his horse and thrust him through with his lance as he lay on the ground so that there needed no second blow: and secondly, Azzolino, brother to the Abbot of Canossa, and son to the Lord Guido da Albareto, who smote off his head: and others they were, both on horse and on foot, who smote him with many strokes, "and tore him with wound upon wound." So likewise they did to his brother Bonifazio who followed hard on him. Then they laid the Lady Giovannina on her horse, wherefrom she had cast herself to fall upon her Lord Guido, believing and hoping that they would spare him for her sake, since she was their kinswoman; and all day she journeyed alone and groaning in the bitterness of her heart, and came to Bianello; and there she told her bitter tidings. And they that heard her lifted up their voices and wept most bitterly, until the fount of their tears was dried up. And all that night the bodies of the two brethren lay in that waste and solitary spot. Yet

some say that the Lord Manfredino was moved to pity at these tidings, and took men and a wagon, and raised and joined together the bodies, and laid them in the church of the Templars midway on the road to Bianello. And next day came the men of Bianello, and carried off the bodies and buried them in their robes and armor in the sepulcher of their fathers, in the convent of the Friars Minor at Montefalcone; and it was a Saturday, whereon men sang for the Epistle at Mass those words of Jeremiah, "Let their wives be bereaved of children, and widows." And, for that the Lord Rolandino of Canossa was cousin-german to this Scarabello, therefore he was accused before the Podesta: (for Scarabello himself had been already banished from Reggio, nor would he have appeared if he had been cited). Wherefore the Lord Bonifacio, Podesta of Reggio, sent for the Lord Rolandino, who came before him with a very great multitude of armed men: so when the Podesta had learned his innocence in this matter he suffered him to go in peace and unhurt. Then the Lord Guido da Albareto was accused, and appeared and was kept ten days in prison, and gently tortured once only, and then sent away. And while he was being put to the torture, the men of Reggio thought they must needs have civil war for three reasons: first, by reason of these two brothers lately slain; secondly, by reason of this great lord who was being tortured; and thirdly, by reason of the parties at Reggio. (For there were two parties, each whereof called itself, and was indeed, of the Church party: for they of the Emperor's party had been cast forth from the city many years since, and still wandered homeless through the world.) But at the beginning, when the Lord Guido was to be put to torture, the Podesta besought him to suffer it in all patience for God's sake and his own; more especially" (he said) "in that I am unwilling to inflict such pain, but I must needs do so, both by reason of my office, and by reason of the crime whereof you stand accused." So the Lord Guido, knowing that the Podesta did this for the honor of both parties, suffered patiently that which afore would have been sour and bitter to him; yet afterwards, when he knew the reason, he held it pleasant. And he said to the Podesta, "If it be possible, let this chalice pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as

thou wilt." Yet there were some who said that the aforesaid Guido was spared all torment, with the help of money, which all things obey. For his son Roland, Abbot of Canossa, gave £100 Imperial to the Lord Guido da Correggio, and as much again to the Podesta of Reggio; and by their favor he escaped this torment. So when it was noised abroad that he should be tortured, the Podesta would suffer none to be there with him but himself alone; and then he caused him to sit awhile on a great balance for weighing flour, and spake familiarly with him of all these things which had befallen. So when he was come down from this instrument of torture and lay in bed, he sent for his brother Jacopo da Palude and told him all that he had suffered in his torture: then he came down from the palace and went to the house of the Lord Rolandino of Canossa, which was hard by the piazza; and there he dwelt at his ease, eating and drinking and merrymaking the whole day long. Yet before, when he came down from the Palazzo Communale, he had caused himself to be upheld by two men, one on either side, as desiring thereby to show that he had been grievously tortured by the Podesta. But the Lord saith, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed." Moreover, concerning this Lord Guido da Albereto, it was told me by his son the Abbot of Canossa, speaking familiarly with me hard by the gate of the town of Gesso, that five years before his father suffered this mishap, he himself had inquired of a certain diviner of that which should befall his father; whereupon the diviner showed him a book wherein was written, "He shall fall into the hands of a judge:" as indeed came to pass. Whereby we see that not only prophets foretell the future, but even sometimes demons and sinful men; yet the righteous foretell it better than they, as I may be able to show next year, if life be spared me.

Now this Lord Guido da Bianello who was thus murdered was a comely man, and learned, and of great discernment and memory, and ready speech, and eloquence, sprightly and jocund and free and liberal, and of most familiar and pleasant company, and a lover and a great benefactor of the Friars Minor. For the Friars Minor had a convent on his lands, in the woods at the foot of Montefalcone, where he also was buried with his brother in the sepulcher of their fathers, as I

have said above: God of His mercy grant that his soul may rest in peace, if so it may be. Amen. For while he lived he was an exceeding good friend to me and to Guido di Adamo, my brother in the flesh and in Religion, who likewise died and was buried at Montefalcone. Yet this Lord Guido was held to be a man of malice by them that loved him not; and they accused him of many wickednesses; that is, that he was a slanderer and defamer of God's servants. And that is ever the wont of carnal men, gladly to defame God's servants, for they think themselves excused of their own sins if they may have holy men to bear them company. Moreover, men accused him that he was wont to say, "If I am predestined to eternal life, then shall I come thereto, whatsoever may be my sins; and if I am predestined to eternal damnation, so shall it be likewise, in spite of all good deeds." In proof whereof he would bring forward that which is written, "Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose it, shall preserve it." And such was his folly that, howsoever either I or other Brethren and friends of his might warn him to look to his ways, he scorned to hear us and would only answer, "It is written, 'He that is hasty to give credit, is light of heart, and shall be lessened.'" Yet I would answer against him (for he was most learned in the Bible) saying "The Wise Man saith, 'Blessed is the man that is always fearful.'" And, as aforesaid, he would not hear me, but ever shook his head as though he scorned all that I spake to him. So I said to him, "It is written in the Proverbs, 'The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that is wise hearkeneth unto counsels.'" Yet when I had thus spoken, adding, "I have said to thee all that in me lieth," then answered he and said, "Ecclesiasticus saith, 'There are many words that have much vanity in disputing.'" [Here five sheets have been torn out of the MS.]

The final vengeance only came in 1287, when on the 17th day of May was slain Pinotto, son of the Lord Ghiberto da Gente, in his villa of Campagine, by his nephews Ghibertino and Guglielmo. The cause of this murder was a certain mill, for the possession of which each party contended—nay, what is worse, he was slain for the sake of a *pinza* or small tongue of land behind the mill. But many days and years before

this he had exchanged words of discord and contention with them and with their father; wherefore they came with certain evil doers and hired murderers and fell upon him with clubs and other weapons, and slew him. And note here three judgments of God. First, that all who were consenting and privy to the death of Pinotto's wife, the Lady Beatrice of Apulia, were slain themselves also within a brief space: the first of whom was Pinotto himself; then the Lord Guido da Bianello. For the Lord Guido had given Pinotto cause for her death, since he would have lain with her, but she utterly spurned such a temptation, not only for the crime of adultery, but also for that Pinotto and Guido were cousins-german. The third was one Martinello, who smothered her one night with a featherbed in the villa of Correggio. The second judgment of God is that this same Martinello was not only present at the murder of Pinotto (whose wife he had already slain at his bidding) but also, being wounded at the siege of Montecalvolo, returned home, and there met his death by his own wife's treachery, whereof he was ignorant. The third marvelous judgment of God is that, if strangers had slain Pinotto, instead of his nephew, then those same nephews would have avenged his death for the honor of their house, and according to the vainglorious custom of worldly men.

I have written these matters aforesaid, for that I have seen and known well-nigh all these men whereof I have spoken; and quickly, as in a brief space, they have passed from this life into another. If more noteworthy deeds were done in this year 1285 I remember them not. I have written the aforesaid in good faith, with truth for my guide, even as I saw each thing with mine own eyes. Here endeth the year 1285: and here followeth the year which is to come.

## X

THIS year [1286] was a disordered wintertide, for all ancient saws were found false except one which men commonly say, "February brief, yet most fulfilled of grief." Which proverb was most plentifully fulfilled this year, above all that I have seen in all the days of my life: for seven times this February did God "give snow like wool;" and there was a mighty cold and frost. And many blains and boils were en-

gendered both in men and in hens, which afterwards broke out openly. For in Cremona and Piacenza and Parma and Reggio and many other cities and Bishoprics of Italy there were very many deaths both among men and among hens; and in the city of Cremona a single woman lost, within a brief space, forty-eight hens; and a certain doctor of medicine caused some to be opened, and found on the tip of the heart of each hen a boil like unto a small bladder; he caused a dead man to be opened likewise, on whose heart he found the same. In those days, in the month of May, Master John the Leech, who dwelt at Venice and had a stipend from the city, sent a letter to his fellow citizens of Reggio, warning them to eat neither potherbs, nor eggs, nor hens' flesh throughout the month of May: wherefore a hen was sold in those days for five small pence. Yet certain wise women fed their hens with pounded rue mingled with bran or meal; by the virtue of which antidote they were wondrously liberated and escaped death.

A certain Friar Minor left our Order to enter that of the Cistercians, and he bore himself so well among them that they made him Abbot of a great monastery. Then the Friars, having a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge on this occasion, fearing moreover lest others might leave our Order after the example of this brother, took him and brought him back into his past Order and fed him with the bread of affliction and water of distress. The Cistercians hearing this were greatly troubled and incensed against the Friars, and this for five several reasons. First, for that they punished so sorely a man who deserved no punishment. Secondly, for that he had already been released from our Order. Thirdly, for that they took him clad in his own Cistercian habit. Fourthly, for that he had a great prelacy in their Order, being an Abbot. Fifthly, for that he had borne himself so excellently in their Order, as to his life and good manners, as to be acceptable and gracious to all men. Brother Bonagrazia, when he was Minister Provincial of Bologna, had a like quarrel with the Abbey of Nonantola. For a certain brother Guidolino of Ferrara left our Order and entered among the Black Monks of St. Benedict, where he bore himself so well and laudably in the Abbey of Nonantola that he was beloved by all, and

they chose him for Abbot. Wherefore the Friars had a great altercation with those monks before the Lord Giovanni Gaetano, who was then Protector of our Order and who after was Pope Nicholas III; and the Friars with much violence obtained their desire that he should not be Abbot; yet the said monks spent £10,000 Imperial that they might have him for their Abbot. And finding that they labored in vain to procure his election, they chose no other in his room, but made him lord of their Abbey as though he were their true Abbot. See now how those monks loved him! Yet he was like Joseph of old, nor would he return evil for evil unto his brethren, though he had it in his power and opportunity: nay, rather he studied to do them good. For he saw and welcomed our Brethren at Nonantola as angels from Heaven, and prayed them to keep two copyists always there at the expense of the Abbey, that they might copy to their fill the original writings whereof it had great plenty. This Brother Guidolino was my close friend when we dwelt together in the convent of Ravenna. And note that the Friars Minor obtained of Pope Nicholas IV (who was of their own Order) the privilege that none who left their Order should ever be promoted to any prelaacy in another Order.

In these days the Commonalty of Bologna made heavy statutes against their knights and all the nobles of their city, namely that whosoever of the knights or nobles should wrong a man of the people's guilds, that man should be so spoiled both in his villages and in the vity, in his houses and fields and trees, that of all his possessions not one stone should be left on another. And the first to fall under this curse were the sons of the Lord Niccolo de' Bazcleri, who were utterly despoiled by the people: wherefore the knightly families of Bologna fear now to live in the city, for the onslaughts of the furious Commonalty: and, like the French, they dwell now on their country estates: wherefore the common folk, who live in the city, may well be called henceforth the *bourgeois*, as in France. But let the Commonalty dread lest God's wrath come upon them, for they do against the Scripture (Levit. xix, 15). Moreover the men of the people and country folk are they through whom the world is ruined, but through knights and nobles it is saved. For Patecchio saith in his *Book of Pests*



“Et quando de sola fit tomera, etc.,”

which is to say, that it is a pest when that is exalted which should be lowly. Remember the example of the butchers of Cremona, one of whom had a great dog who bore patiently many insults from another butcher's small dog; but when the other would not cease from his accustomed insolence, being at last provoked beyond measure, he caught him by the throat and drowned him in the Po. And so are many in this world, who if they lived in peace would be hurt by no man; but because they go about seeking quarrels of set purpose, therefore they find them. That same year the men of Bologna banished many of their fellow citizens to dwell in exile in divers cities: and this was done by the Commonalty, who had gained the mastery over the knights. And note that the Holy Scriptures speak of the dominion of certain persons as most mischievous; that is, of women, children, servants, and fools; also of enemies and worthless persons.

Moreover, in this year 1287, many French ships were sunken in the sea beyond Naples by the fleet of Peter of Aragon. And many of King Charles' fleet who had survived the fight, common folk and knights, nobles and barons, were blinded by their captors. Which vengeance was just and merited, for they are most proud and foolish, an accursed folk who despise almost all other peoples of the world; and especially do they scorn the English and the Lombards (under which term they include all Italians and all on this side of the Alps): whereas in truth it is they who are despicable and scorned of all men. For to them we may apply that which is said in the trutannic verse of Trutannus

The Vagrant with his pot of wine, warm in an ingle-nook,  
Will deem the wealthiest Eastern King scarce fit to be his  
cook.

For when Frenchmen have well drunken, then they think to beat down and conquer the whole world at one blow. But they are deceived<sup>1</sup> . . . therefore the French are proud beyond measure. And they afflicted the Kingdom of Naples, and Tuscany, and the Lombards dwelling in the kingdom of

<sup>1</sup>On this last page of the MS. a few words here and there are entirely illegible.

Apulia, and took from them their victuals without money and without price—corn and wine and milk, fish and flesh, capons and geese and hens and whatsoever they found fit for food. Nor was it enough that they gave no payment; but they beat men also and wounded them grievously. A man of Parma had a most fair wife; and when she asked of a certain Frenchman the price of the geese which she had sold him, not only did he refuse her all payment, but he wounded her grievously, with so sore a stroke that no second was needed; and yet he asked of her, “Wilt thou that I smite thee again?” Her husband hearing this quaked with indignation; and herein was no marvel: for whereas aforetime she had been most perfect in beauty, now all the rest of her life she halted in her gait by reason of that stroke. Wherefore I say that the rule of the French hath ever been most foul and cruel, and it is just that mishap should fall upon them and that they should be destroyed. Moreover in that same year the men of the ancient party of the Emperor Frederick, seeing that they could neither take by force nor hold Reggio nor Modena, went then and seized . . .

[WITH THESE WORDS THE MANUSCRIPT OF SALIMBENE COMES  
ABRUPTLY TO AN END. HE DIED THE FOLLOWING YEAR,  
1288.]

# DANTE

THE CHIEF MIND OF THE MIDDLE AGES

1265-1321

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Dante has been called "the chief mind of the Middle Ages"; and his "Vita Nuova," or "New Life," is his own picture of the unfolding of that mind. In early life Dante was primarily a dreaming lover, and this book is the story of his love. In middle life he was chiefly a stern and noble thinker; and his thought, his understanding of life, is embodied forever in his "Divina Commedia," which has been called the "conscience of the Middle Ages." Yet even in the great "Commedia" Dante has found place for his beloved Beatrice. She remains the guiding spirit of his later work as of the earlier one.

The "Vita Nuova" is given here for its autobiographical value; hence such of its songs as do not add to the connected story have been omitted, so that the reader may more clearly follow the life tale. As even then the material outlines of this spiritual "new life" may not be clear, let us briefly summarize them.

Dante (originally Durante) Alighieri was a Florentine youth when Florence was in the height of her power as a city republic. He fell in love, or rather into a sort of poet's ecstacy of admiration, with Beatrice Portmari, when he was but nine years old and she but eight. Apparently he never wooed her openly; and she wedded another Florentine, and died in 1290 at the age of twenty-three. Dante afterward wedded a daughter of the powerful Donati family. He rose to prominence in Florentine politics and was banished as a result of the partisan strife of 1301. Thereafter he was an exiled and wandering poet, yearning always for the beauty of his native city.

## "THE NEW LIFE"

### I

IN that part of the book of my memory before which little could be read is found a rubric which saith: *Incipit Vita*

*Nuova.* Beneath which rubric I find written the words which it is my purpose to copy in this little book, and if not all, at least their substance.

## II

Nine times already since my birth had the heaven of light returned almost to one and the same point in relation to its own proper revolution, when the glorious lady of my mind first appeared to mine eyes, who was called *Beatrice* by many that knew not what they were calling her.

She had already been so long in this life that, in her time, the heaven of the stars had moved one twelfth part of a degree towards the East; so that almost from the beginning of her ninth year she appeared to me and I beheld her almost at the end of my ninth. She appeared to me clothed in most noble hue, a subdued and modest crimson, cinctured and adorned after the fashion that was becoming to her most tender age. At that point I verily declare that the vital spirit which dwelleth in the most secret chamber of the heart began to tremble so mightily that it was horribly apparent in the least of my pulses, and trembling, it said these words: *Ecce Deus fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi.*<sup>1</sup>

At that moment the animal spirit which dwelleth in the high chamber to which all the spirits of sense carry their perceptions, began to marvel much, and speaking especially to the spirits of sight said these words: *Apparuit jam beatitudo vestra.*<sup>2</sup>

At that moment the natural spirit which dwells in that part where our nourishment is distributed began to weep, and weeping said these words: *Heu miser! quia frequenter impeditus ero deinceps.*<sup>3</sup> From thenceforward I say that Love held lordship over my soul, which was so early bounden unto him, and he began to hold over me so much assurance and so much mastery through the power which my imagination gave to him, that it behoved me to do all his pleasure perfectly. He commanded me many times that I should seek to behold

<sup>1</sup>“Here is a deity stronger than I; who, coming, shall rule over me.”

<sup>2</sup>“Your beatitude hath now been made manifest unto you.”

<sup>3</sup>“Woe is me! for that often I shall be disturbed from this time forth.”

this most youthful angel: wherefore in my childhood often did I go seeking her; and I beheld her of so noble and laudable bearing that assuredly of her might be said those words of the poet Homer: "She seemed not the daughter of a mortal man but of God." And although her image that continually abode with me, were Love's exultancy to master me, nevertheless it was of so noble a virtue that no time did it suffer Love to rule over me without the faithful counsel of reason, in those things where such counsel were useful to hear. And since to dwell on things suffered and done in so young an age hath an appearance of speaking idle tales I will turn me from them; and passing by many things which might be drawn from the copy whence these are derived, I will come to those words that are written in my memory under more weighty paragraphs.

## III

After so many days had passed, that the nine years were precisely completed since the above written appearance of this most gentle one, and on the last of those days, it came to pass that this wondrous lady appeared to me clothed in hue of purest white in the midst of two gentle ladies who were of fuller age; and passing by the way she turned her eyes towards that part where I was right fearful; and of her ineffable courtesy which now is rewarded in the greater world, gave me a salutation of such virtue, that methought I beheld the uttermost bounds of blessedness.

The hour when her most sweet salutation reached me was assuredly the ninth of that day: and inasmuch as that was the first time that her words set forth to come to mine ears, such sweetness possessed me that as one drunken I departed from all people and withdrew to the solitude of a chamber of mine and set me a-thinking of this most courteous one.

And as I thought of her, a gentle sleep fell upon me wherein a wondrous vision appeared to me: for methought I saw in my chamber a cloud of the hue of flame, within which I discerned the figure of a lord, of fearful aspect to one who should look on him. And he seemed to me of such gladness as to himself that a wondrous thing it was; and in his words he said many things which I understood not save a few, among which

I understood these: *Ego dominus tuus*.<sup>4</sup> In his arms methought I saw one sleeping, naked, save that she seemed to me wrapped lightly in a crimson drapery; whom, gazing at very intently, I knew to be the lady of the salutation, who the day before had deigned to salute me. And in one of his hands methought he held a thing that was all aflame; and methought he said to me these words: *Vide cor tuum*.<sup>5</sup> And when he had tarried a while, methought he awoke her who slept and so wrought he by his art that he made her eat of that thing that was aflame in his hand, whereof she ate afeared. Thereafter, short time he abode ere his gladness was changed to bitterest weeping: and thus weeping he gathered this lady up in his arms and with her methought he went away heavenward: whereat I sustained so great anguish that my feeble little sleep could not endure, but broke and I was awake. And straightway I began to ponder and found that the hour in which this vision had appeared to me had been the fourth hour of the night: so that it manifestly appeareth that it was the first of the last nine hours of the night.

And pondering on what had appeared to me, I purposed to make it known to many who were famous rimers of that time: and forasmuch as I had of myself already learned the art of saying words in rime, I purposed to make a sonnet in which I should salute all Love's lieges and praying them that they would interpret my vision, I wrote to them what I had seen in my sleep; and then I began this sonnet:

To every captive soul and gentle heart, into whose presence  
come the present rimes, that they may write me back their  
opinion—Greeting in their lord, to wit, Love.

Already nigh a third of the hours of the time that every star  
is bright to us, had passed, when suddenly Love appeared  
to me, the memory of whose being maketh me shudder.

Gladsome Love seemed to me, holding my heart in his hand,  
and in his arms he had my lady, wrapped in a drapery and  
sleeping.

Then he awakened her and of this flaming heart, she fearful,  
did humbly eat: afterwards I beheld him go his way a-weep-  
ing.

<sup>4</sup>“I am thy master.”

<sup>5</sup>“Behold thy heart!”

To this sonnet answer was made by many and in divers senses, among which he was an answer whom I call chief of my friends; and he then composed a sonnet which begins: *Thou didst behold to my seeming all excellency*. And this was as 'twere the beginning of the friendship between him and me, when he knew of a surety that I was he who had sent him this.

The true interpretation of the said dream was not then seen by any one, but now it is manifest to the most simple.

## IV

From this vision forward my natural spirit began to be impeded in its action because my mind was wholly given to thinking of this most gentle lady; wherefore in short time after I became of so frail and weak a state that the sight of me weighed upon many of my friends; and many full of spite sought to learn from me what my will was wholly to conceal from others. And I, perceiving the malicious questioning they made of me, by Love's will, who commanded me according to the counsel of reason, answered them, that Love was he who had thus dealt with me: I spake of Love because I bore in my countenance so many of his tokens that this much could not be hidden. And when they asked me: Through whom hath this Love thus wasted thee? then I, smiling, gazed at them and nothing said.

## V

One day it came to pass that this most gentle lady sat in a place where words of the Queen of glory were being heard, and I was in a place from which I could behold my beatitude; and in the midway between her and me in a direct line sat a gentle lady of most pleasing mien, who gazed at me many times, marveling at my look which seemed to find its end in her; whereby many became aware of her gazing. And so far was heed given thereto, that departing from this place I heard say behind me: Behold how such a lady wasteth this man's person. And by their naming her, I learned that they were speaking of her who had been in the middle of the direct line which started from the most gentle Beatrice and ended in mine eyes. Then I comforted me greatly being assured that

my secret had not been made common that day to others by my look.

And straightway I thought to make this gentle lady a screen of the truth, and such show did I make thereof in a short time, that my secret was thought to be known by most of the persons who were talking of me. Some months and years I concealed me with this lady, and to make folk more credulous I composed for her certain little things in rime which it is not my purpose to write here, save in so far as they served to treat of that most gentle Beatrice; and therefore I will pass them all by, save that I will write thereof something that may seem to be in praise of her.

## VI

I say that at this time when this lady was a screen of Love so great as that on my part, there came to me a desire that I should record the name of that most gentle one and accompany it with many names of ladies, and in especial with the name of this gentle lady: so I took the names of sixty, the fairest ladies of the city where my lady was placed by the most high Lord, and I composed an epistle in the form of a *serventese* which I will not write down, nor would I have made mention of it were it not to tell of what came wondrously to pass in composing it, namely that in no other number did it suffer the name of my lady to remain than in the ninth among the names of those ladies.

## VII

It behooved the lady with whom I had so long hidden my desire, to depart from the aforesaid city and to go into a far country: wherefore I, as though dismayed at the fair defense which had failed me, was much disquieted, more than I myself would have believed before. And thinking that if I spake not somewhat sorrowfully of her departure, folk would the sooner be aware of my concealment, I purposed to utter some lamentation in a sonnet which I shall write down, for that my lady was the immediate cause of certain words which are in the sonnet, as is apparent to him who understandeth it: so then I composed this sonnet:



O ye who on Love's way pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow heavy as is mine, and I pray only that ye bear to hear me; and then imagine if I am the hostel and key of every torment.

Love, not indeed for my small goodness, but of his nobleness, placed me in a life so sweet and calm that I heard say behind me oft-times: through what worthiness hath this man his heart so glad!

Now have I lost all my exultancy, which sprang from a treasure of love; wherefore I remain poor in such wise that fear cometh upon me to tell thereof.

So that I, who would do as they that hide for shame their lack, make outward show of joy and in my heart do pine away and weep.

This sonnet hath two chief parts; for in the first my intent is to call Love's lieges by those words of Jeremiah the prophet: *O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, attendite et videte, si est dolor sicut dolor meus*; and pray that they bear to hear me. In the second part I relate where Love had placed me, with other meaning than the last parts of the sonnet show: and I tell what I have lost.

## VIII

After the departure of this noble lady it was the pleasure of the lord of the angels to call unto his glory a lady, young and of most gentle mien, who was of much favor in the aforesaid city, whose body I beheld lying bereft of its soul in the midst of many ladies that wept very piteously. Then remembering that once I had seen her bearing that most gentle lady company, I could not restrain some tears; but rather weeping did purpose to say some words of her death in guerdon of my having some times seen her with my lady. And I touched somewhat on that in the last part of the words which I composed, even as manifestly appeareth to him who understands them.

## IX

Some days after the death of this lady a thing befell wherefore it behoved me to depart from the aforesaid city and go

towards those parts, where abode that gentle lady who had been my defense; although the end of my journey was not so far as she dwelt. And albeit that, so far as seemed, I was in the company of many, yet did the journey so mislike me, that hardly could my sighs give vent to the anguish which my heart felt, for that I was faring farther from my beatitude. And so the most sweet lord who held mastery over me by the virtue of the most gentle lady, appeared in my fancy as a pilgrim lightly clad and in coarse apparel. He seemed to me dismayed, and he gazed upon the ground, save that from time to time methought his eyes turned to a river, fair, swift and very clear, which flowed wondrously alongside this road whereon I was.

Methought Love called on me, and said to me these words: I come from that lady who hath long been thy defense and I know that her return is not to be, and therefore I have with me, that heart which I made thee have for her, and bear it to a lady who shall be thy defense even as this one was, (and he named her to me so that I knew her well); but yet if thou tell any of these words which I have spoken to thee, tell them in such wise that the simulated love be not discerned by them, which thou hast shown to her and which it will behove thee to show to another. And, these words said, all this my fantasy vanished suddenly by reason of the great portion of himself that methought Love gave me: and as though transformed in my appearance, I rode that day very pensive and accompanied by many sighs.

## X

After my return I set me to seek this lady that my lord had named to me in the way of sighs. And that my speech be the briefer, I say that in short time I made her so much my defense that too many folk spoke of it beyond the bounds of courtesy; so that many times it weighed heavily upon me. And for this cause, (that is to say this outrageous rumor, which seemed to defame me of vice), that most gentle one who was the destroyer of all vice and queen of the virtues, as she passed a certain way denied me her most sweet salutation in which lay all my beatitude. And digressing somewhat from

my present purpose, I would give to understand what her salutation wrought in me by its virtue.

## XI

I say that when she appeared from any direction, by the hope of her wondrous salutation no enemy was left to me, but rather a flame of charity possessed me which made me pardon whomsoever had offended me; and to him who had then asked of me concerning any matter, my answer would have been simply: *Love!* with a countenance clothed in humility. And if she were somewhat nigh to giving her salutation, a spirit of Love, destroying all the other spirits of sense, thrust forth the feeble little spirits of sight and said to them: "Go and honor your lady," and he remained in their place. And whoso had desired to know Love could know him by gazing at the tremor of mine eyes. And when this most gentle lady gave salutation, so far from Love being such a medium as might dull the unbearable beatitude, he seemed rather to become such by surfeit of sweetness, that my body, which was wholly under his rule, many times fell like a heavy lifeless thing. So that it plainly appears that my beatitude lay in her salutation which many times exceeded and overflowed my capacity.

## XII

Now returning to my purpose, I say that after my beatitude was denied to me, so much grief possessed me that having parted me from all folk I went to a solitary place to bathe the earth with bitterest tears: and after this weeping was somewhat assuaged in me I betook me to my chamber where I might lament unheard. And there craving pity of the mistress of courtesy, and saying: "Love, help thy liege," I fell asleep like a little beaten, sobbing child.

It came to pass, like as in the midst of my sleep, that methought I saw a youth arrayed in pure white garments, sitting alongside me in my chamber, and deep in thought in so far as his appearance went. He gazed at me where I lay and when he had gazed at me a while, methought he called on me, sighing, and said these words to me: *Fili mi, tempus est ut prætermittantur simulacra nostra.*<sup>6</sup> Then methought I

<sup>6</sup> "My son, it is time for us to lay aside our counterfeiting."

knew him, because he called me, even as in my dreams erewhile he had many times called me.

And gazing at him methought he wept piteously and was awaiting some word from me; wherefore reassuring myself I began thus to speak with him: Lord of all nobleness, wherefore weepest thou? And he said these words to me: *Ego tamquam centrum circuli, cui simili modo se habent circumferentiæ partes; tu autem non sic.*<sup>7</sup> Then pondering over his words, methought he had spoken to me very darkly so that I forced myself to speak and said these words to him: Why is this, my lord that thou speakest so darkly to me? And he said to me in the vulgar tongue: Ask no more than may be for thy good.

And therefore I began to speak with him of the salutation which was denied to me and I asked him the cause; whereon in this wise was answer made to me by him: This our Beatrice hath heard from certain persons who were discoursing of thee, that the lady whom I named to thee in the way of sighs, had suffered some vexation through thee, and therefore this most gentle one, who is contrary to all vexations, deigned not to salute thy person fearing lest it be vexful. Wherefore inasmuch as somewhat of my secret is verily known by her through long wont, I desire that thou compose certain words in rime, wherein thou shalt include the power that I hold over thee through her and how thou wast hers, right from thy very boyhood. And of that call thou him to witness who knoweth it; and how thou prayest him that he tell it her, and I, who am he, will gladly speak to her thereof; and by this she shall perceive thy desire, perceiving which, she will understand the words of the beguiled ones. And look that these words be as it were a medium, so that thou speak not to her directly, for it is not meet. And send them not without me, to any place where they may be heard by her; but have them adorned with sweet music wherein I will be every time that is needful.

And having said these words, he vanished and my sleep was broken. Wherefore I, remembering me, found that this vision had appeared to me in the ninth hour of the day; and before I issued from this chamber I purposed to make a ballad in

<sup>7</sup>“I am as the center of a circle, to the which all parts of the circumference bear an equal relation; but with thee it is not thus.”

which I should follow out what my lord had imposed on me. . . .

## XIII

After this battle of divers thoughts, it came to pass that this most gentle one came to a place where many gentle ladies were assembled; to which place I was conducted by one, my friend, who thought to do me great pleasure in so much as he was leading me where so many ladies were displaying their loveliness. Wherefore, as one not knowing to what I was being led, and trusting me to this person who had conducted his friend to the verge of life, I said: Why are we come to these ladies? Then he said to me: To look to it that they be worthily served.

And true it is that they were assembled there in the company of a gentle lady who had been wedded that day; and therefore, according to the usage of the aforesaid city, it behoved them to hold her company at the first sitting that she made at the table in the mansion of her new spouse. So that thinking to do pleasure to this my friend, I purposed to stay in his company at the service of the ladies. And finally, being thus minded, methought I felt a wondrous tremor begin at the left side of my breast and quickly spread over all parts of my body. Then I say that I covertly leaned my person against a painting which surrounded this hall, and fearing lest any one might be aware of my tremor I raised mine eyes and gazing on those ladies beheld the most gentle Beatrice in the midst of them. Then were my senses so destroyed by the might which Love assumed on beholding himself so nigh unto the most gentle lady, that no more than the spirits of sight remained alive; and even these were left outside their organs because Love would dwell in their most noble place to behold the wondrous lady: and although I was other than before, much did I grieve for these little spirits who were lamenting loudly and saying: If he there had not thus hurled us out of our place we could stay beholding the marvel of this lady, even as do the others our likes.

I say that many of these ladies perceiving how I was transformed, began to marvel; and discoursing, did make mockery of me with this most gentle one: whereupon my innocent

friend perceiving this, took me by the hand and drawing me forth from the sight of these ladies, asked what ailed me. Then being somewhat restored and my dead senses risen again and the expelled returned into possession, I said these words to this my friend: I have set my feet in that region of life beyond which one cannot go with intent to return.

And having departed from him I went back to my chamber of tears, wherein, weeping and ashamed, I said within myself: If this lady knew my state I believe she would not thus mock at my person, rather do I believe that great pity of it would possess her. And as I was thus weeping, I purposed to say words in which speaking to her I should signify the cause of my transformation and say that I know verily that it is not known, and that if it were known, I believe that folk would be moved to pity of it, and I purposed to say these words desiring that perchance they might come to her hearing; and then I composed this sonnet:

With the other ladies you mock at my aspect and think not,  
lady, whence it cometh that I have the semblance of so  
strange a figure to you when I behold your beauty.

If you knew it, pity could no more maintain against me her  
wonted obduracy; for Love, when he findeth me so nigh  
unto you, exultant grows and taketh such assurance

that he smiteth among my afflicted senses and this he slayeth  
and that he chases forth, so that he alone remaineth to be-  
hold you.

Wherefore I change me to an alien semblance, yet am not so  
changed but that I truly hear then the lamentations of the  
outcast and tormented spirits.

#### XIV

After the strange transformation a potent thought possessed me which departed little from me; rather did it continually reprove me, and such was its reasoning with me: Since thou art reduced to so derisive an aspect when thou art near this lady, wherefore dost thou still seek to behold her? Look! if thou wert asked by her what wouldst thou have to answer, assuming that thou hadst each of thy faculties free, so far

that thou mightest answer her? And to this another lowly thought made answer and said: If I lost not my faculties and were free so that I could answer, I would say to her that as soon as I image forth her wondrous beauty, so soon a desire possesses me to behold her, which is of such power that it slays and destroys in my memory all that could rise up against it; and therefore my past sufferings do not restrain me from seeking the sight of her. Wherefore moved by such thoughts I proposed to say certain words, wherein making my excuse unto her against such reproof I should set forth also what happened to me when near her; and I composed this sonnet:

That which befalleth me, is effaced from memory when I set forth to behold you, beauteous Joy, and when I am nigh to you I hear Love say: Flee! if to perish be irksome to thee.

My countenance showeth the hue of my heart, which, fainting, seeketh support, and with the great trembling inebriate, methinks the very stones cry out: Die! Die!

He who then beholds me, committeth sin if he comfort not the affrighted soul by showing at least that he grieveth for me because of the pity which your mocking slayeth, and which is begotten of the deathly hue of eyes that desire their death.

## XV

After I had composed these sonnets wherein I spake to this lady (for they were the reciters of well-nigh my whole condition), and when I thought to hold my peace, because meseemed to have manifested enough of myself, even though I should ever more refrain from addressing her, it behoved me to take up new matter and more noble than the past. And since the reason for that new matter is delightful to hear, I will, briefly as I may, discourse thereof.

## XVI

Insomuch as from my aspect the secret of my heart was understood by many persons, certain ladies, who had gathered together, each delighting in the company of other, knew my heart well because each of them had been at many of my dis-

comfitures. And, passing near them as led by fortune, I was hailed by one of those gentle ladies, and she who had called me was a lady of most graceful speech. So that when I had arrived before them and saw that my most gentle lady was not among them, reassuring me I greeted them and asked what their pleasure might be. These ladies were many, amongst whom were certain who laughed amongst themselves. Others there were who gazed at me looking that I should speak. Others there were who spake among themselves, of whom one, turning her eyes towards me and calling me by name, said these words: To what end lovest thou this thy lady since thou canst not support her presence? Tell us, for certes it behoveth that the end of such love be strange indeed.

And after she had said these words to me, not only she but all the others began visibly to await my answer. Then I said these words to them: Ladies mine, the end of my love was once this lady's salutation of whom I ween ye are thinking; and therein dwelt my beatitude, for it was the end of all my desires. But since it hath pleased her to deny it to me, Love, my lord, by his grace, hath placed all my beatitude in that which cannot fail me.

## XVII

Then these ladies began to speak among themselves; and even as sometimes we behold rain falling mingled with fair snow even so methought I beheld their words mingled with sighs. And after they had spoken a while among themselves, the lady who first had spoken to me said these words also to me: We beseech thee to tell us where lieth this thy beatitude: And I answering them said simply: In those words that praise my lady. And she answered: If thou hadst spoken truly to us, thou wouldst have fashioned in other guise those words which thou didst say to us when thou didst signify thy condition to us.

Wherefore pondering on these words I departed from them as one shamed; and I went saying within myself: Since there is such beatitude in those words that praise my lady, why hath other speech been mine? And therefore I proposed to take evermore for the matter of my speech, that which should be praise of this most gentle lady; and pondering much on



this, methought I had undertaken a matter too exalted for my strength, so that I dare not begin; and thus I tarried some days desiring to speak yet afear'd to begin.

## XVIII

It then befell, that passing by a way along which there coursed a river of most clear waters, so great a desire to speak possessed me, that I began to ponder on the style I should use, and I thought that it was not fitting to speak of her except I spake to ladies in the second person, and not to every lady but to such only as are gentle and not mere women. Then I say that my tongue spake as if moved by itself and said: *Ladies, that have intelligence of love*. These words I treasured in my memory with great joy thinking to take them for my beginning; whereupon being afterward returned to the aforesaid city, and pondering for some days, I began a canzone with this beginning. . . .

## XIX

After the passage of not many days (even as it pleased the glorious Lord who denied not death unto himself), he who had been the parent of so great a marvel as that most gentle Beatrice was seen to be, departing from this life, went verily to eternal glory. Wherefore inasmuch as such parting is grievous to those who are left behind and have been friends of him who passeth away, and since no friendship is so intimate as that borne by a good father to a good child, and by a good child to a good father, and since this lady was of surpassing goodness and her father (even as by many is believed, and truly), was good in a high degree, it is manifest that this lady was filled with bitterest grief.

And inasmuch as according to the use of the aforesaid city, women with women and men with men assemble at such mourning, many ladies were gathered where this Beatrice was weeping piteously: wherefore seeing some ladies return from her, I heard them speak words of this most gentle one how she was lamenting. Among which words I heard how they said: Certes she weepeth so that whoso should behold her must needs die of pity. Then these ladies passed by; and I was left in such sadness that from time to time a tear would

bathe my face, wherefore I did defend me by placing many times my hands before mine eyes. And were it not that I expected to hear further of her (because I was in a place by which the greater number of the ladies went that were parting from her), I should have hidden me immediately the tears had assailed me.

And therefore as I tarried yet in the same place, other ladies passed by near me, who went discoursing and saying among them these words: Who of us should e'er be joyous that have heard this lady speak so piteously? After those, others passed, who went saying: He who is here, weepeth neither more nor less than if he had beheld her even as we have done. Others then said of me: Behold this man who seemeth not himself, so changed is he. And thus while these ladies were passing, I heard words of her and of me in this manner that I have said.

Wherefore then pondering I purposed to say words (for worthy cause had I to speak) wherein I should include all that I had heard from these ladies. And forasmuch as I would fain have questioned them had it been no blame to me, I took the matter of my rimes as if I had questioned and they had answered.

And I made two sonnets; in the first I ask after that fashion wherein the desire came upon me to ask; in the other I tell their answer using what I heard from them, even as if they had said it responsive to me.

## XX

A few days after this, it came to pass that a grievous infirmity fell upon some part of my body whereby for many days I suffered most bitter pain; which brought me to such weakness that it behoved me to lie like those who cannot stir. I say that on the ninth day, feeling within me pain intolerable, a thought came to me that was of my lady. And when I had pondered somewhat concerning her, I reverted to my poor feeble life, and seeing how slender was its power to endure, even were I whole, I began to weep within myself at such misery. Wherefore sighing heavily I said within myself: Of necessity the most noble Beatrice must one day die.

And thereat so great bewilderment possessed me, that I

closed mine eyes and began to be in travail, even as one delirious and to imagine in this wise: that in the beginning of the wandering that my fancy made, certain faces of disheveled women appeared to me who said to me: Thou too shalt die. And after these ladies, certain strange faces and horrible to behold appeared to me, and said: Thou art dead:

Thus my fancy beginning to wander, I came to such a point that I knew not where I was, and methought I beheld disheveled ladies pass by the way, weeping and wondrously sad; and methought I beheld the sun grow dark, so that the stars showed themselves of a hue that made me judge they were weeping, and methought that birds on the wing fell dead and that there were great earthquakes. And, marveling in such fantasy and much affrighted, I imagined that a certain friend came and said to me: Come, knowest thou not? thy wondrous lady hath departed from this world. Then I began to weep most piteously; and not only did I weep in imagination but I wept with mine eyes, wetting them with real tears.

I imagined that I gazed heavenward, and methought I beheld a multitude of angels who were returning upward and had a cloudlet exceeding white before them, and methought these angels sang gloriously and that the words of their song were these: *Osanna in excelsis*; and naught else meseemed to hear. Then methought my heart where dwelt love so great, said to me: True it is that our lady lieth dead. And at this methought I went and beheld the body wherein that most noble and blessed soul had been. And so strong was the errant fancy, that it showed to me this lady dead; and methought ladies covered her head with a white veil, and that her face had an aspect of humility so great that she seemed to be saying: Now do I behold the fount of peace.

In this vision there fell such great humility upon me through the sight of her, that I called on Death and said: Sweetest Death, come unto me and be not churlish to me; for needs must thou have become gentle, in such place hast thou been! Now come unto me who greatly desire thee: thou seest that I already wear thy hue. And when I had beheld all the mournful offices fulfilled which are wont to be done to the bodies of the dead, methought I returned to my chamber and there gazed heavenward: and so strong was my imagination,

that weeping, I began to say with my real voice: O soul most beauteous, how blessed is he that beholdeth thee! And as I uttered these words with grievous sobbing and tears, and called on Death that he might come to me, a young and gentle lady who was beside my bed, believing that my tears and my words were a lament for the pain of my sickness, began to weep with great dread. Whereupon other ladies who were about the chamber perceived that I was weeping, by the weeping which they beheld this lady make. Wherefore causing her (who was joined to me by most close kinship) to depart from me, they, believing I was dreaming, drew towards me, in order to awaken me, and they said to me: Sleep no more, and be not discomfited. And as they thus spake to me, the mighty vision ceased at the moment when I was about to say: O Beatrice blessed be thou! And already I had said: O Beatrice . . . when coming to myself I opened mine eyes and saw that I had been beguiled; and although I uttered this name my voice was so broken by the convulsion of weeping, that these ladies could not understand me.

And albeit I was sore abashed, yet by some admonition of love I turned me towards them. And when they beheld me they began to say: He seemeth dead; and to say among themselves: let us take heed to comfort him. Wherefore many words they said to comfort me; and then they questioned me of what I had been afear'd. Whereupon, being somewhat restored and having recognized the emptiness of my dream, I answered: I will tell you how it hath fared with me. Then I began to tell all I had seen from the beginning to the end, but I concealed the name of that most gentle one.

## XXI

After this my empty dream, it came to pass one day, that sitting pensive in a certain place, lo, I felt a tremor begin at my heart as if I had been in the presence of this lady. Then, I say there came to me a vision of Love: for methought I beheld him coming from that part where my lady was and methought he said joyously within my heart: Think to bless the day when I took thee captive, for thou hast cause so to do. And certes methought I had a heart so glad, that it seemed not mine own because of its changed state.

And shortly after these words which my heart said to me by the tongue of Love, I beheld a gentle lady coming towards me who was famed for her beauty and was erst the much-beloved mistress of this my first friend. And the name of this lady was Giovanna (Joan), save that for her beauty, as folk believe, the name Primavera (Spring) was given to her: and even so was she called. And looking beyond her I beheld the wondrous Beatrice coming. These ladies passed near me, thus one after the other and methought Love spoke within my heart and said: The first is named Primavera solely for this coming to-day; for I moved the giver of the name to call her *Primavera* which is to say *prima verra* (she will come first) on the day that Beatrice shall reveal herself after her liege's vision. And if thou wilt consider also her first name, it is as much as to say, Primavera, because her name Giovanna cometh from that Giovanni (John) who was the forerunner of the True Light, saying: *Ego vox clamantis in deserto parate viam Domini.*<sup>8</sup> And further methought Love said other words to me after these, namely: He who should subtly consider would call Beatrice, Love, for the great similitude that she hath unto me. Wherefore pondering, I purposed to write of this in rime to my first friend (concealing certain words which it seemed fitting to conceal), believing that his heart did still gaze on the beauty of this gentle Primavera. And I composed this sonnet:

I felt a spirit of love that slept, awaken within my heart: and then I beheld Love coming from afar, so gladsome that scarce I knew him,

saying: Now think to do me honor, and in each word of his he laughed. And as my lord stayed awhile with me, gazing towards that place whence he came,

I beheld Monna Vanna and Monna Bice coming towards the place where I was, one marvel following the other:

And even as memory retelleth me, Love said to me: This is Primavera, and that hath Love for name, so like is she unto me.

\*"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare ye the way of the Lord!"

## XXII

Here a person worthy of having all his difficulties made plain might be perplexed, for he might be in a difficulty as to what I say concerning Love, as if he were a thing in himself and not only an intelligent being but a corporeal being. Which thing according to truth, is false; for Love exists not as a being in itself but is a quality of a being. And that I speak of him as if he were a body and again as if he were a human being, is apparent in three things which I say of him. I say that I saw him coming from afar; wherefore inasmuch as *coming* implies locomotion (and as according to the Philosopher a body only is *per se* capable of local movement), it appeareth that I assume Love to be a body. I say also of him that he laughed and also that he spoke; which things seem to be proper to man and especially the faculty of laughter; and therefore it appeareth that I assume him to be man.

In order to make such things plain so far as is meet for the present purpose, be it first understood that of old there were no versifiers of Love in the vulgar tongue but rather certain poets of Love in the latin tongue: I mean, among us, though perchance among other folk it may have happened and still happen, even as in Greece, that literary and not vernacular poets treated of these things. And not many years have passed since these poets in the common tongue appeared for the first time; for, to compose in rime in the common tongue is equivalent to composing verses in latin, observing a certain measure. And a token of the shortness of the time is, that if we seek in the tongue of *Oc* and in the tongue of *Si* we shall find nothing composed earlier than one hundred and fifty years before the present time. And the reason why some few rude rimesters had a reputation for skill in composing verses is, that they were almost the first to compose in the tongue of *Si*. And the first that began to compose as a vernacular poet was moved because he desired to make his words intelligible to a lady who had difficulty in understanding Latin verses. And this is directed against those who rime upon other matter than that of Love, inasmuch as such manner of speech was at the beginning invented to treat of Love.

Wherefore, inasmuch as greater license in speech is con-

ceded to poets than to composers in prose and as they who compose in rime are no other than poets in vernacular, it is seemly and reasonable that greater license be vouchsafed to them than to other writers in the vulgar tongue: wherefore if any figure or rhetorical color is conceded to the poets it is also conceded to the rimers. Therefore if we see that the poets have spoken to inanimate things as if they had sense and reason and have made them speak together, and not only real things but unreal things (that is to say they have said of things which do not exist that they speak and have said that many qualities of things speak as if they were beings and men), the composer in rime has a right to do the like; not indeed without some reason, but with a reason which it were possible afterwards to make clear in prose.

In Horace a man speaks to his own poetic faculty even as to another person; and they are not the words of Horace only but he says them as though reciting the words of the good Homer, here in his *Poetria: Dic mihi Musa, virum*, etc. In Ovid Love speaketh, as he were a human being, in the beginning of the book named *Remedy of Love*, here: *Bella mihi, video, bella parantur ait*. And by this may all be made clear to one who finds a difficulty in certain parts of this my little book.

And in order that no witless person may take any license therefrom I say that neither did the poets speak thus without reason, nor should they who rime speak thus, without having some interpretation in their own minds of what they say; for deep shame were it to him who should rime under cover of a figure or of a rhetorical color and, afterwards, being asked, knew not how to strip such vesture from his words, in such wise that they should have a real meaning. And this my first friend and I well know of many who rime thus stupidly.

## XXIII

This most gentle lady of whom the preceding words were spoken came to such favor among folk, that when she passed by the way people ran to behold her, wherefore wondrous joy possessed me thereat. And when she was near to any one, modesty so great possessed his heart that he dared not lift his eyes nor respond to her salutations; and of this many even

from experience could bear witness for me, to him who should not believe it. She, crowned and clad in humility went her way, showing no pride at what she saw and heard. Said many after she had passed: This is no woman, rather is she one of the fairest angels of heaven. And others said: this is a marvel and blessed be the Lord who knoweth how to work so wondrously! I say that she showed herself so gentle and so filled with all winsomeness, that they who gazed upon her, felt within them a pleasant and modest sweetness, such that none could tell it again, nor was any who could look upon her without being first constrained to sigh. These and more wondrous things proceeded from her by her power. Wherefore, pondering on this, and desiring to resume the manner of her praise, I purposed to say words in which I should make some of her wondrous and excellent effects understand, in order that not only those who could behold her with their bodily senses but that others should know of her as much as words can convey to the understanding. Then I composed this sonnet:

So gentle and so modest my lady seems when she saluteth others, that every tongue grows tremblingly dumb, and eyes dare not to look on her.

She goeth her way, hearing her praises, benignly clothed in humility, and seemeth to be a thing come from heaven to earth, to show forth a miracle.

Herself she showeth so winsome to him who gazeth on her, that through his eyes she giveth a sweetness to his heart, such that he who proveth it not, cannot understand it.

And it seemeth that from her countenance a spirit moveth, gentle and filled with love, that goeth saying to the soul: sigh!

This sonnet is so plain to the understanding from what is related above that it needeth not any division; and therefore leaving it,

#### XXIV

I say that this my lady grew to such favor that not only was she honored and praised but many ladies were honored and praised through her. Wherefore I, seeing this and desir-



ing to make it manifest to those who saw it not, purposed to say further words wherein this should be signified. . . .

## XXV

I was still at my purpose of this canzone and had finished thereof this aforewritten stanza, when the Lord of justice called this most gentle lady to dwell in glory under the ensign of that queen, the blessed Mary, whose name was in very great reverence on the lovely lips of this blessed Beatrice.

And although perchance it were pleasing at present to treat somewhat of her departure from us, it is not my intent to treat thereof here for three reasons: the first is that it is not to the present purpose, if we have regard to the introduction which precedeth this little book; the second is that supposing it were to the present purpose, my pen would not yet be sufficient to treat thereof as were fitting; the third is that supposing both the one and the other were, it is not fitting in me to treat thereof, for that so doing it would behove me to be a praiser of myself, (which thing is unseemly and blameworthy beyond all things in him who doeth it), and therefore I leave such treatise to other interpreter.

Yet, because many times the number nine hath found place among the preceding words, whereby it appeareth that it is not without reason, and in her departure such number appears to have much place, it is meet here to say something, inasmuch as it appeareth to be fitting to the purpose. Wherefore I will first tell what place it had in her departure and then I will assign some reason why this number was so friendly to her.

## XXVI

I say that according to the Arabian style her most noble soul departed in the first hour of the ninth day of the month; and according to the Syrian style, it departed on the ninth month of the year, because the first month there is Tisrin I. which with us is October. And according to our style, she departed in that year of our era, namely of the years of our Lord, wherein the perfect number was completed nine times in that century wherein she was placed in this world, and she was of

the Christians of the thirteenth century. Why that number was so friendly to her, this might be a reason: inasmuch as according to Ptolemy and according to Christian verity, nine are the heavens that move, and according to the general opinion of astrologers the said heavens operate here below according to their conjunctions, this number was friendly to her to give to understand, that at her birth the whole nine moving heavens were most perfectly related together. This is one reason for it: but thinking more subtly and according to infallible truth, this number was her very self; by similitude I mean and I understand it thus: The number three is the root of nine because, without other number, multiplied by itself it makes nine, even as we see manifestly that three times three make nine. Therefore if three is the sole factor of nine and the sole factor of miraeles is three, namely Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who are three and one, this lady was accompanied by the number nine to give to understand that she was a nine, that is, a miraele whose root is the wondrous Trinity alone. Perchance a more subtle person might see in it a yet more subtle reason; but this is what I see therein and what pleaseth me most.

## XXVII

After the most gentle lady had departed from this world, all the aforesaid city was left as 'twere widowed and bereft of all worthiness; wherefore I, still weeping in this desolate city, wrote to the chief people of the land somewhat of its condition, taking that beginning of Jeremiah the prophet: *Quomodo sedet sola civitas!*<sup>9</sup> And this I say, in order that folk may not marvel that I have cited it above, as 'twere the portal of the new matter that cometh after. And if any one should desire to reprove me because I do not here write the words that follow those cited, I excuse me herein:—that my intention was from the beginning not to write otherwise than in the vulgar tongue: wherefore, inasmuch as the words that follow those cited are all latin, it were besides my purpose if I wrote them: and a like intent I know had my friend to whom I am writing this, namely, that I should write to him only in the vulgar tongue.

<sup>9</sup>“How doth the city sit solitary!”

## XXVIII

After mine eyes had for some time wept and were so weary that I could not ease my sorrow, I thought I would ease it in some dolorous words; therefore I purposed to make a canzone, wherein lamenting, I should discourse of her, through whom sorrow so great had been the destroyer of my soul; and then I began: *Sorrowing for pity, etc.*

## XXIX

After this canzone had been composed there came to me one who, according to the degrees of friendship, is my friend immediately after the first; and he was so closely united in kinship to this glorious lady that none was nearer to her. And after he had been discoursing with me, he prayed me that I should compose him something for a lady who had died; and he dissimulated his words in order that it might appear that he spoke of another who had shortly died; wherefore perceiving that he was speaking solely because of this blessed one, I said I would do what his prayer asked of me. Wherefore pondering on this, I purposed to make a sonnet in which I should mourn somewhat, and give it to this my friend in order that it should appear that I had done it for him; and I composed then this sonnet: *Come and hear, etc.*

*This sonnet hath two parts: in the first I call upon Love's lieges that they hear me; in the second I relate my wretched condition. The second begins here: Which go forth disconsolate.*

Come and hear my sighs ye gentle hearts, (for pity asketh it),  
which go forth disconsolate; and were it not for them I  
should die of grief;

because mine eyes would be my debtors, many more times than  
I would desire, woe is me! for such due weeping for my  
lady that I might ease my heart, bewailing her.

Ye will hear them oft call upon my gentle lady, who hath gone  
to the world worthy of her virtue,

and disprize sometimes this life, in the person of the sorrow-  
ing soul, forsaken by its salvation.

## XXX

Then sometime after, forasmuch as I was in a place where I was recalling the time that was past, I stood very pensive and with thoughts so sorrowful that they made me appear outwardly with semblance of dreadful dismay. Wherefore, perceiving my travail, I lifted mine eyes to see if any beheld me. Then saw I a gentle lady, young and most fair, who gazed at me from a window very compassionately, so far as it appeared, so that all compassion seemed gathered in her. Wherefore, inasmuch as when the wretched behold compassion for them in another, they are the sooner moved to tears, as though having compassion for themselves, I then felt mine eyes begin to desire to weep: and therefore, fearing lest I should betray my abject state, I departed from before the eyes of this gentle one and said then within myself: It cannot be but that most noble Love is with that compassionate lady.

## XXXI

It then befell that whenever this lady beheld me, she grew visibly compassionate and of pallid hue as if of love: wherefore oft-times I remembered me of my most noble lady who was ever wont to show herself of like hue. And certes many times being unable to weep or to ease my sorrow, I went to behold this compassionate lady who seemed to draw tears forth from mine eyes by her aspect.

## XXXII

I came to such pass by the sight of this lady that mine eyes began to delight over much in beholding her, wherefore many times I was angry in my heart and held me therefore exceeding base; and many times did I curse the inconstancy of mine eyes and said to them in my thoughts: Come, ye were wont to make weep such as beheld your grievous state, and now it seemeth that ye would forget it because of this lady who gazes at you, and gazeth not at you save in so far as she is weighed down for the glorious lady for whom ye were wont to weep; but, what ye can, do; for I will recall her to you very oft, accursed eyes: since ne'er save after death ought your tears to be stayed. And when I had thus said

within myself to mine eyes, lo, sighs most heavy and choking assailed me. And in order that this conflict which I had within me should not remain known to the wretch only who suffered it, I purposed to make a sonnet and to comprehend in it this dreadful condition, and I composed this that begins: *The bitter tears.*

The bitter tears ye wept, eyes of mine, so long a season,  
were wont to make other folk to weep with pity as ye have  
seen.

Now methinks ye would forget her, if on my side I so  
recreant were, as not to thwart every impulse thereto, by  
recalling to you her for whom ye wept.

Your levity sets me pondering and affrighteth me so, that  
I fear sorely the sight of a lady that gazeth upon you.

Ne'er should ye, save through death, forget our lady who is  
dead: thus saith my heart and then doth sigh.

## XXXIII

The sight of this lady brought me into so strange a state, that many times I thought of her as of one who pleased me over much. And thus I thought of her: This is a gentle lady, fair, young and wise, and hath appeared perchance by Love's will, in order that my life may find rest. And many times I had still more loving thought, so that my heart consented to it, namely, to my pleading. And when it had consented to this, I bethought me again as if moved by reason and said within myself: Ah! what thought is this that in so foul a guise would console me and scarce suffereth me to think on aught else! Then uprose another thought and said: Now since thou hast been in such tribulation, wherefore wilt thou not withdraw thee from such bitterness? Thou seest that this is an inspiration which proffers us Love's desires and springeth from a place so gentle as the lady's eyes who hath shown such compassion for thee. Wherefore having thus many times wrestled within myself, I desired to utter some further words concerning it; and since they that pleaded for her, won the battle of thoughts, methought it were fitting to speak to her and I composed this sonnet which begins: A

*gentle thought.* And I say *gentle* in so far as it discoursed of a gentle lady, for otherwise it was most base.

## XXXIV

Against this adversary of reason there arose one day a mighty vision within me, almost at the hour of noon; for methought I beheld this glorious Beatrice, in those crimson garments wherein she first appeared to mine eyes, and she seemed to me youthful and of an age like to that in which I first beheld her. Then I began to think of her; and remembering her according to the sequence of the times that were passed, my heart began to repent grievously of the desire whereby it had so basely allowed itself to be possessed for certain days, counter to the constancy of reason; and this evil desire being cast forth, all my thoughts turned again to this most gentle Beatrice. And I say that from thence forward I began to think of her with all my shamed heart, so that my sighs made it manifest many times; since well-nigh all uttered in their passage what was being spoken in my heart, to wit, the name of that most gentle one and how she departed from us. And many times it befell that some thought held so great pain within itself, that I forgot both it and where I was.

Through this rekindling of sighs, the alleviated tears were rekindled in such wise that mine eyes appeared two things whose sole desire was to weep: and oft it befell that through long weeping they became round about of a purple hue, such as is wont to appear through some torture that hath been received: wherefore it appears that they were worthily rewarded for their inconstancy, so that from thenceforth they could not look on any person who should so gaze upon them as perchance to draw them to a like intent. Wherefore being minded that such an evil desire and vain temptation should seem wholly rooted out, and that the words in rime which I had composed before should not be productive of any doubt, I purposed to make a sonnet wherein I should comprehend the substance of this discourse. . . .

## XXXV

After this sonnet there appeared to me a wondrous vision, wherein I beheld things that made me determine to speak no more of this blessed one until such time as I could treat of her more worthily. And to attain to this I study all I may, even as she truly knoweth. So that if it be the pleasure of him, by whom all things live, that my life persevere for some few years, I hope to write of her what hath never been written of any woman.

And then may it please him who is the Lord of grace, that my soul may have leave to go and behold the glory of its lady, to wit, of that blessed Beatrice who gazeth in glory on the face of him, *qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus*.<sup>10</sup>

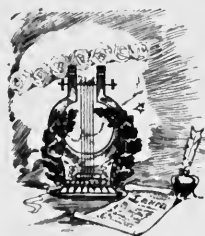
<sup>10</sup> "Who is blessed throughout all ages."

END OF "THE NEW LIFE"









# PETRARCH

“THE FIRST MODERN MAN”

1304-1374

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

When we speak of Petrarch as “the first modern man,” the meaning most commonly attached to the phrase is that he was introspective, he looked inward upon his own self as do modern thinkers. This self analysis shows plainly in Petrarch’s celebrated series of love sonnets to his unidentified lady, “Laura.” The poet has, however, further claims to modernity. He first proclaimed our feeling for the scenic world as a beautiful and powerful influence upon man. He first fully appreciated the ancient classics, and set men to the intellectual study of their teaching. He first eagerly gathered ancient manuscripts, and so began our modern effort for their preservation. He was the first of the so-called “Humanists,” or teachers of the intense and splendid value of our existence in this world as well as in another.

It was characteristic of this “first modern man” that he should be possessed by the modern autobiographical impulse. He wanted posterity to understand him. And so he left behind him an analytic sketch, his celebrated “Letter to Posterity.” He wrote many other letters; indeed, his fame to-day is dependent upon these rather than upon his poems; and we have included here in addition to the “Letter to Posterity” an almost equally autobiographical letter to his great literary contemporary, Boccaccio. This letter was composed at the very close of Petrarch’s life and is in effect his parting word to his beloved fellow-humanity.

In his own day Petrarch was so celebrated that kings vied with each other in inviting him to dwell with them. His well-known boast was not unjustified: “Princes have dwelt with me, not I with princes.” But his fame then was chiefly as a courtly gentleman and scholar, a Latin writer; and he himself mainly valued his Latin poems and prose.

In birth Petrarch was almost, like Dante, a Florentine, his father being a citizen of Florence banished at the same time as Dante, in 1302. Hence when the son, Francesco Petrarch was born two years later, it was as a Florentine exile in the nearby city of Arezzo. Most of Francesco’s childhood, and much of his later life also, was spent at the

Papal court then being held in France at Avignon. In other years he was the honored guest of many Italian cities. Even haughty Florence invited him back, and offered to restore to him all his family's confiscated possessions. Wherever he dwelt Petrarch preached the then unconsidered dream of a united Italy. He thus ranks with Dante among the first and greatest of Italian patriots, the founders of modern Italy.

### PETRARCH'S LETTER TO POSTERITY <sup>1</sup>

FRANCESCO PETRARCA to Posterity.—Greeting. It is possible that some word of me may have come to you, though even this is doubtful, since an insignificant and obscure name will scarcely penetrate far in either time or space. If, however, you should have heard of me, you may desire to know what manner of man I was, or what was the outcome of my labors, especially those of which some description or, at any rate, the bare titles may have reached you.

To begin with myself, then, the utterances of men concerning me will differ widely, since in passing judgment almost every one is influenced not so much by truth as by preference, and good and evil report alike know no bounds. I was, in truth, a poor mortal like yourself, neither very exalted in my origin, nor, on the other hand, of the most humble birth, but belonging, as Augustus Cæsar says of himself, to an ancient family. As to my disposition, I was not naturally perverse or wanting in modesty, however the contagion of evil associations may have corrupted me. My youth was gone before I realized it; I was carried away by the strength of manhood; but a riper age brought me to my senses and taught me by experience the truth I had long before read in books, that youth and pleasure are vanity—nay, that the Author of all ages and times permits us miserable mortals, puffed up with emptiness, thus to wander about, until finally, coming to a tardy consciousness of our sins, we shall learn to know ourselves. In my prime I was blessed with a quick and active body, although not exceptionally strong; and while I do not lay claim to remarkable personal beauty,

<sup>1</sup>The following translation is by Prof. J. H. Robinson, of Columbia University, and is reprinted by his kind permission and that of the publishers from G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS' "Petrarch, the First Modern Scholar."

I was comely enough in my best days. I was possessed of a clear complexion, between light and dark, lively eyes, and for long years a keen vision, which however deserted me, contrary to my hopes, after I reached my sixtieth birthday, and forced me, to my great annoyance, to resort to glasses.<sup>2</sup> Although I had previously enjoyed perfect health, old age brought with it the usual array of discomforts.

My parents were honorable folk, Florentine in their origin, of medium fortune, or, I may as well admit it, in a condition verging upon poverty. They had been expelled from their native city,<sup>3</sup> and consequently I was born in exile, at Arezzo, in the year 1304 of this latter age which begins with Christ's birth, July the twentieth, on a Monday, at dawn. I have always possessed an extreme contempt for wealth; not that riches are not desirable in themselves, but because I hate the anxiety and care which are invariably associated with them. I certainly do not long to be able to give gorgeous banquets. I have, on the contrary, led a happier existence with plain living and ordinary fare than all the followers of Apicius, with their elaborate dainties. So-called *convivia*, which are but vulgar bouts, sinning against sobriety and good manners, have always been repugnant to me. I have ever felt that it was irksome and profitless to invite others to such affairs, and not less so to be bidden to them myself. On the other hand, the pleasure of dining with one's friends is so great that nothing has ever given me more delight than their unexpected arrival, nor have I ever willingly sat down to table without a companion. Nothing displeases me more than display, for not only is it bad in itself, and opposed to humility, but it is troublesome and distracting.

I struggled in my younger days with a keen but constant and pure attachment, and would have struggled with it longer

<sup>2</sup> Eye-glasses were a somewhat new invention when Petrarch resorted to them. Poggendorf cites the first reference to them (1299), which reads as follows: "I found myself so oppressed by age that without the so-called eye-glasses, which have recently been discovered as a godsend to poor old persons, I could neither read nor write." We know little of the construction of these first spectacles. An early German painting (15th century), in the National Gallery at London, shows a saint with a completely developed *pince-nez*.

<sup>3</sup> Petrarch's father and Dante were banished forever from Florence upon the same day, January 27, 1302.

had not the sinking flame been extinguished by death—premature and bitter, but salutary.<sup>4</sup> I should be glad to be able to say that I had always been entirely free from irregular desires, but I should lie if I did so. I can, however, conscientiously claim that, although I may have been carried away by the fire of youth or by my ardent temperament, I have always abhorred such sins from the depths of my soul. As I approached the age of forty, while my powers were unimpaired and my passions were still strong, I not only abruptly threw off my bad habits, but even the very recollection of them, as if I had never looked upon a woman. This I mention as among the greatest of my blessings, and I render thanks to God, who freed me, while still sound and vigorous, from a disgusting slavery which had always been hateful to me.<sup>5</sup> But let us turn to other matters.

I have taken pride in others, never in myself, and however insignificant I may have been, I have always been still less important in my own judgment. My anger has very often injured myself, but never others. I have always been most desirous of honorable friendships, and have faithfully cherished them. I make this boast without fear, since I am confident that I speak truly. While I am very prone to

<sup>4</sup>This is doubtless one of the two or three obscure references to Laura, in Petrarch's correspondence. His frigid statement of the case is characteristic of Petrarch the Humanist as contrasted with Petrarch the singer.

<sup>5</sup>Petrarch, although a churchman, was the father of two illegitimate children, a son, Giovanni, born in 1337, and a daughter, Francesca, born, probably of the same mother, some six years later. The unfortunate mother was, according to Petrarch's own story, very harshly treated by him. This obscure *liaison* seems not to have afflicted him with the remorse which his purer attachment for Laura caused him. Only the latter is spoken of, and that at great length, in his imaginary confession to St. Augustine. The son proved an idle fellow who caused his father a world of trouble, even entering into collusion with a band of thievish servants to rob him. The plague cut short his unpromising career in his twenty-fourth year. Petrarch noted in his copy of Virgil, which he used as a family record: "Our Giovanni was born to be a trial and burden to me. While alive he tormented me with perpetual anxiety, and his death has wounded me deeply." The daughter was of a happier disposition. She married, and Petrarch rejoiced in two grandchildren. One of these, the little Francesco, was, when but a year old, a "perfect picture" of his illustrious grandfather, but the great hopes for the child's future were cut short by its early death. Petrarch comforts himself with the thought that the child "has gained eternal happiness without effort, and by his departure has freed me from a continual source of solicitude."

take offense, I am equally quick to forget injuries, and have a memory tenacious of benefits. In my familiar associations with kings and princes, and in my friendship with noble personages, my good fortune has been such as to excite envy. But it is the cruel fate of those who are growing old that they can commonly only weep for friends who have passed away. The greatest kings of this age have loved and courted me. They may know why; I certainly do not. With some of them I was on such terms that they seemed in a certain sense my guests rather than I theirs; their lofty position in no way embarrassing me, but, on the contrary, bringing with it many advantages. I fled, however, from many of those to whom I was greatly attached; and such was my innate longing for liberty, that I studiously avoided those whose very name seemed incompatible with the freedom that I loved.

I possessed a well-balanced rather than a keen intellect, one prone to all kinds of good and wholesome study, but especially inclined to moral philosophy and the art of poetry. The latter, indeed, I neglected as time went on, and took delight in sacred literature. Finding in that a hidden sweetness which I had once esteemed but lightly, I came to regard the works of the poets as only amenities. Among the many subjects which interested me, I dwelt especially upon antiquity, for our own age has always repelled me, so that, had it not been for the love of those dear to me, I should have preferred to have been born in any other period than our own. In order to forget my own time, I have constantly striven to place myself in spirit in other ages, and consequently I delighted in history; not that the conflicting statements did not offend me, but when in doubt I accepted what appeared to me most probable, or yielded to the authority of the writer.

My style, as many claimed, was clear and forcible; but to me it seemed weak and obscure. In ordinary conversation with friends, or with those about me, I never gave any thought to my language, and I have always wondered that Augustus Cæsar should have taken such pains in this respect. When, however, the subject itself, or the place or listener, seemed to demand it, I gave some attention to style, with what suc-

ness I cannot pretend to say ; let them judge in whose presence I spoke. If only I have lived well, it matters little to me how I talked. Mere elegance of language can produce at best but an empty renown.

My life up to the present has, either through fate or my own choice, fallen into the following divisions. A part only of my first year was spent at Arezzo, where I first saw the light. The six following years were, owing to the recall of my mother from exile, spent upon my father's estate at Ancisa, about fourteen miles above Florence. I passed my eighth year at Pisa,<sup>6</sup> the ninth and following years in Farther Gaul, at Avignon, on the left bank of the Rhone, where the Roman Pontiff holds and has long held the Church of Christ in shameful exile. It seemed a few years ago as if Urban V. was on the point of restoring the Church to its ancient seat, but it is clear that nothing is coming of this effort, and, what is to me the worst of all, the Pope seems to have repented him of his good work, for failure came while he was still living. Had he lived but a little longer, he would certainly have learned how I regarded his retreat.<sup>7</sup> My pen was in my hand when he abruptly surrendered at once his exalted office and his life. Unhappy man, who might have died before the altar of Saint Peter and in his own habitation! Had his successors remained in their capital he would have been looked upon as the cause of this benign change, while, had they left Rome, his virtue would have been all the more conspicuous in contrast with their fault.<sup>8</sup>

But such laments are somewhat remote from my subject. On the windy banks of the river Rhone I spent my boyhood, guided by my parents, and then, guided by my own fancies, the whole of my youth. Yet there were long intervals spent

<sup>6</sup> Petrarch's father, being still an exile, could not return with the family to Ancisa, in Florentine territory, but joined them when they moved to Pisa, which did not in those days belong to Florence.

<sup>7</sup> Urban V. (1362-1370) had transferred the papal court back to Rome after it had remained for sixty years in France and Avignon, but after a year or two the disorder in Italy, as well as his own longing and that of his cardinals for their native land, overcame his good intentions and he returned to Avignon, where he died almost immediately, in December, 1370.

<sup>8</sup> Petrarch had not only exhorted Urban V. to return to Rome, but had previously sent metrical epistles to his predecessors, Benedict XII. and Clement VI., urging them to restore the papacy to its ancient seat.



elsewhere, for I first passed four years at the little town of Carpentras, somewhat to the east of Avignon: in these two places I learned as much of grammar, logic, and rhetoric as my age permitted, or rather, as much as it is customary to teach in school: how little that is, dear reader, thou knowest. I then set out for Montpellier to study law, and spent four years there, then three at Bologna. I heard the whole body of the civil law, and would, as many thought, have distinguished myself later, had I but continued my studies. I gave up the subject altogether, however, so soon as it was no longer necessary to consult the wishes of my parents.<sup>9</sup> My reason was that, although the dignity of the law, which is doubtless very great, and especially the numerous references it contains to Roman antiquity, did not fail to delight me, I felt it to be habitually degraded by those who practice it. It went against me painfully to acquire an art which I would not practice dishonestly, and could hardly hope to exercise otherwise. Had I made the latter attempt, my scrupulousness would doubtless have been ascribed to simplicity.

So at the age of two and twenty<sup>10</sup> I returned home. I call my place of exile home, Avignon, where I had been since childhood; for habit has almost the potency of nature itself. I had already begun to be known there, and my friendship was sought by prominent men; wherefore I cannot say. I confess this is now a source of surprise to me, although it seemed natural enough at an age when we are used to regard ourselves as worthy of the highest respect. I was courted first and foremost by that very distinguished and noble family, the Colonnese, who, at that period, adorned the Roman Curia with their presence. However it might be now, I was at that time certainly quite unworthy of the esteem in which I was held by them. I was especially honored by the incomparable Giacomo Colonna, then Bishop of Lombez, whose peer I know not whether I have ever seen or ever shall see,

<sup>9</sup>The news of the death of Petrarch's father recalled him and his brother from Bologna in April, 1326.

<sup>10</sup>It seems strange that at twenty-two Petrarch should already have spent some seven years at the universities. It was not, however, unusual then. There were no entrance requirements, and the students were often mere boys.

and was taken by him to Gascony; there I spent such a divine summer among the foot-hills of the Pyrenees, in happy intercourse with my master and the members of our company, that I can never recall the experience without a sigh of regret.

Returning thence, I passed many years in the house of Giacomo's brother, Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, not as if he were my lord and master, but rather my father, or better, a most affectionate brother—nay, it was as if I were in my own home.<sup>11</sup> About this time, a youthful desire impelled me to visit France and Germany. While I invented certain reasons to satisfy my elders of the propriety of the journey, the real explanation was a great inclination and longing to see new sights. I first visited Paris, as I was anxious to discover what was true and what fabulous in the accounts I had heard of that city. On my return from this journey I went to Rome, which I had since my infancy ardently desired to visit. There I soon came to venerate Stephano, the noble head of the family of the Colonnese, like some ancient hero, and was in turn treated by him in every respect like a son. The love and good-will of this excellent man toward me remained constant to the end of his life, and lives in me still, nor will it cease until I myself pass away.

On my return, since I experienced a deep-seated and innate repugnance to town life, especially in that disgusting city of Avignon which I heartily abhorred, I sought some means of escape. I fortunately discovered, about fifteen miles from Avignon, a delightful valley, narrow and secluded, called Vaucluse, where the Sorgue, the prince of streams, takes its rise. Captivated by the charms of the place, I transferred thither myself and my books. Were I to describe what I did there during many years, it would prove a long story. Indeed, almost every bit of writing which I have put forth was either accomplished or begun, or at least conceived, there, and my undertakings have been so numerous that they still continue to vex and weary me. My mind, like my body, is characterized by a certain versatility and readiness, rather than by strength, so that many tasks

<sup>11</sup> Petrarch was a commensal chaplain in the house of the Cardinal, as we learn from the Papal document granting him his first benefice.

that were easy of conception have been given up by reason of the difficulty of their execution. The character of my surroundings suggested the composition of a sylvan or bucolic song. I also dedicated a work in two books upon *The Life of Solitude*, to Philip, now exalted to the Cardinal-bishopric of Sabina. Although always a great man, he was, at the time of which I speak, only the humble Bishop of Cavaillon. He is the only one of my old friends who is still left to me, and he has always loved and treated me not as a bishop (as Ambrose did Augustine), but as a brother.

While I was wandering in those mountains upon a Friday in Holy Week, the strong desire seized me to write an epic in an heroic strain, taking as my theme Scipio Africanus the Great, who had, strange to say, been dear to me from my childhood. But although I began the execution of this project with enthusiasm, I straightway abandoned it, owing to a variety of distractions. The poem was, however, christened *Africa*, from the name of its hero, and, whether from his fortunes or mine, it did not fail to arouse the interest of many before they had seen it.

While leading a leisurely existence in this region, I received, remarkable as it may seem, upon one and the same day,<sup>12</sup> letters both from the Senate at Rome and the Chancellor of the University of Paris, pressing me to appear in Rome and Paris, respectively, to receive the poet's crown of laurel. In my youthful elation I convinced myself that I was quite worthy of this honor; the recognition came from eminent judges, and I accepted their verdict rather than that of my own better judgment. I hesitated for a time which I should give ear to, and sent a letter to Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, of whom I have already spoken, asking his opinion. He was so near that, although I wrote late in the day, I received his reply before the third hour on the morrow. I followed his advice, and recognized the claims of Rome as superior to all others. My acceptance of his counsel is shown by my twofold letter to him on that occasion, which I still keep. I set off accordingly; but although, after the fashion of youth, I was a most indulgent judge of my own work, I still blushed to accept in my own case the verdict

<sup>12</sup> September 1, 1340, when Petrarch was thirty-six years old.

even of such men as those who summoned me, despite the fact that they would certainly not have honored me in this way, had they not believed me worthy.

So I decided, first, to visit Naples, and that celebrated king and philosopher, Robert, who was not more distinguished as a ruler than as a man of culture.<sup>13</sup> He was, indeed, the only monarch of our age who was the friend at once of learning and of virtue, and I trusted that he might correct such things as he found to criticize in my work. The way in which he received and welcomed me is a source of astonishment to me now, and, I doubt not, to the reader also, if he happens to know anything of the matter. Having learned the reason of my coming, the King seemed mightily pleased. He was gratified, doubtless, by my youthful faith in him, and felt, perhaps, that he shared in a way the glory of my coronation, since I had chosen him from all others as the only suitable critic. After talking over a great many things, I showed him my *Africa*, which so delighted him that he asked that it might be dedicated to him in consideration of a handsome reward. This was a request that I could not well refuse, nor, indeed, would I have wished to refuse it, had it been in my power. He then fixed a day upon which we could consider the object of my visit. This occupied us from noon until evening, and the time proving too short, on account of the many matters which arose for discussion, we passed the two following days in the same manner. Having thus tested my poor attainments for three days, the King at last pronounced me worthy of the laurel. He offered to bestow that honor upon me at Naples, and urged me to consent to receive it there, but my veneration for Rome prevailed over the insistence of even so great a monarch as Robert. At length, seeing that I was inflexible in my purpose, he sent me on my way accompanied by royal messengers and letters to the Roman Senate, in which he gave enthusiastic expression to his flattering opinion of me. This royal estimate was, indeed, quite

<sup>13</sup>Robert (who died in 1343) was the grandson of that Charles of Anjou (the brother of St. Louis) who had been called in by the popes to succeed the house of Hohenstaufen in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. He was Petrarch's sovereign, for Avignon belonged to him as Count of Provence, until sold to the popes by Robert's successor in 1348.

in accord with that of many others, and especially with my own, but to-day I cannot approve either his or my own verdict. In his case, affection and the natural partiality to youth were stronger than his devotion to truth.

On arriving at Rome, I continued, in spite of my unworthiness, to rely upon the judgment of so eminent a critic, and, to the great delight of the Romans who were present, I who had been hitherto a simple student received the laurel crown.<sup>14</sup> This occasion is described elsewhere in my letters, both in prose and verse. The laurel, however, in no way increased my wisdom, although it did arouse some jealousy—but this is too long a story to be told here.

On leaving Rome, I went to Parma, and spent some time with the members of the house of Correggio, who, while they were most kind and generous towards me, agreed but ill among themselves. They governed Parma, however, in a way unknown to that city within the memory of man, and the like of which it will hardly again enjoy in this present age.

I was conscious of the honor which I had but just received, and fearful lest it might seem to have been granted to one unworthy of the distinction; consequently, as I was walking one day in the mountains, and chanced to cross the river Enza to a place called Selva Piana, in the territory of Reggio, struck by the beauty of the spot, I began to write again upon the *Africa*, which I had laid aside. In my enthusiasm, which had seemed quite dead, I wrote some lines that very day, and some each day until I returned to Parma. Here I happened upon a quiet and retired house, which I afterwards bought, and which still belongs to me. I continued my task with such ardor, and completed the work in so short a space of time, that I cannot but marvel now at my dispatch. I had already passed my thirty-fourth year when I returned thence to the Fountain of the Sorgue, and to my Transalpine solitude. I had made a long stay both in Parma and Verona, and everywhere I had, I am thankful to say, been treated with much greater esteem than I merited.

Some time after this, my growing reputation procured for

<sup>14</sup> Upon Easter Sunday, April 8, 1341.

me the good-will of a most excellent man, Giacomo the Younger, of Carrara, whose equal I do not know among the rulers of his time. For years he wearied me with messengers and letters when I was beyond the Alps, and with his petitions whenever I happened to be in Italy, urging me to accept his friendship. At last, although I anticipated little satisfaction from the venture, I determined to go to him and see what this insistence on the part of a person so eminent, and at the same time a stranger to me, might really mean. I appeared, though tardily, at Padua, where I was received by him of illustrious memory, not as a mortal, but as the blessed are greeted in heaven—with such delight and such unspeakable affection and esteem, that I cannot adequately describe my welcome in words, and must, therefore, be silent. Among other things, learning that I had led a clerical life from boyhood, he had me made a canon of Padua, in order to bind me the closer to himself and his city. In fine, had his life been spared, I should have found there an end to all my wanderings. But alas! nothing mortal is enduring, and there is nothing sweet which does not presently end in bitterness. Scarcely two years was he spared to me, to his country, and to the world. God, who had given him to us, took him again. Without being blinded by my love for him, I feel that neither I, nor his country, nor the world was worthy of him. Although his son, who succeeded him, was in every way a prudent and distinguished man, who, following his father's example, always loved and honored me, I could not remain after the death of him with whom, by reason especially of the similarity of our ages, I had been much more closely united.

I returned to Gaul, not so much from a desire to see again what I had already beheld a thousand times, as from the hope, common to the afflicted, of coming to terms with my misfortunes by a change of scene.

[Here the autobiography breaks off abruptly.]

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER TO BOCCACCIO, WRITTEN IN THE LAST  
YEAR OF PETRARCH'S LIFE

. . . I CERTAINLY will not reject the praise you bestow upon me for having stimulated in many instances, not only in

Italy but perhaps beyond its confines also, the pursuit of studies such as ours, which have suffered neglect for so many centuries; I am, indeed, almost the oldest of those among us who are engaged in the cultivation of these subjects. But I cannot accept the conclusion you draw from this, namely, that I should give place to younger minds, and, interrupting the plan of work on which I am engaged, give others an opportunity to write something, if they will, and not seem longer to desire to reserve everything for my own pen. How radically do our opinions differ, although, at bottom, our object is the same! I seem to you to have written everything, or at least a great deal, while to myself I appear to have produced almost nothing.

But let us admit that I have written much, and shall continue to write;—what better means have I of exhorting those who are following my example to continued perseverance? Example is often more potent than words. The aged veteran Camillus, going into battle like a young man, assuredly aroused more enthusiasm in the younger warriors than if, after drawing them up in line of battle and telling them what was to be done, he had left them and withdrawn to his tent. The fear you appear to harbor, that I shall cover the whole field and leave nothing for others to write, recalls the ridiculous apprehensions which Alexander of Macedon is reported to have entertained, lest his father, Philip, by conquering the whole world, should deprive him of any chance of military renown. Foolish boy! He little realized what wars still remained for him to fight, if he lived, even though the Orient were quite subjugated; he had, perhaps, never heard of Papirius Cursor, or the Marsian generals. Seneca has, however, delivered us from this anxiety, in a letter to Lucilius, where he says, “Much still remains to be done; much will always remain, and even a thousand years hence no one of our descendants need be denied the opportunity of adding his something.”

You, my friend, by a strange confusion of arguments, try to dissuade me from continuing my chosen work by urging, on the one hand, the hopelessness of bringing my task to completion, and by dwelling, on the other, upon the glory which I have already acquired. Then, after asserting that I have

filled the world with my writings, you ask me if I expect to equal the number of volumes written by Origen or Augustine. No one, it seems to me, can hope to equal Augustine. Who, nowadays, could hope to equal one who, in my judgment, was the greatest in an age fertile in great minds? As for Origen, you know that I am wont to value quality rather than quantity, and I should prefer to have produced a very few irreproachable works rather than numberless volumes such as those of Origen, which are filled with grave and intolerable errors. It is certainly impossible, as you say, for me to equal either of these, although for very different reasons in the two cases. And yet you contradict yourself, for, though your pen invites me to repose, you cite the names of certain active old men,—Soerates, Sophocles, and, among our own people, Cato the Censor,—as if you had some quite different end in view. How many more names you might have recalled, except that one does not consciously argue long against himself! Searching desperately for some excuse for your advice and my weakness, you urge that perhaps their temperaments differed from mine. I readily grant you this, although my constitution has sometimes been pronounced very vigorous by those who claim to be experienced in such matters; still, old age will triumph.

You assert, too, that I have sacrificed a great deal of time in the service of princes. But that you may no longer labor under a delusion in this matter, here is the truth. I have lived nominally with princes; in reality, the princes lived with me. I was present sometimes at their councils, and, very rarely, at their banquets. I should never have submitted to any conditions which would, in any degree, have interfered with my liberty or my studies. When every one else sought the palace, I hied me to the woods, or spent my time quietly in my room, among my books. To say that I have never lost a day would be false. I have lost many days (please God, not all) through inertia, or sickness, or distress of mind,—evils which no one is so fortunate as to escape entirely. What time I have lost in the service of princes you shall hear, for, like Seneca, I keep an account of my outlays.

First, I was sent to Veniee to negotiate a peace between that city and Genoa, which occupied me for an entire winter



month.<sup>1</sup> Next I betook myself to the extreme confines of the land of the barbarians,<sup>2</sup> and spent three summer months in arranging for peace in Liguria, with that Roman sovereign who fostered- or I had better say deferred,—the hope of restoring a sadly ruined Empire. Finally, I went to France to carry congratulations to King John on his deliverance from an English prison; here three more winter months were lost. Although during these three journeys I dwelt upon my usual subjects of thought, nevertheless, since I could neither write down my ideas nor impress them on my memory, I call those days lost. It is true that when I reached Italy, on my return from the last expedition, I dictated a voluminous letter on the variableness of fortune to a studious old man, Peter of Poitiers; it arrived too late, however, and found him dead. Here, then, are seven months lost in the service of princes; nor is this a trifling sacrifice, I admit, considering the shortness of life. Would that I need not fear a greater loss, incurred long ago by the vanity and frivolous employments of my youth!

You add, further, that possibly the measure of life was different in olden times from what it is in ours, and that nowadays we may regard men as old who were then looked upon as young. But I can only reply to you as I did recently to a certain lawyer in this university,<sup>4</sup> who, as I learned, was accustomed to make that same assertion in his lectures, in order to depreciate the industry of the ancients, and excuse the sloth of our contemporaries. I sent by one of his students to warn him against repeating the statement, unless he wished to be considered an ignoramus by scholars. For more than two thousand years there has been no change in the length of human life. Aristotle lived sixty-three years. Cicero lived the same length of time; moreover, although he might have been spared longer had it pleased the heartless and drunken Antony, he had some time before his death written a great deal about his unhappy and premature decline, and had composed a treatise on *Old Age*, for the edification of himself and a friend. Ennius lived seventy

<sup>1</sup> In 1353.

<sup>2</sup> That is, to Prague in 1356.

<sup>3</sup> In 1360. All three missions were undertaken for the dukes of Milan.

<sup>4</sup> Of Padua.

years, Horace the same time, while Virgil died at fifty-two, a brief life even for our time. Plato, it is true, lived to be eighty-one; but this, it is said, was looked upon as a prodigy, and because he had attained the most perfect age the Magi decided to offer him a sacrifice, as if he were superior to the rest of mankind. Yet nowadays we frequently see in our cities those who have reached this age; octogenarians and nonagenarians are often to be met with, and no one is surprised, or offers sacrifices to them. If you recall Varro to me, or Cato, or others who reached their hundredth year, or Gorgias of Leontium who greatly exceeded that age, I have other modern instances to set off against them. But as the names are obscure I will mention only one, Romualdo of Ravenna, a very noted hermit, who recently reached the age of one hundred and twenty years, in spite of the greatest privations, suffered for the love of Christ, and in the performance of numerous vigils and fasts such as you are now doing all in your power to induce me to refrain from. I have said a good deal about this matter in order that you may neither believe nor assert that, with the exception of the patriarchs, who lived at the beginning of the world, and who, I am convinced, developed no literary activity whatever, any of our predecessors enjoyed greater longevity than ourselves. They could boast of greater activity, not of a longer life,—if, indeed, life without industry deserves to be called life at all, and not a slothful and useless delay.

By a few cautious words, however, you avoid the foregoing criticism, for you admit that it may not be a question of age after all, but that it may perhaps be temperament, or possibly climate, or diet, or some other cause, which precludes me from doing what the others were all able to do. I freely concede this, but I cannot accept the deduction you draw from it, and which you support with laboriously elaborate arguments; for some of your reasons are, in a certain sense, quite opposed to the thesis you would prove. You counsel me to be contented—I quote you literally—with having perhaps equaled Virgil in verse (as you assert) and Cicero in prose. Oh, that you had been induced by the truth, rather than seduced by friendship, in saying this! You add that, in virtue of a *senatus consultum* following the cus-

tom of our ancestors, I have received the most glorious of titles, and the rare honor of the Roman laurel. Your conclusion from all this is that, with the happy results of my studies, in which I rival the greatest, and with my labors honored by the noblest of prizes, I should leave off importuning God and man, and rest content with my fate and the fulfilment of my fondest wishes. Certainly I could make no objection to this if what your affection for me has led you to believe were true, or were even accepted by the rest of the world; I should gladly acquiesce in the opinions of others, for I should always rather trust their judgment than my own. But your view is not shared by others, and least of all by myself, who am convinced that I have rivaled no one, except, perhaps, the common herd, and rather than be like it I should choose to remain entirely unknown.

As for the laurel wreath, it encircled my brow when I was as immature in years and mind as were its leaves. Had I been of riper age I should not have desired it. The aged love what is practical, while impetuous youth longs only for what is dazzling. The laurel brought me no increase of learning or literary power, as you may well imagine, while it destroyed my peace by the infinite jealousy it aroused. I was punished for my youthful audacity and love of empty renown; for from that time well-nigh every one sharpened his tongue and pen against me. It was necessary to be constantly on the alert with banners flying, ready to repel an attack, now on the left, now on the right; for jealousy had made enemies of my friends. I might narrate in this connection many occurrences which would fill you with astonishment. In a word, the laurel made me known only to be tormented; without it, I should have led that best of all lives, as many deem, a life of obscurity and peace.

You put the finishing touch to your argument, it seems to me, when you urge me to do all that I can to prolong my life as a joy to my friends, and first and foremost as a solace to you in your declining years, because, as you say, you desire when you depart hence to leave me still alive. Alas! our friend Simonides<sup>5</sup> also expressed this wish—a

<sup>5</sup> *I. e.*, Francesco Nelli, Prior of the church of Santi Apostoli at Florence. He died of the plague in 1363. Not only did Petrarch dedicate

wish but too speedily granted: if there were any order in human affairs, it is he who should have survived me. My own desires are, however, directly opposed to those which my friends—you in particular—harbor. I should prefer to die while you are all still alive, and leave those behind in whose memory and conversation I should still live, who would aid me by their prayers, and by whom I should continue to be loved and cherished. Except a pure conscience, I believe there is no solace so grateful to the dying as this.

If your counsels spring from the belief that I cling tenaciously to life, you are entirely mistaken. Why should I wish to prolong my existence among customs and manners which make me constantly deplore that I have fallen on such times? To omit more serious disorders, I am afflicted by the perverted and indecent clothing of a most frivolous set of men. I have already too often complained of them, both in speech and writing, but words are powerless to quiet my indignation and distress of mind. These fellows, who call themselves Italians, and were, indeed, born in Italy, do all they can to appear like barbarians. Would that they were barbarians, that my eyes and those of the true Italians might be delivered from so shameful a spectacle! May God Omnipotent confound them, living and dead! Not satisfied with sacrificing by their pusillanimity the virtues of our ancestors, the glory of war, and all the arts of peace, they dishonor in their frenzy the speech and dress of our country, so that we may consider our forefathers happy to have passed away in good time, and may envy even the blind, who are spared the sight of these things.

Finally, you ask me to pardon you for venturing to advise me and for prescribing a mode of life, namely, that I hereafter abstain from mental exertion and from my customary labors and vigils, and endeavor to restore, by complete rest and sleep, the ravages wrought by advancing years and prolonged study. I will not pardon you, but I thank you, well aware of the affection which makes you a physician for me, although you refuse to be one for yourself. I beg, however,

his *Letters of Old Age* to Nelli, but of the letters preserved, he addresses a greater number (thirty-five) to him than to any other of his correspondents.

that you will obey me, although I refuse to obey you, and will let me persuade you that, even if I were most tenacious of life, which I am not, I should assuredly only die the sooner if I followed your advice. Continued work and application form my soul's nourishment. So soon as I commenced to rest and relax I should cease to live. I know my own powers. I am not fitted for other kinds of work, but my reading and writing, which you would have me discontinue, are easy tasks, nay, they are a delightful rest, and relieve the burden of heavier anxieties. There is no lighter burden, nor more agreeable, than a pen. Other pleasures fail us, or wound us while they charm; but the pen we take up rejoicing and lay down with satisfaction, for it has the power to advantage not only its lord and master, but many others as well, even though they be far away,—sometimes, indeed, though they be not born for thousands of years to come. I believe that I speak but the strict truth when I claim that as there is none among earthly delights more noble than literature, so there is none so lasting, none gentler, or more faithful; there is none which accompanies its possessor through the vicissitudes of life at so small a cost of effort or anxiety.

Pardon me then, my brother, pardon me. I am disposed to believe anything that you say, but I cannot accept your opinion in this matter. However you may describe me (and nothing is impossible to the pen of a learned and eloquent writer), I must still endeavor, if I am a nullity, to become something; if already of some account, to become a little more worthy; and if I were really great, which I am not, I should strive, so far as in me lay, to become greater, even the greatest. May I not be allowed to appropriate the magnificent reply of that fierce barbarian who, when urged to spare himself continued exertions, since he already enjoyed sufficient renown, responded, "The greater I am, the greater shall be my efforts"? Words worthy of another than a barbarian! They are graven on my heart, and the letter which follows this will show you how far I am from following your exhortations to idleness. Not satisfied with gigantic enterprises, for which this brief life of ours does not suffice, and would not if doubled in length, I am always on the alert for new and uncalled-for undertakings,—so distasteful to me

is sleep and dreary repose. Do you not know that passage from Ecclesiasticus, "When man has finished his researches, he is but at the beginning, and when he rests, then doth he labor"? I seem to myself to have but begun; whatever you and others may think, this is my verdict. If in the meanwhile the end, which certainly cannot be far off, should come, I would that it might find me still young. But as I cannot, in the nature of things, hope for that, I desire that death find me reading and writing, or, if it please Christ, praying and in tears.

Farewell, and remember me. May you be happy and persevere manfully.

PADUA, April 28 (1373).

THE END





Handwritten signature and a small decorative flourish at the bottom left of the page.



# TIMUR THE LAME

THE GREAT ASIATIC CONQUEROR, THE TERROR OF EUROPE

1336-1405

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The Western world's idea of the terrible Timur is of a hideous monster devastating all lands, heaping up, as once he actually did, huge pyramids of human skulls as a monument, "And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword." This bloody despot would seem to us the last man who would be likely to write an autobiography. And surely if he wrote one, it is the first of such studies we would care to read. What did he think of himself, this multitudinous desecrator of the human sanctuary?

Strangely enough, Timur did write his own autobiography. And naturally enough, if one pauses to look closely at the intricate human equation, he wrote of himself, and doubtless thought of himself, as a great benefactor of humankind.

Timur was a Tartar chieftain, descended, or claiming descent, from Khubla Khan, the great Tartar conqueror of China. Timur after many vicissitudes schemed and fought himself into the leadership of his race, and then led his people to the conquest of all western Asia and India. He overthrew the Turkish Sultan Bajazet in a tremendous two days' battle in 1402 and threatened to invade Europe as inheritor of the Turkish dominion there. Fortunately perhaps for civilization, he turned his arms first against China instead, and died soon afterward. But the Europeans had been thrown into such terror that ever after the name of Timur remained to them as the type of irresistible and ruthless Asiatic conquest. The Elizabethan poet Marlowe wrote his first great drama on Tamburlaine, or Timur the Lame, and pictures him as driving conquered kings as horses to his chariot.

Timur's own book, his "Institutes," or explanation of his organization of empire, gives a very different view. He dictates his book to his scribes, for the benefit of his descendants, explaining to them the value and the method of each detail of his vast political machine. Occasionally he illustrates a point by telling a story from his own experience. Then in the last, or fifth, book of his "Institutes," he becomes

fully autobiographical; he reverts to his childhood and traces his career in full. It is this fifth book, with some autobiographical portions from the others, which is given here.

## THE MULFUZAT TIMURY

OR "MEMOIRS OF TIMUR"

BOOK I.—TEZUKAT

BE it known to my victorious and fortunate Sons, to my noble and princely Grandsons and others, that,<sup>1</sup>

[*Jagtay Turkey.*]

I have written my Memoirs in the *Turkey* language, in order that each and every one of my posterity, who, by the divine aid, and the protection of Mohammed (upon whom and upon his descendants be the peace of God) shall ascend my Throne and succeed to my Sovereignty, which I obtained by much labor, toil, marches and wars, (having understood them) may put in practice those rules and regulations, by which their Sovereignty and Dominion may be preserved safe from ruin or decay.

### CHAPTER I

My Father Teragay related to me the following circumstance relative to my name, "Soon after your birth, I took your virtuous mother to pay our respects to the celebrated Saint Sheik Shems Addeen, when we entered his apartment, he was reading aloud the 67th Chapter of the Koran, and was repeating this verse, 'Are you sure that he who dwelleth in heaven, will not cause the earth to swallow you up, and behold *it shall shake,*' (Tamuru). The Sheik then stopped, and said, 'We have named your son, Timur.' "

I was much delighted by this anecdote, and returned thanks to God that my name was taken from the sacred volume; it was also a great inducement for me to learn that chapter by heart.

When I had attained my seventh year, my father took me by the hand, and led me to the school, where he placed me

<sup>1</sup> The following two lines are in the ancient *Jagtay Turkey*, the words of which are no longer known.

under charge of Mullah Aly Beg, the Mullah having written the Arabic alphabet on a plank, placed it before me, I was much delighted with it, and considered the copying of it as an amusement.

When I reached my ninth year, they taught me the daily service of the Mosque, during which I always read the 91st Chapter, denominated the *Sun*.

While seated in the school-room, I always took the chief seat, and often fancied myself the commander of all the other boys. One day a subject of conversation was started, on which was the best mode of sitting, each boy gave some answer to the question, when it came to my turn, I said, the best mode of sitting is on the knees, for Mohammed has commanded, "Whilst in prayer sit on your knees;" on which all the spectators praised me exceedingly. When we came out from school, we began to play as children, but I assuming the command, stood upon a high mound, and having divided them into two armies, caused them to fight a sham battle, and when I saw one of the parties worsted, I sent them assistance.

At twelve years of age, I fancied that I perceived in myself all the signs of greatness and wisdom, and whoever came to visit me, I received with great hauteur and dignity.

At this time I selected four amiable companions, with whom I constantly associated, and when I attained the sovereignty, I remembered their claims, as well as those of my other play-fellows and acquaintances, and promoted each of them according to his deserts.

By the Divine grace, from the time of being nine years old, till I had reached seventy-one years, I never dined alone, and never walked out without a friend, and whenever I put on new clothes, on taking them off, I gave them to my companions; and whatever they asked from me, I never refused, but gave it without humiliating entreaty.

At fourteen, I had formed an intimacy with a very handsome youth, and passed great part of my time with his tribe; he was sensible of my partiality, and also showed great affection for me, at length a blackguard of Maveralnaher, who was called *Mullache*, and who under the semblance of a student, had been admitted into the circle of our acquaintance,

took a liking to the youth; but as this fellow was an entertaining companion, I was pleased with him; this circumstance made him very vain, and he used to talk in a familiar and obscene way: one day having given him admission into our society, I overheard the boy say to him in a familiar manner, "I don't want your kisses;" I was quite nettled at these words, and resolved never to allow such impropriety of conduct, either in myself or others.

At sixteen, my father took me by the hand, and brought me to his own Monastery, he there addressed me, "My boy, our ancestors from generation to generation, have been commanders of the armies of the Jagtay and Berlas family. The dignity of (Sepah Salar) Commander in Chief, has now descended to me, but as I am tired of this world, and consider it no better than a golden vase filled with serpents and scorpions, I mean, therefore, to resign my public office, and retire from it, in order to enjoy the delights of tranquillity and repose; but as I have founded this village, and erected this monastery in my own name, to perpetuate my fame, and that of our family, I must particularly request that you will not diminish ought of its revenues or privileges."

My father then related to me the genealogy of our family, extending to Tumuneh Khan, whose genealogy is carried back in history to Japhet, the son of Noah, he added:

"The first of our family who had the honor of conversion to the faith of *Islam*, was Kerachar Nuyan, who was the Gurgan (son-in-law) of Jagtay Khan, as he was a sensible man, he of his own accord adopted the faith of Mohammed, and said to his family and people, 'When I look around me in the universe, I see but one world, yet I am of opinion that there are other worlds besides this; but I am also convinced, that there is one only God who hath created all these worlds, and who is all sufficient to rule, and direct all these worlds; but as he has chosen this world as his special dominion, he has deemed it requisite to have ministers (to instruct mankind): he hath therefore chosen Mohammed to be his *Vizier* in this world, and as it was requisite that Mohammed should have ministers (to extend his religion), he hath appointed the holy race of *Khalifs* to this dignity.'

"Now my son, as this speech of our ancestor is quite con-

formable to my judgment, I also have become a sincere Mussulman; I request, O Timur,

“1stly. That you will imitate the example of your illustrious progenitor in conforming to the sacred religion of Mohammed, (on whom, and on his posterity and companions, be the peace of God), I entreat you never to deviate from his law, but ever to respect and honor his descendants and followers in the persons of the *Syeds*, the learned, and the prelates of his religion; associate with them, and constantly ask the blessings of the dervishes, the hermits, and the righteous upon all your undertakings; obey the commands of God, and have compassion upon his creatures.

“2dly. That you will encourage and give currency and support to the religion of the Prophet.

“3rdly. That you will believe that we are all the servants of God, and appointed by his decree to inhabit this terrestrial globe; that our destinies are predicted, and that whatever is written on our foreheads, must come to pass; as it is decreed that we shall all do so and so, and have not the power of quitting this world, we must be content with whatever *fate* determines, and be satisfied with whatever God shall give us; we should also assist our poor brethren, and constantly, by every means in our power, befriend all the creatures of God; let us always acknowledge the unity of God, and by our practice, strengthen the four pillars of the law; viz. prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and alms.

“4thly. Be affectionate to your relations and connections, injure no person, nor keep any one in bonds, unless the bonds of kindness; deprive no man of his rights by fraud or tyranny; clothe yourself in the robe of justice; avoid the society of the bad and wicked; keep no man in prison more than three days, and distribute provision to the poor and hungry; and plant yourself in the hearts of your subjects by beneficence, otherwise you will fall from your power and prosperity.”

When my father had finished his discourse, I promised faithfully to follow his counsel, and to comply with his advice.

When I attained the age of seventeen, my father being indifferent about worldly affairs, and in delicate health, I

took upon me the charge of his private affairs, and made the following arrangements; I formed every hundred sheep into a separate flock, and appointed a shepherd to each flock, whose profits were to be one fourth of the milk, the butter, and the wool; I did the same with the goats, separating the wethers from the females; I likewise denominated every twenty horses a stable, separating the horses from the mares; also the camels in the same manner.

Of the various omens which predicted my future greatness, one which most tended to raise my hopes was this; one day I went to pay my respects to the famous Saint Amyr Kelal, and when I entered the assembly, I seated myself at the very lowest end of the room, (literally where the shoes are taken off); the Saint looked at me and said, "Although this boy is in appearance so little and young, he is in fact, a great personage;" he then made room for me near himself, and after looking at and conversing with me for some time, he fell into a slumber; after he awoke, one of his servants presented to him a tray of bread and sweetmeats, he stretched out his hand, and having taken seven cakes and sweetmeats, gave them to me, saying, "Eat a mouthful of each of these, in consequence of which, the *seven regions of the world* shall become subject to you;"<sup>2</sup> I was astonished at these words, and the people of the assembly looked first at each other, and then on me, but through awe of the Saint, no one ventured to speak; I therefore folded up the cakes, and carried them to my father, who said to me, "Kelal is a great personage, a descendant of the Prophet, a seer of visions, and a worker of miracles, whatever he has told you of his visions, will certainly come to pass; take care of these cakes, and do not give of them to anybody, but regard them as the greatest blessing from the blessings of that holy personage."

Some time after this event, my father went with me to pay his respects to the Saint. At this time there was a basket of nuts before him, he ordered my father to count them; after he had done so, he informed him that there were three hundred and seventy nuts, the Saint said, "Each of these three hundred nuts signifies a year, the remainder are

<sup>2</sup> Many of these Santons were considered as deranged, but their predictions were not the less credited.

the number of Timur's posterity, which shall reign for three hundred years;" he then presented the basket to my father, which I took, and placed the nuts with the cakes; when I mentioned these circumstances to my mother, she took my head between her hands and blessed me: the cakes and the nuts remained in my possession for many years, during all which time my prosperity increased.

Some time after the affair of the nuts, my mother went also to pay her respects to the Saint, and was most graciously received, at length he said to her, "Seventy of Timur's sons, grandsons, and descendants, shall reign for the term of three hundred years, provided that they make no change of (the Mohammedan) religion, but give currency to the faith of Islam; neither shall they vex nor injure the descendants of the Prophet, but do everything in their power to give him satisfaction for the blessing he conferred on mankind; bounty shall be heaped upon bounty, and prosperity added to prosperity, as long as they continue to show kindness to the relatives and descendants of his Holiness."

When my mother reported to me the conversation of the Saint, although then only seventeen years of age, I made a solemn vow to the all merciful God, that I would never neglect the descendants of the Prophet, but do everything in my power for their honor.

## CHAPTER II

WHEN I had entered my eighteenth year, I became vain of my abilities, and thought no person superior to myself, or anything too difficult for my undertaking; I was at this time very fond of riding and hunting, one day having pursued a deer, while at full gallop, I came suddenly to the brink of a ditch, more than five *guz* (ten or fifteen feet) in breadth, and four *guz* in depth, I attempted to turn my horse, but he was obstinate; I therefore tried to make him jump over the ditch, he reached the opposite bank with his fore feet, but not being able to clear it, fell, while he was struggling, I had slipped my feet out of the stirrups, sprang from the saddle, and reached the bank, the horse tumbled into the ditch, and was disabled; my companions soon after came up, and congratulated me on my good fortune and happy escape; I said,

“It was God who had preserved me, who is also the bestower of fortune;” my friends not being able to jump the ditch, I went round to them, and having mounted a led horse, proceeded homewards. When we had gone some distance, it became dark, and began to rain, in consequence of which, we lost the road, and as the night was extremely cold, we thought we should have perished (in the desert).

About this time we saw some black (felt) tents or huts, upon which my companions said, “These are hilloeks of sand and dust,” so we gave ourselves up for lost; I therefore threw the reins on my horse’s neck, and took hold of the mane, the horse raised his head and began to neigh, and stretched his neck. When we arrived near the tents, we saw a light shining through one of the doors, which gave us courage; I therefore alighted from my horse, and entered the tent, the inhabitants of which supposing I was a thief, hallooted out and prepared to attack me; but when I told them all the circumstances, they were ashamed, and having cleared out a room which was constructed under ground, lighted a fire for us, on which my companions entered, and we took possession of the room; the good people shortly brought us some *Temakh Keruny* soup, of which I eat a great quantity, and was quite refreshed; they also brought us some blankets, upon which we lay down, but they were so full of fleas, that I could not sleep a wink all night. After I had mounted the Imperial throne, I recollected all the circumstances of my hunting excursion, of the cold and frost of the night, and of our society in the cellar, in consequence of which I sent for the family, (and made them *Terkhan*), i. e. amply rewarded them.

During this year, I was very ill for four months, and they could not find out any cure for my disorder, I therefore gave up all hopes of life; for a week I could eat nothing, but on the seventh day, they gave me a pomegranate; soon after I became quite languid and insensible, and while in the swoon, I fancied that they had bound me on a wheel, and were bearing me towards heaven, and afterwards descending to the earth; I did not recover from the fit, till they had burned me between the fore finger and the thumb, when I felt the heat of the iron, I opened my eyes, and saw the servants and my father and mother standing around me crying aloud, I also



joined in lamentation; soon after this I became hungry, and the physicians having asked me what I would like, and they would bring it, I called for *Yekhnny*, and some of the *Temakh* broth; I eat a whole plate full of the latter, and during the night fell into a deep perspiration, and from that time recovered.

Another of the auspicious omens predicting my sovereignty, was this; one day during this year, I was seated in my father's monastery, and was reading the 67th Chapter of the Koran; when a gray-haired Syed entered the monastery, and having looked attentively at me, demanded my name, (having told him) he compared it with the chapter I was reading, and said, "God Almighty has given the sovereignty of the earth to this boy and his posterity;" I looked upon this circumstance as a mere dream, but when it reached the ears of my father, he encouraged my hopes, and showed my Horoscope to one of the Astrologers of Turkestan, who said, "He will be superior in his own dominions, in dignity, and authority, to any of his predecessors, and he will add other countries to his own dominions, and will be an ornament to religion:" he then said to me, "your descendants and posterity shall rise to the very highest dignity:" when I had heard these words, I gave him a handsome present.

At this period, I passed much of my time in reading the Koran, and playing at chess; I was also much employed in charitable actions, and soliciting the blessings of the hermits and dervishes.

I was also fond of horsemanship, and I employed a celebrated riding master to teach me the art, and also to instruct me in the science of maneuvering an army; I frequently assembled my companions, and having taken upon myself the title of Commander, made them all obedient to me; and whenever we rode out, I used to divide them into two armies, and taught them how to advance, and how to retreat in the field of battle.

#### CHAPTER III

ABOUT this period, I asked my father to tell me the history of our family from the time of Yafet Aghlan, which he did, nearly in the following manner:

“It is written in the Turkish history, that we are descended from Yafet Aghlan, commonly called (Abu al Atrak) Father of the Turks, son of (the Patriarch,) Japhet, he was the first monarch of the Turks: when his fifth son Aljeh Khan ascended the throne, the all gracious God bestowed on him twin sons, one of which was called *Tatar*, the other *Mogul*; when they were grown up, Aljeh Khan divided the kingdom of Turkestan between them during his life-time; after they were seated on their respective thrones, they became proud of their authority, and forsook the religion of their ancestors, placing their feet in the paths of infidelity: Tatar had eight sons, from whom are descended eight (Oulous) tribes. Mogul had nine sons, from whom are descended nine clans: these two parties frequently disagreed, and fought many battles in the plains of Turkestan.

“Till at length, after the establishment of the *Islam* faith, Tumenah Khan was seated on the throne of dominion of the region of Turkestan; he had two sons by one birth, one of which he named Kajuly, the other Khubla Khan; when Kajuly had arrived at the age of manhood, he dreamt one night, that he saw two stars rise from the breast of Khubla Khan, and shortly after set; again he thought he saw a star, equal in splendor to the sun, which illuminated the whole world; when he awoke, he related his dream to his father, who expounded it in this manner, ‘From the posterity of your brother, a boy shall be born in the third generation, who shall be the conqueror of the world:’ Tumenah Khan then gave orders for a grand feast, to which he invited all the nobles and principal persons; during the feast the brothers, having embraced each other, entered into an agreement, which was drawn up in the Turkish language, and engraved on a plate of steel, and which was deposited in the treasury; the subject of the agreement was this, ‘That the posterity of the two brothers should never quarrel with each other; that the dignity of *Khan* should forever remain in the descendants of Khubla Khan, and that of (Sepah Salar) Commander in Chief, and prime minister in the family of Kajuly.’

“In A.H. 549, Mungu Behadur, son of Khubla Khan, had a boy, born with his two hands full of blood, to whom he gave the name of *Timujy*; when this personage arrived at

the age of forty-nine, after much toil and danger, he was seated on the throne of Turkestan.

“On the day that he took the title of Khan, a dervish entered the assembly, and proclaimed, ‘The Lord hath said to me, “I have given the surface of the earth to Timuju,” and I confer on you the title of Genghiz Khan, that is to say, King of Kings.’ But Genghiz abandoned the duty of a conqueror, by slaughtering the people, and by plundering the dominions of God, and put to death many thousands of the Mussulmans.

“On the morning of the day that he died, he bestowed the sovereignty of Maveralnaher on his eldest son Jagtay Khan; he appointed Kerachar Nuyan, son of Ayzdumjyn Berlas, son of Kajuly Behadur, who is my fourth and your fifth ancestor, to be generalissimo and prime minister; and caused the agreement entered into by Kajuly and Khubla Khan, to be brought from the treasury, and given to them; Jagtay having perused it, delivered it to Kerachar Nuyan, and conferred on him the proud title of Gurgan or Kurkan (Great Prince).

“When God had bestowed on Kerachar Nuyan a son, he called him Anchel Nuyan; Kerachar was not at first one of the true believers, but followed the religion of the (Majusy) Materialists, who say that God is in everything, and in every person; he was however anxious to acquire a proper knowledge of God, and therefore sought the acquaintance of all holy men, at length he asked the opinion of one of those learned personages, who was descended from Mohammed, what do the Mussulmans say respecting the true knowledge of God; the holy man replied, ‘The faith of the Mussulmans is this, that from all eternity there has existed an Omnipotent and Omniscient Being, he is our God, and he is the God of all creatures, it is therefore not proper to say, as the Materialists do, for there is only one God, the creator of all things; we deny a plurality of Gods, and assert that there is only one:’ Kerachar after some reflection, said, ‘It is true, God can have no partner, he is all sufficient.’ He then submitted himself to the holy man as a convert, and repeated the Creed after his preceptor; viz. ‘There is no God but God, Mohammed is the Messenger of God;’ glory be to him who is

eternal, omniscient, and omnipotent, the all seeing, the all hearing, the giver of speech, the causer of all events.

“Praise be also to his Messenger Mohammed, who by the miracle of dividing the moon, evinced he was the true Prophet, he is the minister of the glorious God, and the Khalifs are his Viziers.

“From that time Kerachar became firm in his faith, and invited all the people to imitate his example, in consequence of which, the religion of Mohammed increased and became current through all that region.

“He also divided the country of Iran equally between the (*Ayelat*) different clans, and appointed the plains of Kesh for the residence of the tribe of Berlas, (his own tribe) giving them the water, the grass, and pasturage of that and several other places for their support; Kerachar then took on him the business of generalissimo, and subdued the countries of Kashgar, of Badakhshan, Andejan, and Hassar, also parts of Khorasan, which he retained as his own private territory.

“When Kerachar departed this life, he was succeeded by his eldest son Amyr Ayltekuz, as generalissimo, who conquered several countries; when your grandfather Amyr Burkul succeeded as *Sepah Salar*, finding that there were dissensions among the tribes and clans, (*Alusat va Kushunat*) he was disgusted, and having retired from his office, contented himself with the government of his own clan of Berlas: he however possessed an incalculable number of sheep and goats, of cattle, of slaves and servants.

“On the death of your grandfather Amyr Burkul, I succeeded to his possessions, but I preferred the company of the learned and the religious persons, and associated mostly with them, frequently soliciting their blessings and prayers, that the Almighty God, would bestow on me a son, which should raise the fame and increase the dignity of the tribe of Berlas.

“About this time, a celebrated Astrologer came from Fars to Maveralnaher, and one day when seated in the assembly of the learned personages, he said, ‘From the revolution of the heavens it is well known to me, that, in the year seven hundred and thirty, (of the Hejira) a child shall be born,

who will prove the conqueror of the world.' Verse, 'In the year seven hundred and thirty, on the 9th of the month, Rejeb, a star of auspicious title shall arise;' God hath bestowed this boy on you."

When my father had related all these circumstances to me, I was convinced in my own mind, that I was born to succeed to the sovereignty, and believed myself endued with all the requisite abilities; I became however very religious, constantly prayed to God for success, and made numerous offerings of cattle and sheep to the Syeds, the learned, and devout personages.

Thus I sent an offering of twenty sheep to the (Saint) Amyr Kelal, but in consequence of heavy rain, they missed the road, and I thought were lost; but some days after having gone to pay my respects to him, I saw the sheep standing at his door, and returned thanks to God, that my offering had been accepted. As soon as the Saint cast his eyes on me, he said to the by-standers, "The sovereignty of the territories of God has been bestowed on this young Turk;" he then began to say his prayers, I also imitated his example: after he had finished his devotions, he said, "Good fortune and royalty is to be your fate, provided that you support the religion of Islam."

At this time I repented (of my follies), and left off playing chess; I strictly adhered to the law, and followed the dictates of religion; I also made a vow never to injure any creature, and whenever I did so by chance, was very sorry for it; thus one day having unintentionally trodden on an Ant, I felt as if my foot had lost all its power; I constantly begged the intercession of the first Khalifs, and was benevolent to all mankind.

In the year 756,<sup>1</sup> I attained my twentieth year, and having reached the age of maturity, my father Teragay made over to me a number of tents, sheep, camels, slaves, servants, and attendants, from which during this year I gained much profit. The first arrangement I made of my private affairs was this, I gave the command of eighteen slaves to one slave, to whom I gave the title of *Aun Bashy*, and I named every twenty horses a (Tavyleh) stable, and every hundred

<sup>1</sup>The Mohammedan year 756 is equivalent to our year 1355.

camels a (Kuttar) string, and every thousand sheep a (Gileh) flock, and gave each of these in charge of a particular slave, and allotted to each of them, a certain share of the profits. During this year I was again very unwell, and a physician of Samarcand having administered pomegranates to me, I was seized with a violent palpitation, and became quite insensible, upon which my father and mother, and all the attendants wept bitterly; after this, a physician of Turkestan seared me with a hot iron, upon which I came to myself; they afterwards gave me some *Yelmak* broth, and other food, and I became convalescent. In gratitude for my recovery, I made valuable offerings of sheep and horses; thus I gave an hundred camels in honor of the Prophet, and fifty more in honor of the illustrious Khalifs, and gave ample charities to the poor, the hermits, and dervishes, through whose prayers I entirely recovered.

#### CHAPTER IV

IN this year A.H. 756, Amyr Kezan Sultan, son of Sur Aghlan, held the standard of sovereignty over the tribe of Chagtai, and for fifteen years had extended the hand of oppression over the people of Maveralnaher, and placed his feet out of the path of justice and equity: in consequence of his tyranny, his subjects were in a state of despair, confining themselves to their houses, and praying for his death.

I was also much incensed by his bad conduct, and felt every inclination to rebel against him, and take revenge of his cruelty, but I could not find anybody of consequence to join me; nor until I had distributed all my wealth among them, could I prevail upon any person to unite with me, whilst I was very much affected at the sight of their oppressed state.

At length Amyr Kurgen, who was one of the greatest chiefs of the tribe of Jagtay, rebelled against him, and in the year 746, (A.D. 1345) fought with him in the desert of Derreh Zengy, but was defeated.

The tyrant having been successful, renewed his oppressions, and returned to Kershy; this astonished the people, who expected that Providence would have interfered in their behalf.

In consequence of such evil conduct, a Syed of Termuz said, "That as long as Amyr Kezan retains these habits, he will never be conquered;" the people therefore began openly to curse him, which only stimulated him to fresh acts of injustice. Some of the effects of the maleconduct of this worthless monarch were:

1stly. A very severe frost, which destroyed the cattle.

2ndly. A total want of rain, in consequence of which the cultivation was quite dried up, and the fruits were annihilated.

3rdly. A famine which swept off the people.

During the following year, Amyr Kurgen having again recruited his army, advanced towards Kershy, and having engaged the tyrant, defeated and took him prisoner; he at first confined him, but at the end of two years put him to death, and relieved the kingdom of Maveralnaher from his oppressions.<sup>1</sup>

Amyr Kurgen then took possession of the kingdom, restored much of the property that had been unlawfully seized, and conducted himself with equity; but as the nobles would not acknowledge his authority, I had some intention of taking the sovereignty upon myself;<sup>2</sup> however the chiefs anticipated my design, and raised Danishmundche Aghlan, one of the descendants of Genghiz Khan, to the dignity of *Khan*, to whom they vowed fidelity, and made him monarch of all Maveralnaher.

Amyr Kurgen, with the title of Commander, ruled the kingdom in the name of Danishmundche Khan, for the term of ten years, with great propriety; reëstablished the laws, and gave encouragement to the Mohammedan religion.

When I had attained my twenty-first year, I wished to have united all the tribe of Berlas, and to have rebelled; I was joined by forty of my school-fellows, and we consulted upon taking possession of the mountain of Kaan; but at this time my mother was called to the divine mercy, and my sister

<sup>1</sup> He was the last of the descendants of Genghiz Khan, who actually reigned over Transoxiana, although several young men had the empty title of Khan conferred on them, but they were mere puppets in the hands of the powerful chiefs.

<sup>2</sup> This was a boast of Timur, as he was then very young; Aghlan signifies both a boy and a Prince.

Turkan Aka took charge of my household; I was for some time very melancholy, and gave up my ambitious intentions. After the days of mourning for my mother were accomplished, my father betrothed me to the daughter of Amyr Jaku Berlas. About this time, my father deputed me to Amyr Kurgen, on some business respecting our tribe and clan, by which means I became acquainted with the Amyr, who took a great liking to me, adopted me as his son, and gave me one of his grand-daughters in marriage, with great honor and much wealth, and seated me near himself in the assembly.

After the death of the Amyr, as his son was not equal to the duties (of Vizier), I had some wish to take the office myself, and had got the consent of several of the chiefs; but recollecting my debt of gratitude to the father, I said to myself, "Better be patient," and took patience.

In this year, I one day went into the desert to hunt, when we came to the hunting ground, a violent storm of both snow and rain came on; afterwards the snow being very deep, I lost my road, and wandered about; at length I saw something dark, when I approached it, I found it was a hill, at the bottom of which there was a great cave, in which some families of the Arlat clan had taken shelter from the inclemency of the weather, had formed chambers in the rocks of the cave, and had pitched their tents in its vicinity; as I was nearly dead with cold, I got off my horse, and entered the cave without ceremony; I there saw a good fire, with a pot well filled with broth hanging thereon; as I was very hungry, the sight of it delighted me; the owner of the room was very kind, he pulled off my coat and boots which were wet through; he also unbound my quiver, and bringing some horse rugs, made a bed for me; he then brought the hot soup, of which I eat a quantity, and became warm and refreshed: I passed the night there, and in return to the family for their kindness, I took their eldest son home with me, and introduced him to the Amyr.

Another time I went a-hunting and met with a very serious accident; I was pursuing a deer at full speed, when I unexpectedly came to a dry well, the horse was very active, and attempted to jump the well, but although his fore feet



cleared it, his hind legs fell in; I vaulted from the saddle, and tried to get over, but did not succeed, and both horse and man went down; my companions thought I was killed; but when they found me alive, they were much rejoiced, and made offerings for my lucky escape, which was considered as a fortunate omen, and gained me many followers.

In the year 757, an army from Irak invaded Maveralnaher, and collected much plunder; I was then just twenty-one, and was sitting with Amyr Kurgen, when intelligence of the invasion was brought; he instantly ordered me to take command of a detachment, and pursue the enemy; I followed the Irakians twenty-three (Fersukh) parasangs, and having made a forced march, came up with them at mid-day; the enemy were divided into two parties, one of which protected the plunder, while the other prepared to oppose me; my officers advised me to attack the plunder, but, I said, "No, let us defeat the fighting part, and the other will soon disperse;" I then gave orders to charge, and putting spurs to my horse, rushed on; the Irakians stood their ground, and we came to blows; but after a few cuts on each side, they fled, upon which I took possession of the plunder, and having restored it to the owners, waited on the Amyr, who praised me exceedingly, presented me with his own quiver, and appointed me (Beglerbeg) Commander of the tribe.

At this time, I was very anxious to rebel against the *Khan*, and to assume the power myself; but when I mentioned it to Amyr Kurgen, who was then very busy, he said, "Cannot you wait, it will be yours some time or other:" I therefore relinquished my intention.

About this time, I went again to pay my respects to the *Kutb al Aktab* Sheik Zyn Addeen Shady; at the time of my arrival, he was seated with some of his disciples reading the Koran, and had just repeated the verse, "Is not the conquest of the kingdom of Rum (Anatolia) in my power;" as soon as he perceived me, he compared the circumstance of my arrival, with the moment of pronouncing the above verse, and finding a great accordance between them, he received me with the utmost respect and honor, and seated me opposite himself.

When he finished reading the prescribed portion of the

holy book, he said to me, "God hath decreed the downfall of Rüm, and as I perceive in you the signs of royal dignity, perhaps you are to be its destined conqueror;" he further added, "As the final letter of the word (Arz) kingdom, signifies eight hundred, I predict that you will conquer Rüm in the year 800." I was very much encouraged, and rejoiced by this auspicious prediction.

At another visit that I paid the Saint, he bound round my loins his own shawl, put on my head his own cap, and presented me a cornelian, on which was engraved (Rasty va Rusty) righteousness and salvation; I considered this also as a fortunate omen, added my own name, and had it made into a seal-ring; and from this time placed my entire confidence and faith in the Sheik.

[Here the Sheik entertains him with a story of his having been very ill, and that he had been directed in a vision to visit the tomb of Aly Iben Musa, at Tus, now Mushehed, in Khorasan; that he walked barefooted, and was seven years on the pilgrimage, and got perfectly well as soon as he arrived at the tomb; the story is very prolix and not interesting.]

#### CHAPTER V

DURING this year, several complaints were received by Amyr Kurgen, against Melk Hussyn Ghoury, Ruler of Herat, who had exceeded his authority, and oppressed the people, on which account the principal personages of that city, wrote a petition, requesting the Amyr to come thither, and redress their wrongs. The Prince however thought it better to write a letter of exhortation to Melk Hussyn, commanding him to refrain from oppressing the people of Khorasan, and to alter his conduct, otherwise he should be under the necessity of marching against him, and depriving him of his government and dignity.

But as Melk Hussyn would not take warning, nor alter his conduct, nay for a long time did not acknowledge the receipt of the Prince's letter; the anger of the Amyr was roused, and he gave orders for assembling the army, with the intention of invading Khorasan; but when he showed his chiefs the letters from Herat, and asked their advice, they replied,

“that they did not consider the persons who had signed the petition as sufficient authority for proceeding to harsh measures, and that it would be better again to ascertain the disposition of the other inhabitants;” this reply vexed the Amyr, he began to hesitate, and asked my opinion, I said frankly to him, “You should not have assembled the army, till you had determined this point, but having done so, you should not now procrastinate, lest the enemy impute it to weakness, but let us manfully attack them, if victorious, we shall gain the object, and at all events fill the bellies of our hungry soldiers, for ‘in exertion there is prosperity.’”

Amyr Kurgen approved of my advice, and instantly gave me the command of a thousand horsemen. I fed these thousand cavaliers daily, and never sat down to a meal without (some of) them; on this account they all became much attached to me: we formed the advanced guard, and marched forward with great confidence; many of the tribes and clans having assembled in hopes of plunder, I induced them also to join me. When I had got my army well equipped and arranged, they were quite unanimous in acknowledging my authority, so that I began to have a prospect of the gate of sovereignty; I wrote a list of the names of the cavaliers, and kept it folded up in my pocket; I also resolved in my own mind, that when I should have dispossessed Melk Hussyn, I would keep the country of Khorasan for myself.

Having thus determined, we moved forward, we crossed the Moorghab river, and marching by the route of Bashtan, we encamped on the mountains, in the vicinity of Herat.

The next day I mounted and rode to a bleach-green, which was situated on a hill, from whence I determined on the field of battle; I then waited on Amyr Kurgen, and pointed out the field of battle to him.

Amyr Kurgen having arranged the army, rode up to the bleach-green, and having minutely examined the field of battle, highly extolled my judgment, as we had our backs to the sun, it was consequently in the face of the enemy; the Prince said, “The rays of the sun will blind our foes, and give us an easy conquest.”

Soon after this, the first line of army of Melk Hussyn, which was drawn up behind a low wall, advanced boldly into

the plain, but they were unskillfully drawn up. At this time Amyr Kurgen called me, and said, "My boy, see how ill their army is arranged, we shall soon defeat them;" I replied, "Have a little patience till they advance further from the wall;" I then sent orders to our front line to retire gently, upon which the enemy growing bold, advanced further into the field, and drew out in order of battle.

I drew up our line in right wing, left wing, and center; I then gave orders for the center to advance; when the two lines met, and were engaged hand to hand, I ordered the wings to charge at full gallop, and pushed on myself; but on the first and second attack, the enemy abandoned the field, and took refuge behind the wall.

At this time Amyr Kurgen came up, and gave orders that we should dismount, and force the wall, we did so, and were successful; the Prince then divided the troops, and sent a division to erect batteries against each of the gates of the city; he then gave me the command of the attack, and returned to his camp.

The next day he gave orders for the whole army, cavalry and infantry, to attack the city; in consequence of which, we entirely surrounded the place, and cut off all supplies: when the inhabitants of Herat began to be distressed, the principal people assembled, and agreed to make overtures for peace; they then sent to Amyr Kurgen various curiosities and presents, and promised that if he would withdraw his army, Melk Hussyn should wait upon him at Samarcand, in the course of one month, and pay his devoirs. The Amyr having consulted his chiefs, accepted the tribute, which he divided equally amongst them, agreed to make peace, and returned to Maveralnaher. He however left me at Herat, with a thousand cavalry, and the advanced guard, to intimidate Melk Hussyn, and oblige him to keep his promise of coming to Samarcand in one month.

In consequence of these instructions, I encamped on the esplanade of Herat; but whilst waiting the expiration of the appointed time for Melk Hussyn to fulfill his promise, I proceeded to Bakhter, and took possession of all that part of Khorasan.

I also took this opportunity of again paying my respects to

the Kutb al Aktab Sheik Zyn Addeen Abu Beker, and when admitted to his presence, forgot all my cares and disappointments, and felt the greatest comfort; on the first day the Sheik received me with the greatest kindness, and clothed me in his own robe; I therefore unburdened my mind to him, respecting my views on the kingdom of Khorasan: he ordered me to be punctual in my prayers, and that whenever any difficulty occurred to me, to offer up my supplications to Mohammed, and to his descendants, so that all my difficulties would be rendered easy.

The second day, the Sheik said to me, "You will now be supported, the Commander of the faithful (Aly) has ordered one of his agents to attend you, you will not know him at first, but will finally become acquainted with him;" I was much rejoiced by this intelligence, and felt the greatest confidence in the Saint's prediction, and looked forward with patience to the sovereignty and conquest of the whole country of Khorasan. Having taken leave of the Sheik, I returned to Herat, and encamped in the vicinity; but I shortly after received a confidential message from Melk Hussyn, that his army was in a state of insurrection, had threatened to murder him, and set up Melk Baker in his place, that if I would advance with my troops towards the city, he would come out and join me, and proceed with me to Amyr Kurgun: I thought to myself, that if Melk Hussyn spoke the truth, and that his officers were in a state of mutiny, it will be easy for me to get hold of the city of Herat, and to keep possession of it without any associate; I therefore drew out my forces, and having mounted, proceeded towards the city.

Melk Hussyn also mounted his horse, and pretending to his people that he meant to fight with me, came out of the fortress and advanced against me in battle array; as I thought he was deceiving me, I put on my armor, and my officers prepared for an engagement; while we were in this state of suspense, Melk Hussyn, accompanied by his own attendants, came over to me, bringing much of his wealth and property; we met, and embraced each other on horseback; many of his officers also came over, and laid aside all animosity. I then took Melk Hussyn to my own tent, and gave orders for marching immediately.

When the Amyr learned that I was bringing Melk Hussyn to court, he sent his son Abdullah to meet him personally, received him in the most gracious manner, and accepted his presents.

The Amyr also received me in the most flattering manner, kissed my forehead, and offered up prayers for my prosperity (literally, may your face be white).

The Amyr assigned one of his own special tents for the residence of his guest; but after a few days, the cupidity of the tribes and clans was roused, and they were very anxious to plunder and destroy him; but as the Prince would not give his consent to this measure, he sent for me in the middle of the night, and said, "As you were the means of bringing this hostage here, you must convey him safe home again."

I therefore carried Melk Hussyn (privately) to my own tent, and shut him up close; he was dreadfully frightened, and thought I was going to murder him; seeing him so alarmed, I told him all the circumstances, upon which he offered up prayers both for me and for the Prince.

The next day I (publicly) obtained permission to make a hunting excursion, and as the Prince was very fond of the field sports, he agreed to accompany me with a few of his most confidential servants; and taking Melk Hussyn with us, we went to the banks of the Moorghab: whilst amusing ourselves in the field, the Prince called his guest to him, and having spoken to him very graciously, they renewed their promises of friendship; on taking leave, Hussyn presented a large ruby armlet, after which, Melk Hussyn and I set off, crossed the river, and encamped on the opposite bank.

Whilst in this situation, intelligence arrived that the chiefs of Ghour, and the army of Khorasan, had raised Melk Baker to the government, and that he had taken possession of the city of Herat; on receipt of this news, Melk Hussyn was much distressed, and sunk in the whirlpool of consternation.

After some time he asked my advice in this affair, I said to him, "You have no alternative, but to place on your head the helmet of courage, and put on the armor of determination, bind on the sword of resolution, and like an alligator dive at once into the river of blood; if victorious, you will gain renown, if subdued, you need not be ashamed." Melk Hus-

syn bidding adieu to life, resolved to do his duty, begged me to accompany him, and offered me a year's revenue of the province of Herat; I would not agree to this proposal, but said, "If you and I conjointly recover the province, the city shall be mine;" to this he consented. At this time there was a stewed leg of mutton before us, the bone of which was sticking out; I took it, and having stripped it of all the meat, I resolved within myself to draw from it an omen, whether Melk Hussyn would be successful in his enterprise. I performed the usual ceremonies,<sup>1</sup> and the result was favorable; I therefore determined to brave the adventure, and after four forced marches, we arrived before daylight at the bleach-green; as we entered the bazar of the suburbs, the day broke, which enabled me to see a cook in his shop taking up a hot dish of broth; when he saw me, he cried out, "Welcome, welcome," and brought me a bowl of the soup; I looked upon this as a fortunate omen, and pushed on; when we arrived at the gate of Herat, the guard had just opened it, I gave the horse of Melk Hussyn, a blow with my whip, and we bounded over the planks of the drawbridge, and entered the fortress; I kept possession of the gate, to give entrance to our people, whilst Melk Hussyn proceeded to the apartments of his rival Melk Baker; the garrison seeing the number of my troops, were confounded, and quietly submitted; thus Melk Hussyn recovered his capital victoriously, and without any loss.

It then entered my mind, that I might as well take possession of the government of Herat myself, but upon further reflecting, that possibly the troops would not support me, I relinquished the idea; and I afterwards found by experience, that I had judged rightly, and that they would not have joined me, which convinced me that one sincere friend is better than a thousand pretended friends. In consequence of this reflection, I placed Melk Hussyn on the throne of government, and exacted some promises from him; he very honorably paid me the money he had agreed to give for my assistance; he also sent with me, by the hands of his own agents, numerous presents to Amyr Kurgen.

When I returned to Samarcand, the Amyr embraced me, and kissed my forehead and cheeks; but when the chiefs of

<sup>1</sup>The Tartars play with sheep-shanks instead of dice.

the tribe heard what I had done, they were much irritated, and bound up their loins for my destruction; they also rebelled against Amyr Kurgan. On this occasion, the Prince again consulted me; I advised him, as it was he who had raised Danishmundche Aghlan to the *Khanship*, he should induce the Khan to issue the imperial order, summoning the refractory officers to court, that such of them as obeyed, should be treated with kindness, but those that disobeyed, should have their heads struck off.

In the year 758, I reached twenty-two years of age, and began to put in practice some of my speculations regarding the sovereignty, for several of the chiefs of the tribes and clans being dissatisfied with Amyr Kurgan, conspired together, and wrote to me, that if I would encourage them, they would be my friends, and would displace both the *Amyr* and the *Khan*, after which we might divide the country between us; but I having reflected that it would be much easier at some future time to dispossess one person, than to have to contend with ten rivals, and recollecting the friendly connection that existed between the Amyr and me, I determined to inform him of the circumstance.

But the chiefs having discovered my intentions, wrote to the Amyr, "Be it known to your enlightened mind, that everybody selects some (powerful) personage to be his patron, through whose mediation he may obtain the object of his desires and wishes; we, in order to obtain our desires and wishes, have chosen your benevolence and kindness to be our intermediators; we have taken the liberty of representing this, may your prosperity endure forever."

When this letter reached the Amyr, as he was a very weak man, he in a kind and friendly manner invited the chiefs to wait on him, and paid no regard to the caution I had given him.

In consequence of this invitation, the chiefs having collected their men, and having put on their armor, came to the palace gate, between the hours of evening prayer and bedtime. The Amyr immediately sent for me, when I came to the gate, I spoke to several of the chiefs, and finding that they had armor under their clothes, I suspected that they had evil intentions, bade them good evening, went into the palace



and told the Amyr all the circumstances; who, on hearing of the treachery, and the mutinous state of his officers, was seized with a pain in his bowels; he therefore sent them an apology, but gave orders for their being hospitably entertained, and permitted to return to their camp.

He then consulted me, how we were to get rid of them, I advised him to deceive them by presents; he in consequence sent a large sum of money, and desired them to divide it among them according to their rank. As the sum was large, they could not agree on the division, and soon began to quarrel; after which they came singly to ask the Amyr's pardon, and to be again admitted into favor; thus enmity was changed into friendship, and the danger was averted; on this occasion the Amyr again took me in his arms, called me his son, and bestowed on me the district of Shemerghan.

In the year 759, I attained my twenty-third year; at this time Amyr Kurgen being quite absolute in the kingdom of Maveralnaher, resolved to subdue the kingdom of Khuarizm, and in this affair, offered to give me the command of the expedition; I at first agreed, but after deliberation, I thought it advisable that the command should be given to some other person, who might be defeated by the Khuarizmians, after which I would then enter the country with my forces and subdue it.

I therefore spoke privately to Amyr Khizer, that he would request Byan Kuly, who was one of the lords of the council, to say to the Prince, that "Khuarizm being an easy conquest, ought to be assigned to his highness's eldest son Abdullah, whose fame would be exalted thereby, and all the credit given to him instead of Timur."

Byan Kuly having explained these circumstances to Amyr Kurgen, he approved of the measure, and ordered his eldest son Abdullah from Samarcand, to take command of the army against Khuarizm; Abdullah entered the country, but the Khuarizmians having strengthened their fortresses, kept him at bay, and reduced him to great distress.

The Amyr not knowing what to do, sent for me, and said, "From the first it was my wish to have given the command of the army to you, and still it is my wish that you should take it:" I reflected within myself, that the Amyr wished

for my assistance to effect the conquest, but that he meant to keep all the benefit to himself; I therefore thought I might as well make the conquest for myself, and become sovereign of the country. As ambition is a very powerful passion, I resolved no longer to be subservient to any one, but to go and take Khuarizm for myself.

When Amyr Kurgen had superseded his son, and put under my command a large force, I marched towards Khuarizm, but I ordered that the army of Abdullah should remain stationary till my arrival. As the Khuarizmians would not engage us in the field, but shut themselves up in their fortresses, the first thing I did was this, I made overtures to the chiefs of all the wandering tribes and clans that inhabited Khuarizm, and having united them to me, I requested them to intercede with the governors of the forts; they did so, and they (the governors) all agreed to be my servants.

I then divided amongst them the whole of the countries of Khuarizm and Ourkunje; having thus gotten possession of all the fortresses of the kingdom, I appointed a confidential person of my own to be (Kutwall) superintendent of them, and thus settled the government of the country; I also wished to have raised the standard of sovereignty, but having no dependence on the fealty of my new subjects, I returned with Abdullah to the Amyr, who in return for my successful conduct, gave me the country of Ourkunje.

In the year 760, I attained my twenty-fourth year; about this time, Amyr Kurgen made a grand hunting party, and came out of Samarcand; whilst we were engaged in the chase, night came on. Kutlug Timur Khan, the son-in-law of the Prince, having a number of wicked wretches united with him, judged it a favorable opportunity to assassinate the Amyr, seeing that I and the chief huntsman were his only companions; he, therefore, made an attack on him with seven expert swordsmen; at this time it was dark, but I hearing them, called out and threatening them, threw myself between them and the Prince, who immediately alighted from his horse, and drawing his sword, got behind a large stone; the huntsman then joining us, Kutlug Timur ran off; in reward for saving him from this peril, the Amyr bestowed on me the revenue of Hissar Shadman.

Being now master of the countries of Khuarizm and Shadman, I divided the revenues with my soldiers; but although I was very kind and liberal to all my servants, they would not support me in my ambitious views.

The eyes of Amyr Kurgan being now open to the designs of his son-in-law, he left off hunting, and watched an opportunity of seizing him and his companions, with the intention of putting them to death; but Kutlug being aware of his intention, took refuge in the highlands of Maveralnaher, and became a public robber. At length the daughter of the Amyr, who was married to this fellow, pretended to become insane from the absence of her husband.

As the Amyr was a weak and compassionate man, he listened to the deceit of women, and believed that his daughter was really mad, and the other women joining with her led him astray, and prevailed on him to pardon Kutlug Timur; in consequence of which, an edict was issued for him to return to court.

I opposed this measure, and said to the Amyr, "Do not be led away by your women, for God hath said, 'Always act contrary to what women advise,' if they have told you not to put him to death, undoubtedly kill him, for according to the orders of God, you should oppose them in everything, for they are deficient in sense." Although the Amyr knew his son-in-law to be his inveterate enemy, he would not at first follow the advice of the proverb, which I repeated to him, viz., "Keep your enemy in your grasp as you would a ruby, till you come to a flinty spot, then knock his head against the stone till you dash it to pieces:" but at length he listened to my opinion, and determined to crush his enemy; he however did not find an opportunity.

In this same year, Amyr Kurgan one day sent for me, and having repeated his complaints, said, "He was resolved to divorce his daughter and son-in-law;" but his women again rendered him subservient to their orders, and Kutlug Timur pretending to be sorry for what he had done, the divorce was postponed.

About this time, Amyr Kurgan took the government of Andijan from Sultan Kuly, the father of his son Abdullah's wife, and gave it to Khuajeh Ayzdy; in consequence of which,

the deposed governor bound up the loins of enmity against his master, and conspired with Kutlug Timur, and agreed to set up the young Abdullah; I frequently cautioned the Amyr against them, and as he had been pleased to adopt me as a son, and had given me a written promise that I should be his successor in the kingdom of Maveernalnaher, I watched over him as a child should over a parent, and omitted no part of my duty towards him.<sup>2</sup>

Till at length the Amyr Kurgen who was extremely fond of hunting, one day went out (without me) attended only by a few persons without their armor, and having crossed the Oxus, (Jihun) was deeply engaged in the chase, when Kutlug Timur and Sultan Kuly attacked and murdered the just Prince.

When I was informed of the circumstance, I was dreadfully affected; I repaired immediately to the spot where the body was lying, and having respectfully taken it up, I transported it to the banks of the river, and there purified it, after which we carried it to Saly Seray,<sup>3</sup> and there buried it. Immediately after this event, Kutlug Timur and Sultan Kuly placed Abdullah, eldest son of the murdered prince, in the government, but took the oath of allegiance to Bian Kuly, the *Khan*, whom the deceased Amyr had set up, and promised to support him in his (nominal) dignity, provided he would employ Abdullah as his Vizier: the whole party then proceeded towards Samarcand, but on their arrival there, they put the innocent and harmless *Khan* to death with the utmost injustice.

As the Vizier Abdullah was a miser, who took from every one, and gave to nobody, and who had thrown the eyes of cupidity on the wealth of the two murdered personages, (the Amyr and the Khan) the conspirators elevated Timur Shah Aghlan, son of Munsur Timur, to the *Khanship*, they then attacked the party of Abdullah, and fought three battles with them; but Abdullah having swum his horse across the Jihun, took refuge in the country of Khutelan and Anderab, where he died.

<sup>2</sup> This accounts for the long rivalry between him and Amyr Hussyn, which only terminated with the death of the latter.

<sup>3</sup> Saly Seray was the capital or residence of the Amyr, it is situated on the Jihun.

## CHAPTER VI

IN the year 760, having attained my twenty-fourth year, being much disgusted with the infamous conduct of Kutlug Timur and Sultan Kuly, and being without any other remedy, I mounted my horse and proceeded to the (Oulus) tribe of Byan Selduz, and implored him to join me in taking revenge on the murderers of the late Amyr and Khan; he agreed to unite with me, and we put on the swords of revenge. Although the fortress of Shadman belonged to me, yet I divided with Byan Selduz, in a brotherly manner, and gave him possession of it, in order to secure his coöperation, and to prove to mankind that the murderers of Kings should always suffer retaliation.

I also prevailed on Hajy Berlas, a descendant of Kerachar Nuyan, to join us in revenging the death of the *Amyr* and the *Khan*; I therefore drew my troops out of Samarcand, and proceeded towards Kesh; when arrived in its vicinity, I sent to Hajy Berlas, who came and joined me; we then agreed to proceed to Samarcand, and to depose Timur Khan from the Khanship.

In compliance with this determination, we marched with all our forces to Samarcand, and dethroned Timur Khan, and took possession of the whole kingdom of Maveralnaher, and we three persons divided it between us; I got possession of Kesh, with its dependencies, and fixed my residence there. Thus we three persons ruled the country of Maveralnaher like three brothers, and whenever any noble, soldier, or citizen proved disobedient, we united in punishing him. . . .

## BOOK II

BE it known to You, my fortunate Sons, the conquerors of kingdoms; to You, my mighty descendants, the lords of the earth; that, trusting in Almighty God that many of my children, descendants, and posterity, shall sit upon the throne of regal authority; upon this account, having established Laws and Regulations for the well-governing of my dominions, I have collected together those Regulations and Laws as a model for others: to the end, that every one of my children, de-

scendants, and posterity, acting agreeably thereto, my power and empire, which I acquired through dangers, difficulties, and bloodshed; by the Divine favor, by the influence of the Holy Religion of Mohammed (God's peace be upon him,) and with the assistance of the powerful descendants and illustrious followers of that Prophet, may be by them preserved. That they may act conformably to these Regulations in the government of their Empire, and by so doing, that the glory and power which shall descend from me to them, may be secured from discord and dissolution.

Now therefore be it known to my sons, the fortunate, the most illustrious conquerors, the mighty subduers of kingdoms; that in like manner as I by twelve Maxims, which I established as the rules of my conduct, attained to regal dignity; and with the assistance of these Maxims conquered and governed kingdoms, and decorated and adorned the throne of my Empire; so they by the practice of these Instructions, may preserve the splendor of mine and their dominions.

Among the various rules which I established for the support of my glory and empire, the First was this—That I promoted the Worship of Almighty God, and propagated the Religion of the sacred Mohammed throughout the world; and at all times, and in all places, firmly supported the true Faith.

Secondly, With the assistance of twelve classes of men I conquered and governed kingdoms; with them I strengthened the pillars of my fortune, and from them I selected my counselors.

Thirdly, By consultation, deliberation, and provident measures; by caution, and by vigilance I vanquished armies, and reduced kingdoms to my authority. I carried on the business of my Empire by complying with times and occasions, by generosity, by patience, and by policy; and demeaned myself with affability both to my Friends and to my Enemies.

Fourthly, By order and by discipline I regulated the concerns of my government; and by discipline and order I so firmly established my authority, that the Emirs, the Viziers, the Soldiers, and the Subjects, could not aspire beyond their respective stations; but on the contrary, every one was content and satisfied with the rank allotted him.

Fifthly, With donations of money and of jewels I rejoiced the hearts of my Officers and Soldiers; I permitted them to participate in the banquet; and in the field of blood they hazarded their lives in support of my power. I withheld not from them my gold nor my silver. I educated and trained them to Arms; and to alleviate their sufferings, I myself shared in all their labors, and in all their hardships; until, with the arm of fortitude and resolution, and with the unanimity of my Chiefs, my Generals, and my Warriors, by the edge of the sword I obtained possession of the thrones of seven and twenty kings; and became the firm and established Lord of the kingdoms of Eraun and of Tooraun; of Room, of Muggrib, and of Shaun; of Missur, of Erauk-a-Arab, and of Ajum; of Mauzinderaun, and of Kylaunaut; of Shurvau-naut, and of Azurbaëjaun; of Fauris, and of Khorasaun; of the Dusht of Jitteb, and the Dusht of Kypchawk; of Khauruzm, of Khuttun, and of Cabulistaun; of Hindostaun, and of Baukhterzemeen.

From the moment that I clothed myself in the robe of Empire, I shut my eyes to the soft repose which is found in the bed of ease, and to that health which follows tranquillity. From the twelfth year of my age I suffered distresses, combated difficulties, formed enterprises, and vanquished armies; experienced mutinies amongst my Officers and my Soldiers, was familiarized to the language of disobedience (which I opposed with policy and with fortitude,) and hazarded my person in the hour of danger; until in the end I vanquished kingdoms and empires, and established solidly the glory of my name.

Sixthly, By justice and equity I gained the affections of mankind; my clemency extended to the guilty as well as to the innocent; I passed that sentence which truth required: by benevolence I gained a place in the hearts of men; and by rewards and punishments I kept both my troops and my subjects divided between hope and fear. I compassionated the lower ranks of my people, and all those who were distressed. The Soldiers experienced my generosity. I delivered the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor; and after proof of the oppression, whether on the property of the person, the Decision which I passed between them was agreeable

to the Sacred Law; nor did I ever cause any one person to suffer for the guilt of another.<sup>1</sup> Those who had done me injuries, who had attacked my person in battle, and had counteracted my schemes and enterprises, when they threw themselves on my merey, I received them with kindness; conferred on them additional honors, drew the pen of oblivion over their evil actions, and treated them with such a degree of confidence, that if the least vestige of apprehension remained in their hearts, it was entirely eradicated.

Seventhly, I attached to myself, and treated with esteem and veneration, the posterity of the Prophet, Theologians, Teachers of the true Faith, Philosophers and Historians. I was the friend of men of courage and intrepidity; because the brave are beloved by Almighty God. I associated with good and learned men; I gained their affections, entreated their support, and hoped for victory from their holy prayers. I loved the Dervishes and the Poor; I neither oppressed them, nor excluded them from my favor. The evil and the malevolent I permitted not to enter into my council; I acted not by their advice, nor did I listen to their insinuations to the prejudice of others.

Eighthly, I ever acted on deliberation; and whatever enterprise I undertook, that enterprise engaged my whole attention: nor did I ever relinquish it, till I had brought it to a conclusion. I adhered to my promises. I never dealt with severity towards any one, nor was I oppressive in any of my actions; that God Almighty might not deal severely towards me, nor render my own actions oppressive unto me. I inquired of learned men into the Laws and Regulations of ancient Princes, from the days of Adam to those of the Prophet, and from that time to the present period. I weighed their institutions, their manners, their actions, and their opinions, one by one; I selected models for my own conduct from their excellent qualities and approved virtues. I inquired into the causes of the subversion of their power, and avoided those actions which tended to the destruction and overthrow of regal authority. Cruelty and oppression, which

<sup>1</sup> In this observation he alludes to a too frequent custom of the East, of involving the whole family and connections of an attainted person in the same punishment with the guilty subject.



are the destroyers of posterity, and the parents of famine and of plagues, I cautiously shunned.

Ninthly, The situation of my subjects was known unto me. Those of them who were of a superior rank, I considered as my brethren; and as my children those of the inferior class. I made myself acquainted with the tempers and dispositions of the inhabitants of each country and city; contracted intimacies with the Citizens, the Chiefs, and the Nobles; and appointed over them Governors adapted to their manners, dispositions, and wishes. I knew the circumstances of the inhabitants of every province; throughout each of my kingdoms I appointed writers of intelligence, men of probity and integrity, to send me information of the conduct and behavior of the troops and inhabitants, and of every particular that might happen amongst them. If I discovered circumstances contrary to their information, I inflicted punishment on the intelligencer; and every article of cruelty or oppression in the governors, troops, or inhabitants, which reached my ear, I chastised agreeably to justice.

Tenthly, Whatever Tribes, either Turks or Tartars, Arabs or Persians, enrolled themselves in my service, I received their Chiefs with distinction and respect, and their followers I honored in proportion to their rank and abilities. The good obtained good from my hands, and the evil I delivered over to their evil actions. Whoever attached himself unto me, I overlooked not the merit of his attachment; I acted towards him with kindness and generosity: and whoever had rendered me services, I repaid the value of those services unto him. Whoever had been my enemy, and was ashamed thereof, and flying to me for protection, humbled himself before me, I forgot his enmity; and by my liberality and courtesy became a bidder for his friendship. In such manner Share Behraum, the Chief of a tribe, was in my service. He quitted me in the hour of action, united with the enemy, and fought against me. At length my salt, which he had eaten, overwhelmed him with remorse; he again threw himself on my mercy, and humbled himself before me. As he was a man of illustrious descent, of bravery and of experience, I covered my eyes from his faults; I raised him to a superior rank; and I pardoned his disloyalty in consideration of his valor.

Eleventhly, My children, my relations, my associates, my neighbors, and such as had been connected with me,<sup>2</sup> all these I distinguished in the days of my prosperity, and was liberal to them in proportion to their merit. With respect to my family, I rent not asunder the bands of consanguinity and of mercy, nor on them did I presume to inflict imprisonment and death. I dealt with every man, whatever the opinion I had formed of him, agreeably to my own ideas of his worth. As I had seen much of prosperity and adversity, and had acquired knowledge and experience, I conducted myself with caution, and with policy, towards both my friends and my enemies.

Twelfthly, Soldiers, whether associates or adversaries, I held in esteem; those who sell their permanent happiness to perishable honor, who rush into the field of battle and of slaughter, and hazard their lives in the hour of danger. The man, who preserving his fidelity to his master untainted, drew his sword on the side of my enemy, and committed hostilities against me, him I highly honored; and when such a man offered me his services, knowing his worth, I classed him with the most faithful of my associates; and respected and valued his fidelity and attachment. That soldier who forgot his duty and his honor, and in the hour of action deserting his master, joined the standard of his adversary, I considered as the most detestable of men. In the war with Touktumish Khaun, his superior officers, forgetful of their duty to him who was their legal master and my confirmed foe, sent proposals and made applications unto me. I held their treachery in abhorrence; because, unmindful of that which they owed to the hand that fed them, they had thrown aside their honor and their duty, and offered their services to the enemy of their prince. Thus I reflected with myself, What fidelity have they observed to their liege Lord? What fidelity will they show unto me, their ruler?

By experience it was known unto me, that from every empire, which is not established in Morality and Religion, nor strengthened by Regulations and Laws, all order, grandeur, and power shall pass away. It may be likened unto a naked

<sup>2</sup> Timur appears to allude to those persons whom he knew in the days of his obscurity.

man, who, when exposed to view, commands the eye of modesty to be covered: it is like unto a palace, which hath neither roof, nor gates, nor defenses; into which, whoever willeth, may enter unmolested.

Therefore, I established the foundation of my Empire in Morality and Religion; and by Regulations and Laws I gave it stability. By those Laws and by those Regulations, I executed every business that came before me in the course of my government.

The first Regulation which my heart dictated unto me, was the promulgation of the true Faith, and the support of the Sacred Tenets of Mohammed (God's peace be upon him). Therefore I encouraged the progress of those Holy Laws and the Religion of Islam through all the cities, provinces, and kingdoms of the earth; and thereby added to the luster of my throne. Thus I regulated the promulgation of the true Faith. I appointed a man of holiness,<sup>3</sup> and of illustrious dignity, to superintend the conduct of the faithful, to regulate the manners of the times, and to appoint superiors in Holy Offices; to establish in every city and town Judges of penetration, and Doctors learned in the Sacred Law, and to appoint Supervisors of the markets and places of traffic, of the weights and of the measures. It was his province also to ordain pensions and salaries for the descendants of the Prophet, for superior Ecclesiastics, pastors, and for men of distinguished abilities. I established a Judge for the Army, and a Judge for the Subjects; and I sent into every province and kingdom instructors in the Law, to deter the faithful from those things which are forbidden, and to lead them in the truth. I commanded that they should build temples of worship and monasteries in every city, and that they should erect structures for the reception of travelers on the high roads, and bridges across the rivers. I appointed ecclesiastics and religious teachers in those cities, to instruct the followers of Islam in the abstruse and fundamental principles of our Holy Law; to preach to them with truth and perspicuity the doctrines

<sup>3</sup> The man appointed to fill the station mentioned in the original, is called *Sedr*. He was a person of great authority in the empire, who had the absolute management of church lands, and what revenues were appropriated towards the maintaining of public schools, salaries to learned men, and other pious uses.

of religion, with the holy traditions, and the sacred commentaries upon them.

I ordered the Governors and Judges, from time to time, to lay before me all circumstances and transactions that occurred throughout my empire; and I appointed a Judge in Equity, whose business it was to transmit to me all extraordinary matters of litigation, that happened amongst my troops and my subjects.

Having thus regulated all religious concerns, and promoted the progress of the Sacred Tenets throughout the cities of Islam; and the rumor of the promulgation of the true Faith having reached the ears of all ranks of the faithful; the Doctors of our Holy Law published an ecclesiastical ordinance,—That as Almighty God in each century had sent a promoter and propagator of the Faith, for the promulgation and restoration of the Religion of Mohammed (God's peace be upon him); and as in this the eighth century AMEER<sup>4</sup> SAHIBA KURRAUN has restored the purity of the Holy Laws, he therefore shall be styled the RESTORER OF THE RELIGION OF MOHAMMED.

<sup>4</sup>*Sahiba Kurraun* is a royal title first assumed by Timur. It literally signifies *Lord of the Conjunction*; it being said, that there was a fortunate conjunction of planets at his birth.

THE END





# SIR JOHN FROISSART

THE MOST GAY AND GORGEOUS OF MEDIEVAL CHRONICLERS

1337-1410

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Strictly speaking, there is very little that is autobiographical in the "Chronicle of Froissart." It is a celebrated book, but celebrated for its picture of the pomp and parade of chivalry, not for its picture of the man. Of Froissart himself his book tells very little. Yet that little is practically all we know. He was not a prominent actor in the gorgeous scenes around him, but rather a minor spectator, much elated when a king or great lord deigned to speak with him. Nevertheless, since Froissart's book is reputed to be the best of medieval chronicles, and since he does sometimes pause to show himself moving among the great folk he describes, it seems necessary to include in our series the personal portion of his narrative, leaving the reader to realize that there are other whole books of the "Chronicle" in which Sir John himself never appears.

Froissart was of Flemish birth and thus, in those days, owed almost equal allegiance to France and England. This will explain his impartial attitude, his almost equal rejoicing over the victories of either side in the long "Hundred Years' War" between them. He was educated for the Church, but spent most of his life as a clerk instead; because, as he himself tells us, "My ears quickened at the sound of uncorking the wine-flask, for I took great pleasure in drinking and in fair array and in delicate and fresh cates (foods)." Sir Walter Scott drew much upon this gay and gorgeous narrative for his medieval stories. Indeed, he used to call this most affectionately his "best beloved book," his *liber carissimus*.

## THE CHRONICLE OF ENGLAND, FRANCE AND SPAIN

### I

To encourage all valorous hearts, and to show them honorable examples, I, John Froissart, will begin to relate the actions

of the noble King Edward of England, who so potently reigned, and who was engaged in so many battles and perilous adventures, from the year of grace 1326, when he was crowned king. Although he and all those who were with him in his battles and fortunate rencounters, or with his army when he was not there in person, which you shall hear as we go on, ought to be accounted right valiant; yet, of these, some should be esteemed super-eminent—such as the Prince of Wales, the king's son, the Duke of Lancaster, Sir Reginald Lord Cobham, Sir Walter Manny of Hainault, Sir John Chandos, Sir Fulke Harley, and many others who are recorded in this book for their worth and prowess.

In France, also, was found good chivalry, strong of limb, and stout of heart, in great abundance—such as King Philip of Valois, and his son, King John; also John, King of Bohemia, and Charles, Count of Alençon, his son; the Count of Foix, and others that I cannot now name.

The better to understand the honorable and eventful history of King Edward we must remark a common opinion in England, of which there have been proofs since the time of King Arthur, that between two valiant kings there is always one weak in mind and body: and most true it is, that this is apparent in the example of the gallant King Edward, of whom I am now to speak; for his father, King Edward the Second, was weak, unwise, and cowardly, while his grandfather, called the good King Edward the First, was wise, brave, very enterprising, and fortunate in war.

King Edward the Second had two brothers; one was the Earl Marshal, of a wild and disagreeable temper; the other Lord Edmund of Kent, who was wise, affable, and much beloved. This king had married the daughter of Philip the Fair, King of France, who was one of the greatest beauties of her time; and by her had two sons and two daughters. The elder son was our noble king, Edward III.; the other, named John, died young. Of the two daughters, Isabella, the elder, was married to King David of Scotland; and the younger to the Count Reginald, subsequently called Duke of Guelderland. History tells us that Philip the Fair had three sons, besides his beautiful daughter, Isabella, who, as we have said, was married to King Edward the Second of England.



These all in turn became kings of France, and died without male issue. Whereupon the princes and barons of France, holding the opinion that no woman ought to reign in so noble a kingdom, determined to pass by Queen Isabella and her son, and to confer the government on Philip of Valois; which exclusion of Isabella from the right of succession to the throne of France became the occasion of the most devastating wars, as well in France as elsewhere: and the real object of this history is to relate the great enterprises and deeds of arms achieved in these wars.

## II

WE have said that the peers and barons of France proclaimed Philip of Valois king, to the exclusion of Isabella of England, and her son Edward. Philip was, accordingly, crowned at Rheims on the Trinity Sunday following the day on which the throne was declared vacant; and about a year after his coronation, King Edward paid him homage for the Duchy of Guienne.

There were strange doings in England at this period. The Earl of Kent, on a suspicion of treason, was arrested, and publicly beheaded; and the charges against him being afterwards proved to be false, Sir Roger Mortimer, whose jealousy had brought about the earl's execution, was in his turn arrested, and put to a horrid and ignominious death. Edward also, at the advice of his council, ordered his mother, who had injured her reputation by too great intimacy with Mortimer, to be placed in confinement. A goodly castle was prepared for her reception; he gave her many attendants, made her a handsome allowance, and himself visited her twice or three times a year.

There had been a truce between England and Scotland now for four years, the like to which had not occurred before for two hundred years: but the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed was destined to disturb it. David, who succeeded Robert Bruce on the throne of Scotland, held possession of Berwick, which Edward claimed as part of his own kingdom. The King of Scotland, who followed the advice of his council and chief barons on the subject, resolved that as King Robert, his father, had taken the town in open war from the late King

of England, and had kept possession of it during his lifetime, so he would do everything in his power to retain it; and such being the case, neither party was willing to give way. The contest which ensued, however, was fraught with dire misfortune to the Scots, for Edward advanced into their kingdom, destroyed it, and, having taken possession of Berwick, and also many other forts, placed in them several able and expert knights and squires, to protect the border countries.

While Edward was thus engaged in England, certain intelligence came to Rome that the enemies of God were marching in great force against the Holy Land—that they had re-conquered the kingdom of Rasse, taken the king, who had been baptized, prisoner, and that they also threatened the Holy Church and all Christendom. The Pope preached on Good Friday before the kings of France and Navarre, when a crusade was proclaimed, and the King of France, with several other valiant knights and men-at-arms, resolved to set out immediately for the Holy Land. This circumstance was favorable to the King of England, who had long wished for an opportunity to assert his right to the crown of France. At the advice of his counselors, therefore, he sent to his old friend, Sir John de Hainault, and others, requesting their assistance in the proposed undertaking.

Now it appeared to all, that before any decided steps were taken by King Edward against France, it would be desirable for him to gain the interest of Flanders. It happened at this time that there were great dissensions between the Earl of Flanders and the Flemings. A man of Ghent, a brewer of metheglin, by name Jacob Von Artaveld, had taken advantage of these dissensions, and gained so much power and influence over the Flemings that everything was done according to his will. Whenever he went abroad, he was attended by three or four score of armed men on foot. He put to death any who opposed him. In every town and castlewick throughout the country he had sergeants and soldiers in his pay to execute his orders and to serve as spies; and, because of him, even the Earl of Flanders himself was compelled to quit his own dominions, and to retire with his wife, and Lewis his son, into France; in short, to speak the truth, there never was in Flanders, or in any other country, count, duke, or

prince, who had such entire command as Jacob Von Artaveld. By fair speeches, promises, and a bountiful distribution of money, Edward, through his agents, at last prevailed with this powerful individual so far, that by his means the chiefs of the principal towns gave their consent that the King of England and his army might pass through Flanders whenever he pleased, though themselves refused to take any active part against France. The Earl of Flanders, however, was not content to have his dominions thus seized upon, and given over to the English; and, collecting certain knights and squires, and all the men he was able, he garrisoned the havens of Sluys and Flushing, resolving to defend those places and do the English as much damage as he could.

The king, on hearing this, sent over forces under the command of the Earl of Derby, Sir Walter Manny, and others, to reduce Cadsant. The Flemings were good men and expert in arms, so that a very fierce and severe battle was fought; but the English archers pressed them hard, and at length they were put to the rout, having more than 3,000 killed as well at the haven as in the streets and houses of the city. The news of this discomfiture at Cadsant was very pleasing to Jacob Von Artaveld, who immediately sent to England and signified to the king that, in his opinion, he should at once cross the sea and come to Antwerp, by which means he would acquit himself towards the Flemings, who were very anxious to see him; and he imagined, if he were on this side of the water, his affairs would go on more prosperously. The king accordingly made very great preparations, and when the winter was over, left England and came to the city of Antwerp. There and at Louvain he passed some months in negotiating alliances; and finding his time fully and profitably occupied, sent to England for his queen to join him. All things went on prosperously. The English knights gained credit and honor wherever they went. Their behavior was such, that the lords and ladies alike admired them; and even with the common people they found favor by their state and magnificence.

On the feast of St. Martin King Edward had an interview with the Duke of Brabant at Arques. The town-hall was hung with rich and fine cloths. His majesty was seated five

feet higher than the rest of the company, and had on his head a rich crown of gold. Here letters from the emperor to the king were publicly read, by which the King of England was constituted and established vicar of the empire of Germany, with full power granted him to do all acts of law and justice to every one in the emperor's name, and also to coin gold and silver. All persons, moreover, were commanded to do him fealty and homage as vicar of the empire.

The lords of England, assisted by those of Germany, made preparations for the intended expedition. The King of France also prepared to meet them. Challenges were written, and sent by Edward and his allies to Paris, through the hands of the Bishop of Lincoln, who performed the office so well and justly that he was blamed by no party. A week after these challenges had been sent, Sir Walter Manny—always brave and ready for action—collected about forty lances, and having vowed in England before some lords and ladies that he would be the first to enter France, rode straight to Mortaigne to surprise the town. It was sunrise when Sir Walter, with some of his companions, alighted before the gate, entered, and then, with his pennon flying, marched down the street before the great tower. The watch of the castle heard their voices, and immediately raised a cry of "Treason! Treason!" However, they were all so much alarmed at first, that there was no sally made from the fort, and Sir Walter and his men having set fire to several houses, retreated handsomely, and joined the king at Mechlin.

A party of French troops, consisting of Sir Hugh Quiriel and some few others, made a somewhat similar attack upon England. As soon as they heard that hostilities had commenced, they landed one Sunday morning in the harbor of Southampton, entered the town whilst the inhabitants were at church, pillaged it, and having loaded their vessel with booty, fell down with the tide, and made sail to Dieppe, where they went on shore, and divided the plunder.

From Mechlin the King of England went to Brussels to pay a visit to the Duke of Brabant. Here 20,000 Germans joined him. From Brussels he marched to Nivelles, and the next day came to Mons in Hainault, where he found the young count and his uncle, who received him joyfully. Having

rested two days at Mons, he journeyed onwards to Valenciennes, and thence to Cambay. At Cambay he met with a stout resistance, and finding, after a siege of some time, that the place was not likely to yield to him without much difficulty, he asked his lords, and particularly Sir Robert d'Artois, in whom he had the greatest confidence, whether it were best to enter the kingdom of France at once, or to remain before Cambay until it should be taken. The advice given was, that he should press forward and meet the enemy. The siege of Cambay was in consequence raised, and Edward and his troops continued their march. As soon as they had passed the Scheld, and had entered the kingdom of France, the King of England called to him the Lord Henry of Flanders, who was but a young squire, and knighted him, at the same time giving him 200*l.* sterling a year, properly secured. On this occasion the king lodged in the abbey of Mont St. Martin, where he remained two days, during which time his people overran the country as far as Bapaume.

Sir Henry of Flanders, to do credit to his newly acquired knighthood, made one of a party of knights, who put themselves under the command of Sir John de Hainault. There were among them the lords of Fauquemont, Bergues, Vaudresen, Lens, and many others, to the number of 500 combatants; and they had a design upon a town in the neighborhood, called Hennecourt, whither the greater number of the inhabitants of that part of the country had retired, and confiding in the strength of the fortress, had carried with them all their movables. There was in Hennecourt at that time an abbot of great courage and understanding, who, fearing an attack, ordered barriers of wood-work to be made round the town, and likewise to be placed across the street, so that there was not more than half a foot between the posts of which the barriers were composed. He then collected armed men, and provided stones, quick-lime, and such like instruments of annoyance, to guard them. As soon as the lords above mentioned came there, the abbot posted his people between the barriers and the gate, which he flung open. The lords dismounted and approached the barriers sword in hand, and great strokes were given to those within, who made a most valiant defense. Sir Abbot did not spare himself, but,

having on a good leathern jerkin, dealt about his blows manfully, and received as good in turn.

It chanced that Sir Henry of Flanders, who was one of the foremost, with his sword attached to his wrist, laid about him at a great rate; but unfortunately he came too near the abbot, who caught hold of his sword, and drew him to the barriers with so much force that his arm was dragged through the grating,—for he could not quit his sword with honor. The abbot continued pulling, and had the grating been wide enough, he would certainly have had him through, for his shoulder had passed, and he kept his hold, to the knight's discomfort. On the other side, his brother knights were endeavoring to draw him out of the abbot's hands; and this lasted so long, that Sir Henry was sorely hurt. He was, however, at last rescued; but his sword remained with the abbot. At the time I was writing this book, as I passed through that town, the monks showed me this sword, which is most carefully preserved by them; and there I learnt the truth of this assault.

The attack upon Hennecourt lasted that day till vespers. Many of the assailants were killed and wounded, and Sir John of Hainault lost a knight from Holland, called Sir Herman, who bore for arms a fess componé gules, and in chief, three buckles azure. When the Flemings, Hainaulters, English, and Germans who were there, saw the courage of those within the town, and that, instead of gaining any advantage, they were beaten down and wounded, they retreated in the evening, carrying with them to their quarters the wounded and bruised. On the next morning the king departed from Mont St. Martin, and ordered, under pain of death, that no damage should be done to the abbey; which order was strictly observed.

The armies of France and England first met at Vironfosse. It was on Friday morning, and preparation was made for battle. Mass was heard, and many confessed themselves and took the sacrament. The English order of battle formed three battalions of infantry, the horse and baggage being placed in a small wood in the rear. There were about seventy-four banners, 230 pennons, in all 27,000 men under command of the King of England in person, the Lord of Kus, the Lord of

Breda, the Duke of Gueldres, Sir John de Hainault, and many others, right good and valiant men. On the side of the French there were eleven score banners, four kings, six dukes, twenty-six earls, upwards of 5,000 knights, and more than 40,000 common men. It was a fine sight to see the banners and pennons flying, the barbed horses, the knights and squires richly armed; and it was matter of much wonder that two such fine armies could separate without fighting. But so it was. The French were of contrary opinions among themselves, some declining battle, and others desiring to engage; and at the close of the day, as they could come to no decision, the king gave permission to his officers to depart.

King Edward now assumed the arms and title of the King of France, and leaving in Flanders the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk, embarked with a numerous train at Antwerp, and sailed for London, where he arrived on St. Andrew's day, 1339, to the great joy of his subjects, who were most anxious for his return. But though King Philip had disbanded his army, he sent strong reënforcements to the navy, which he had under the command of Quiriell, Bahucet, and Barbenoire. These, frequently sailing near the coast of Sandwich, Rye, Winchelsea, and Dover, did great damage and caused much terror to the English. Among other things, they captured the ship Christopher on its way to Flanders, richly laden with money and wool.

The King of France was not satisfied: revenge was brooding in his breast, especially against Sir John of Hainault, whose territory he took every opportunity to ravage and burn. These aggressions of the French, however, were returned with equal violence and outrage on the part of the Hainaulters and Flemings, and a war of much injury to both parties was for some time maintained. Duke John of Normandy, the eldest son of the king, headed the French in these incursions. On one occasion, while the duke was at Cambrai, he was informed that the Hainaulters had taken by assault the strong castle of Thin, which place the bishop and inhabitants of Cambrai entreated him to endeavor to regain. The castle of Thin is upon the Scheld. Thither, then, the duke immediately advanced, and took up his position before it in those fine meadows opposite to Ostrevant. Day and night huge

stones were thrown from his numerous engines against the castle walls, and sorely was this rough storming felt by those within. The captains of the castle were Sir Richard Limousin and two esquires of Hainault, John and Thierry, brothers to Sir Walter Manny; and most valiantly did the little garrison hold out against the besiegers, notwithstanding that dead horses and other carrion were thrown by the engines into the castle to poison them by their smell. At length, in the last extremity, a truce of fifteen days was proposed, in the hope that, before the expiration of that time, assistance would be rendered by the Earl of Hainault; and happily this truce was agreed to by the besiegers.

Agreeably with the expectations of the garrison, the earl did arrive, and shortly after, Jacob Von Artaveld and 60,000 Flemings. When Sir Richard Limousin and his companions saw the wished for succor at hand, they were greatly rejoiced, and secretly leaving the castle, made the best of their way across the Scheld in boats, to join their friends on the opposite shore. The Earl of Hainault greatly desired to give the Duke of Normandy battle; but the Scheld was between the two armies, and the duke's policy was to vex and annoy the earl, and make him maintain an expensive army rather than come to any engagement with him. Report soon reached England respecting these encounters, and King Edward at once embarked for Flanders to assist his brother-in-law against the French.

He and his army sailed from the Thames the day before the eve of St. John the Baptist, 1340, and made straight for Sluys. On his way he fell in with the French navy, of which we have been speaking, and though the numbers were four to one against him, resolved to give them battle. The French were equally desirous to engage, and as soon as they were within sight of the English, they filled the *Christopher*, the large ship which they had captured but a short time before, with trumpets and other warlike instruments, ordering her to begin the attack. The battle was fierce, murderous, and horrible. In the end the English came off victorious, the *Christopher* was recaptured by them, and all in her taken or killed.

After the king had gained this victory he remained all that



night on board his ship before Sluys, and on the morrow entered the port. As soon as he had landed he repaired to Ghent, where he met with a most cordial reception, and shortly after joined in conference with his allies at Vilvorde; here the three countries of Flanders, Brabant and Hainault entered into a solemn treaty to succor and assist each other in every possible way: they then formed an alliance, with covenants that if either of the three was attacked, the other two should immediately march to its assistance; and if at any future period two of them should quarrel, the third should settle the matters of difference between them. It was also determined that the King of England should put himself in motion about Magdalen-tide to lay siege to the city of Tournay, and all the lords present at the conference promised to be there to assist him.

King Philip, as may be supposed, was very angry at the defeat of his navy, nor was he less so when he heard of the compact entered into at Vilvorde, and the intended siege of Tournay: without delay he ordered off thither the flower of his chivalry, and gave instructions that the city should be provided in the best possible manner with ammunition, and everything a garrison could want. At the time appointed the King of England set out from Ghent, accompanied by seven earls from his own country, two prelates, twenty-eight bannerets, 200 knights, 4,000 men-at-arms, and 9,000 archers, without counting foot soldiers; these, with the fine cavalry of the Earl of Hainault, and the 40,000 Flemings of Jacob Von Artaveld, completely invested the city of Tournay. The siege lasted a long time, and many gallant actions were performed, for there is never discord so bitter as that between neighbors and friends.

The Flemings exerted themselves to the utmost to damage and destroy the place, and the besieged were as resolute in defending it. The King of France did all in his power to save Tournay, and even published a special summons throughout his empire for the mustering of forces, in order to drive the assailants away: Charles, King of Bohemia, the Duke of Lorraine, the Earl of Bar, and many others proffered their assistance. The exact length of the siege was eleven weeks all but three days, and during the time the surrounding coun-

try was much pillaged. At length the Lady John de Valois, sister to the King of France, and mother to the Earl of Hainault, prevailed with both parties to conclude a truce; a day was fixed for negotiation, when each side was to send five well qualified commissioners to treat upon the best means of bringing about a reconciliation. The meeting took place in the chapel, and three days were occupied in discussion. At last a truce for one year was agreed upon between the two kings and all the allies who were present, as well as between those who were carrying on the war in Scotland, Gascony, and elsewhere. The truce being settled, King Edward returned to Ghent, and with his queen and followers once more set out for England.

[Sir John's narrative continues for some time before he himself enters it. He does so for the first time as follows.]

## III

I HAVE NOW been some time without alluding to the affairs of distant countries, those nearer home being so fresh in my memory, and so much more agreeable to speak about; it must not, however, on this account be supposed that nothing was done worthy of record, for valiant men in Castille, Portugal, Gascony, Limousin, and other places, were employing themselves against each other, and many noble deeds were performed in surprising castles, and conquering towns. And for this reason, I, Sir John Froissart, having undertaken, at the request of that most renowned prince, Guy de Châtillon, Count de Blois, to indite and chronicle this history,—a history which will be much in request, and in which all good people will take pleasure when I am dead and gone,—determined, in order to ascertain the truth of these distant transactions, instead of sending others to make the inquiry, to go myself and visit that high and redoubted prince. Gaston Phœbus, Count de Foix and de Béarn—for I well knew that if I should be so fortunate as to be admitted into his household, I could not choose a situation better suited for my purpose, since knights and squires from all countries assembled at his court.

When I intimated this intention to my good lord and sovereign master the Count de Blois, he gave me letters of recom-

mendation to the count, and I began my journey, inquiring on all sides for news, and by the grace of God arrived safe at the count's residence at Orthes, in Béarn, on St. Catherine's day, in the year 1388.

The Count de Foix gave me a hearty welcome, adding that he was already well acquainted with me, for though he had never before seen me, he had frequently heard me spoken of. He at once retained me in his household, giving me full liberty to act as I pleased, as long as I remained with him. It was at his court I learned the greater part of those events which happened in the kingdoms of Castille, Portugal, Navarre, Arragon, and even in England, also in the Bourbonnais, and everything concerning Gascony. The count himself was very communicative, and readily answered every question put to him, saying, "That the history I was employed upon would in times to come be more sought after than any other; because, my fair son," he added, "more gallant deeds of arms have been performed within these last forty years, and more wonderful things have happened, than for three hundred years before."

I will, therefore, continue my history, adding to my own materials all that I learned at the court of Prince Gaston Phœbus; and if I have, hitherto, dwelt on gallant deeds, on hard-fought skirmishes and battles, and told how castles, forts, and towns were attacked and taken, many more will follow, and of these, by God's grace, I will give a true account.

Between the countries of Foix and Béarn lies the territory of Bigorre, which belongs to France, and is bounded on one side by the Toulousain, and on the other by Comminges and Béarn. In Bigorre is situated the strong castle of Lourde, which has always been regarded as belonging to the English, since that territory was given up to King Edward and his son the Prince of Wales, as part of the ransom for King John of France. When the Prince of Wales, attended by the princess, left England, to take possession of the duchy of Aquitaine, they resided at Bordeaux about a year, and then, at the invitation of the Count d'Armagnac, came into Bigorre, and fixed their residence at Tarbes, a handsome town situated among rich vineyards, and watered by the beautiful river Lisse, which rises in the mountains of Béarn and Catalonia.

Five leagues from Tarbes is the town of Morlans, and about six the town of Pau, both belonging to the Count de Foix, who, during the time the prince and princess were at Tarbes, was himself at Pau engaged in erecting a handsome castle on the outskirts of the town. Now this invitation had been given to the Prince and Princess of Wales by Count d'Armagnac, with a view to prevail on them to intercede with the Count de Foix to release him from a part, if not from the whole of the sum of 250,000 francs, which he owed for his ransom; for he was well aware that the Count de Foix would come and pay his respects to the prince and princess, while in his neighborhood.

It turned out as Count d'Armagnac had expected, for the Count de Foix, accompanied by 600 horses, and 60 knights, took an early opportunity of visiting the prince and princess, who were much pleased at his coming, and gave him a most handsome entertainment, but the prince would not consent to mention the subject of the ransom to him: "You were made prisoner," he said to Count d'Armagnac, "by fair deeds of arms, and in open battle; it was you who put our cousin the Count de Foix to the hazard of the fight, and if fortune has been favorable to him and adverse to you, he surely ought not to fare the worse for it. Neither my lord and father nor myself would have thanked you, if you had entreated us to give back what we had honorably won at Poitiers, and for which we returned thanks to God."

The count, upon this, finding he could not prevail with the prince, made a similar request of the princess, who gave him a far different reception, and immediately requested the Count de Foix to grant her a boon. "Madam," he replied, "I am but a poor gentleman—and insignificant bachelor, therefore I cannot make great gifts; but if the boon you request do not exceed 60,000 francs, I cheerfully grant it." The princess was anxious to gain the whole amount, but the count suspecting that the boon had reference to the ransom of the Count d'Armagnac, was not inclined to do more. This and many other things I learned upon my way to visit the Count de Foix.

At the time I undertook my journey, reflecting on the diversity of countries I had never seen, I set out from Car-

cassone, leaving Toulouse on the right, and first entered the territory of the count at Pamiers, where I halted three days. Pamiers is a delightful city situated among vineyards, and surrounded by a clear and broad river called the Liege. Here I fell in by accident with a knight attached to the Count de Foix—a prudent and valiant man, handsome in person, and about fifty years old. We journeyed in company together on the road to Orthes, and the knight, after saying his orisons, entered freely into conversation with me respecting the affairs of France. We crossed Mount Cesse, and passing by the castle of Ortingas, went on to dine at a castle belonging to the Count de Foix. After dinner the knight said to me, “Let us ride gently, as we have but two leagues to our lodgings for the night.” “Willingly,” said I.

“We have this day,” continued the knight, “passed the castle of Ortingas, the garrison of which did great harm to this part of the country. Peter d’Achin had possession of it; he took it by surprise, and by it gained 60,000 francs from France.” “How so?” said I.

“In the middle of August, on the Feast of our Lady,” replied the knight, “a fair is holden at Ortingas, when all the country people assemble, and to which much merchandise is brought—now Peter d’Achin and his companions at Lourde had long wanted to gain the town and castle of Ortingas, but could not devise the means. In the beginning of May, however, they instructed two of their men to seek for service in the town, in order that they might have friends within the walls, whenever they should find themselves prepared to surprise the place. When the fair time came, the town was filled with foreign merchants, and in the houses of the masters of these two servants, there was, as usual, much drinking and feasting. Peter d’Achin, thinking this a good opportunity, placed some men in ambush, and sent forward six varlets with two ladders to the town, who, with the assistance of the servants, managed to fix the ladders against the walls, which they mounted; one of the servants then conducted them towards the gate, where only two men were on guard, and placing them in concealment, said, ‘Do you remain here till you hear me whistle; then sally forth and slay the guards.’ The servant then advanced to the gate, and

calling the guards by name, said, 'Open the door—I bring you some of the best wine you have ever tasted.' As soon as the door was opened, he gave a whistle, upon which his comrades rushed into the guard-room and slew the guards so suddenly that they could give no alarm; they then let down the drawbridge, and at one blast of their horn all the party in ambush mounted their horses, and came full gallop into the town, where they found all its inhabitants either feasting or in bed, and so gained the town."

"But how did they gain the castle?" I asked. "I will tell you," said Sir Espaign du Lyon, for that was the name of my companion; "when the town was taken, as ill-luck would have it, the governor was absent, supping with some merchants, so that he was made prisoner, and the next day Peter d'Achin had him brought before the castle, in which were his wife and children, whom Peter so frightened, by declaring that unless they surrendered the place he should be put to death before their eyes, that they most gladly complied, and by this means Peter d'Achin got possession of the castle, and a very large booty, besides much money."

With this, and other subjects of conversation, we rode on to Montesquieu, and thence to Palaminich on the Garonne. As we approached this town we thought of entering it by the bridge over the Garonne; but this we found impossible, for the bridge, which was of wood, had been carried away by the overflowing of the river, so that we were forced to return to Montesquieu to dinner, and there we remained the whole day. On the morrow the knight was advised to cross the Garonne in a boat opposite Casseres, which we did, although with some difficulty, for the boat was so small that only two horses with their men could pass at a time. At Casseres we stayed a whole day, and while our servants were preparing supper, Sir Espaign du Lyon and myself took a walk round the town. We had passed through the gate on the side towards Palaminich, when the knight said to me, "Do you observe that part of the wall which is newer than the rest?" "Yes," said I, "why do you ask?"

"I will tell you how it happened," he continued. "You have heard of the wars between the Count d'Armagnac and the Count de Foix; well, on the night of the feast of St.

Nicholas, 1362, the Count de Foix captured the Count d'Armagnac, and his nephew the Lord d'Albreth, and had them confined in the tower of the castle of Orthes, by which capture he gained 100,000 francs ten times told.

"It happened afterwards that the Count d'Armagnac, father of the present count, with about 200 men, took the town of Casseres by scalado, and when news of this was brought to the Count de Foix, he sent his two natural brothers first, and afterwards came himself with 500 men to recover the place. He arranged his men about the town, and moreover had it encompassed with a fortification of wood, so that no sally could be made from it in the night-time, and in this way, without making any attack, blockaded them within, until their provisions began to fail; for, though they had plenty of wine, they had nothing to eat, and the river was too deep for them to ford. They, therefore, thought it better to surrender, and the count, who listened to their offers, informed them, that as they could not pass through any of the town gates, he would make a hole in the wall through which the garrison might come forth one by one, without arms, in their common dress. With this condition they were compelled to comply. And as they came out through the hole one by one, the count had them brought to him and sent off as prisoners, to different castles and towns, and this, my fair sir," continued my companion, "is the history of this wall being broken down and repaired about ten years ago."

When we had finished our walk, we returned to our lodgings and supped; and the next day, having mounted our horses, we pursued our journey, following the course of the Garonne. All the country on the left belonged to the Count de Foix, and on the right to the Count d'Armagnac. On our way we passed Montpesac, a fine strong castle on the top of a rock, below which is the road and the town. On the outside of the castle, about a bow-shot distant, there is a pass called La Garde, with a town between the rock and the river, and an iron gate. Six men could defend this pass against all the world, for only one man at a time can advance between the rock and the river. "Sir," said I to the knight, "this is a strong place, and a difficult country." "Indeed it is," he answered; "but nevertheless the Count de Foix and his

men once forced it, being assisted by some English archers."

The next object which attracted our attention was a large and handsome castle on the other side of the river, with a town of goodly appearance about it. This was Montesplain, and belonged, as my companion informed me, to a cousin of the Count de Foix, called Sir Roger d'Espaign. "He is a great baron and landed proprietor in this part." "What relation is he," said I, "to Sir Charles d'Espaign, constable of France?" "He is not of that family," said the knight. "Sir Lewis and Sir Charles came originally from Spain; I served, in my youth, under Sir Lewis d'Espaign, in the wars in Brittany, for he took the side of Charles de Blois against the Count de Montfort."

We rode on for some time, in conversation about different castles, when, all at once, I could see the river no longer. "What is become of the Garonne?" said I to my companion. "It loses itself," he replied, "between those two mountains: its spring is about three leagues off, on the road to Catalonia, below a castle called St. Béart, the last belonging to France, on the frontiers of Arragon. The governor of St. Béart at this time is a squire, named Ernauton, who is called the Bastard of Spain, and is cousin-german to Sir Roger d'Espaign. You will meet him at the hotel of the count at Christmas next, and the moment you see him you will say, that he is formed for a downright man-at-arms. I will now tell you what the Duke of Anjou did when in this part of the country; for if you have not inserted it in your history, it may be as well to do so."

We then rode on gently, when my companion began as follows:—"At the first renewal of the war the French gained back from the English all their possessions in Aquitaine, and Sir Oliver de Clisson having turned to the French interest, conducted the Duke of Anjou into Brittany, to the estates of Sir Robert Knolles, and to the siege of Derval. I must tell you, that Sir Garsis du Châtel, a valiant knight and a good Frenchman, had gone to seek the duke, to bring him before Malvoisin, when the duke had issued his summons to march to Derval. It is a truth, as I was informed, that when Sir Garsis found Sir Robert Knolles was not inclined to keep



the treaty made by Hugh Broc, and the castle of Derval was not likely to surrender, he came to the duke, and said, 'My lord, what shall we do with the hostages. It is no fault or crime of theirs if the castle be not given up, and it would be a sin to put them to death. Is it right that they should have their liberty?' 'Yes, by my faith,' said the knight, who had much compassion for them. 'Go, then,' said the duke, 'and do what you please with them.' At these words, as Sir Garsis told me, he went to set them at liberty, and on his road fell in with Sir Oliver de Clisson, who asked where he was going? To set the hostages free, was the reply. 'To set them free,' said Sir Oliver, 'stop a little, and come with me to the duke.' On their return, Sir Oliver prevailed with the duke to have the hostages all put to death, and Sir Garsis never dared to say one word in their favor, since Sir Oliver had determined that they should die. Two knights and two squires were immediately beheaded, and when Sir Robert Knolles saw what was being done, he instantly opened a postern gate of the castle; and, in revenge, had all the prisoners beheaded without sparing one. The great gate was then opened, and the drawbridge let down, when the garrison sallied beyond the barriers, and began to skirmish with the French. According to Sir Garsis's account, this skirmish was a very severe affair. The first arrow wounded Sir Oliver de Clisson, who was compelled to retire; and after much hard fighting, the duke marched away, and laid siege to the castle of Malvoisin, which we see here before us.

"The governor of Malvoisin, at the time the duke laid siege to it, was Raymonet de l'Épée, a Gascon squire, and an able man-at-arms. There were daily skirmishes at the barriers, and many gallant feats were performed by those who wished to advance themselves. The duke and his army were encamped in these handsome meadows between the town of Tournay and the castle, on the banks of the Lisse. During this siege Sir Garsis du Châtel, who was marshal of the army, marched with 500 men-at-arms, 200 archers and cross-bows, and full 2,000 common men, to lay siege to the castle of Tri-galet, which we have left behind us, and which, after an obstinate resistance, he so completely reduced and destroyed, that no one has ever thought of rebuilding it. The castle

of Malvoisin held out about six weeks, and it could easily have made a much longer resistance, but the well which supplied the castle with water being without the walls, they cut off the communication; moreover, the weather was very hot, and the cisterns within quite dry, for it had not rained for many weeks; and all this time the besiegers were on the banks of this clear river, which they made use of for themselves and their horses. The garrison, therefore, alarmed at their situation, determined to open a treaty, and Raymonet de l'Épée, having obtained a passport to wait on the duke, said, 'My lord, if you will act courteously to me and my companions, I will surrender the castle of Malvoisin.' 'What courtesy do you want?' replied the duke; 'go about your business, and take care that I do not get hold of you, for if I do, I will deliver you up to Jocelin, who shall shave you without a razor.' 'My lord,' answered Raymonet, 'if we depart we must carry away what belongs to us.' The duke paused awhile, and then said, 'I consent that you take with you whatever you can carry before you in trunks and on sumpter horses, but not otherwise; and if you have any prisoners they must be given up.' 'I agree,' said Raymonet. Such was the treaty, and all who were in the castle departed, carrying away whatever they could. The duke, on recovering the castle, made a knight of Bigorre, by name Sir Ciquart de Luperiere, governor of it, and afterwards gave it to the Count de Foix, who still holds it."

"Has the Count de Foix much wealth?" said I to my companion. "By my faith," he replied, "the count has at this moment a hundred thousand florins thirty times told; and there is not a year but he gives away 60,000, for a more liberal lord in making presents does not exist." "To whom does he make them?" "To strangers, to knights and squires, who travel through his country, to heralds, minstrels, indeed to all who converse with him; none leave him without a present." "Holy Mary!" cried I, "are his revenues so great as to supply him with such a sum?"

"The Count de Foix," replied the knight, "has been induced to collect so large a sum of money, because he was continually expecting war with the Count d'Armagnac, and also doubtful of the maneuvers of his neighbors, the Kings of

France and England. Moreover, when the Prince of Wales was in Aquitaine he threatened the count that he would make him do homage for the county of Béarn, and on this account, also, he began to amass large sums of money, in order to defend himself should he be attacked. He imposed heavy taxes on the country and on all the towns. Each hearth pays two francs per annum, and in this he has found and still finds a mine of wealth; for it is marvelous how cheerfully his subjects pay it. His whole country is well protected, and justice administered, for in matters of justice he is the most severe and upright lord existing."

Thus conversing, we found ourselves in the town of Tournay, where our lodgings were prepared at the hotel of the Star. When supper was served, the governor of Malvoisin, Sir Raymond de Lane, came to see us, and brought with him four flagons of wine, as excellent as any I had tasted on the road.

In the morning we left Tournay, passed the river Lisse at a ford, and after riding some time entered a wood on the lands of the Lord de Barbason; when the knight said, "Sir John, this is the pass of Larre, look about you." I did so, and a very strange place it is; indeed I should have considered myself in great danger, if I had not had the knight for my companion.

As we continued our journey the knight began as follows:—"During the time Peter d'Achine held the castle and garrison of Ortingas, those of Lourde made frequent excursions from their fort. On one occasion they fell in with a party of knights and squires from Bigorre, who had heard of their ravages, and were desirous to put a stop to them. They met about the spot where we now are, and having dismounted, advanced with pointed lances on each other, crying out, 'St. George for Lourde!' 'Our Lady for Bigorre!' The charge was very severe, for they thrust their spears with all their strength; and, to add greater force, urged them forward with their breasts. When they had used the spears for some time they threw them aside, and began to fight with their battle-axes. This contest lasted for three hours, and it was marvelous to see how well they defended themselves. When any were so worsted, or out of breath, that they could no

longer support the fight, they seated themselves near a ditch full of water in the plain, removed their helmets, and refreshed themselves, then, replacing their helmets, they returned to the combat.

“I do not believe there was ever a battle so well fought and so severe as this of Marteras, in Bigorre, since the famous combat of thirty English against thirty French knights in Brittany. They fought hand to hand, and Ernauton de Sainte Colombe, an excellent man-at-arms, was at one time on the point of being killed by a squire of the country, when his servant, seeing his master’s danger, came up, and wresting the battle-ax from his hand, said, ‘Ernauton, go and sit down, you are not in a state to continue the fight;’ and upon saying this, he advanced to the squire, to whom he gave such a blow upon his helmet that he staggered and almost fell down; he then closed with him, and flinging him to the ground, said, ‘Surrender to my master or I will put you to death.’ ‘And who is your master?’ said the squire. ‘Ernauton de Sainte Colombe, with whom you have been so long engaging.’ The squire consented, and surrendered on condition to deliver himself prisoner within fifteen days at the castle of Lourde, whether rescued or not. Ernauton Biscete and Le Meneant de Sainte Basile fought hand to hand without sparing themselves, till both were killed upon the spot. With their death the combat ceased by mutual consent, for all the men were so worn out that they could wield their axes no longer. In order to preserve the memory of this battle, a cross was erected on the spot where these two knights fought and died. See, there it is,” said my companion. Upon which we turned to the right, and made for the cross, when each of us said an Ave Maria and a Paternoster for the souls of the deceased.

From this spot we rode on at our ease, not to fatigue our horses; and the knight pointed out to me, on the other side of the river, the town and castle of Montgaillard, and the road which goes straight to Lourde. He then related several particulars touching the siege of Lourde and the death of the governor, whom, on account of his obstinate resistance, the Count de Foix stabbed five times, and then cast into prison, where he died. “Holy Mary!” said I to the knight;

“was not this a great act of eruelty?” “Whatever it was,” he replied, “so it happened, and ill betide him who angers the count, for he pardons none. He kept his cousin-german, the Viscount de Chateaubon, even though he is his heir, eight months in prison in the tower of Orthes, and then ransomed him for 40,000 francs.”

“What, sir!” said I; “has not the Count de Foix any children?” “Yes! in God’s name! but not in lawful marriage; he has two young knights, bastards, Sir Jenuain and Sir Gareien, whom he loves most dearly.” “And was he never married?” “Yes, and is so still; but Madame de Foix does not live with him. She resides in Navarre; for the King of Navarre is her brother.” “Had the count never any children by her?” “Yes, a fine son, who was the delight of his father and of the country.” “And pray, sir,” said I, “may I ask what became of this son?” “Yes,” replied Sir Espaign du Lyon; “but the story is too long at present, for as you see here is the town.” At these words we entered Tarbes, where we remained a whole day, for it is a very comfortable place.

Early in the morning, after mass, we left Tarbes, and had not journeyed very far when the knight stopped on the plain and said, “We are now in Béarn.” At this spot two roads cross each other, one to Morlens and the other to Pau: we hesitated which to take, but at last followed the former. Riding over the heaths of Béarn, which are tolerably level, I asked, in order to renew our conversation, whether the town of Pau were near? “Yes,” said the knight, “I will show you the steeple. It is, however, much farther off than it appears, and the roads are very bad, being of deep clay. Below are the town and castle of Lourde.” “And who is governor of Lourde now?” “John de Béarn, brother to Sir Peter de Béarn who was murdered.” “Indeed,” said I, “and does this John de Béarn ever visit the Count de Foix?” “Never since the death of his brother; but his other companions, Peter d’Achin and Ernauton de Sainte Colombe, go thither whenever they have occasion.”

As we rode on I said to my companion, “Sir Knight, I should much like to know what caused the death of the son of the Count de Foix.” At this the knight became pensive,

and said, "It is so melancholy a subject that I would rather not speak of it. When you are at Orthes, you will find many there who will tell you the whole history." With this answer I was obliged to content myself, and so we continued our journey until we arrived at Morlens, where we passed the night. The next day we dined at Montgerbal, and, after drinking a cup at Ereie, arrived by sunset at Orthes. The knight dismounted at his own house, and I did the same at the hotel of the Moon, kept by a squire of the count, by name Ernauton du Pin, who received me with much pleasure on account of my being a Frenchman. Sir Espaign du Lyon, soon after our entrance into Orthes, went to the castle to speak with the count, whom he found in his gallery; and as soon as he informed him of my arrival, I was instantly sent for.

## IV

ON entering his presence the count received me most handsomely, and retained me in his household. Our acquaintance was strengthened by my having brought with me a book which I had made at the desire of Wincellaus of Bohemia, Duke of Luxembourg and Brabant; in which book, called *Le Meliador*, are contained all the songs, ballads, roundelays, and virelays, which that gentle duke had composed. Every night after supper I read out to the count parts of it, during which time he and all present preserved the greatest silence; and when any passages were not perfectly clear, the count himself discussed them with me, not in his Gascon language, but in very good French.

I shall now tell you several particulars respecting the count and his household. Count Gascon Phœbus de Foix, at the time of which I am speaking, was about fifty-nine years old; and although I have seen very many knights, squires, kings, princes, and others, I never saw any one so handsome. He was so perfectly formed that no one could praise him too much. He loved earnestly the things he ought to love, and hated those which it became him to hate. He was a prudent knight, full of enterprise and wisdom. He never allowed any men of abandoned character to be about him, reigned prudently, and was constant at his devotions. There were

regular nocturnals from the Psalter, prayers from the rituals to the Virgin, to the Holy Ghost, and from the Burial Service. He had, every day, distributed, as alms at his gate, five florins, in small coin, to all comers. He was liberal and courteous in his gifts, and well knew how to take and how to give back. He loved dogs above all other animals; and during summer and winter amused himself much with hunting. He never indulged in any foolish works or ridiculous extravagances, and took account every month of the amount of his expenditure. He chose twelve of the most able of his subjects to receive and administer his finances, two serving two months each, and one of them acting as comptroller. He had certain coffers in his apartment, whence he took money to give to different knights, squires, or gentlemen, when they came to wait on him, for none ever left him without a gift. He was easy of access to all, and entered very freely into discourse, though laconic in his advice and in his answers. He employed four secretaries to write and copy his letters, and these were to be in readiness as soon as he left his room. He called them neither John, Walter, nor William, but his good-for-nothings, to whom he gave his letters, after he had read them, to copy or to do anything else which he might command.

In such manner lived the Count de Foix. When he quitted his chamber at midnight for supper, twelve servants bore each a lighted torch before him. The hall was full of knights and squires, and there were plenty of tables laid out for any who chose to sup. No one spoke to him at table unless he first began the conversation. He ate heartily of poultry, but only the wings and thighs. He had great pleasure in hearing minstrels, being himself a proficient in the science. He remained at table about two hours, and was pleased whenever fanciful dishes were served up to him—not that he desired to partake of them, but having seen them, he immediately sent them to the tables of his knights and squires.

In short, everything considered, though I had before been in several courts, I never was at one which pleased me more, nor was ever anywhere more delighted with feats of arms. Knights and squires were to be seen in every chamber, hall, and court, conversing on arms and armor. Everything hon-

orable was to be found there. All intelligence from distant countries was there to be learned; for the gallantry of the count had brought together visitors from all parts of the world. Seeing the hotel of the count so spacious and so amply provided, I was very anxious to know what was become of his son Gaston, and by what accident he died, for *Espaign du Lyon* would never satisfy my curiosity. Indeed, I made so many inquiries on the subject, that an old and intelligent squire at last informed me. He began his tale thus:—

“It is well known that the Count and Countess of Foix are not on good terms with each other. This disagreement arose from the King of Navarre, who is the lady’s brother. The King of Navarre had offered to pledge himself, in the sum of 50,000 francs, for the Lord d’Albreth, whom the Count de Foix held in prison. The count, knowing the King of Navarre to be crafty and faithless, would not accept his security, which circumstance piqued the countess, and raised her indignation against her husband. The countess went to the King of Navarre to endeavor to settle this business; and when, after much talking, she found she could come to no satisfactory arrangement, she was afraid to return home, knowing her husband to be of a cruel disposition towards those with whom he was displeased. Thus things remained for some time. Gaston, my lord’s son, grew up and became a fine young gentleman. He married the daughter of the Count d’Armagnac, sister to the present count, by which union peace was restored between Foix and Armagnac. He might be at the time about fifteen or sixteen years old, and was a very fine figure, the exact resemblance of his father. Some time after his marriage he took it into his head to make a journey into Navarre to visit his mother and uncle; but it was an unfortunate journey for him and for this country. In Navarre he was splendidly entertained, and stayed there some time with his mother. On taking leave he could not prevail on her to return, for she had found that the count had bid him convey no such request to her. She consequently remained, and the heir of Foix went to Pampeluna to take leave of his uncle, who detained him ten days, and on his departure made him several handsome presents. The last



gift he gave to him was the cause of his death, and I will tell you in what way. As the youth was on the point of setting out, the king took him privately into his chamber and gave him a bag full of powder, which was of such pernicious quality that it would cause the death of any one who ate it. 'Gaston, my fair nephew,' said the king, 'will you do what I am about to tell you? You see how unjustly the Count de Foix hates your mother. Now, if you wish to reconcile them, you must take a small pinch of this powder and strew it upon the meat destined for your father's table; but take care no one sees you. The instant he has taken it he will be impatient for your mother's return, and henceforth they will so love each other that they will never again be separated. Do not mention this to any one, for if you do, it will lose its effect.'

"The youth, who believed all which his uncle told him, cheerfully agreed to do as he said, and then departed from Pampeluna. On his return to Orthes, his father received him gladly, and asked what presents he had received. The youth replied, 'Very handsome ones;' and then showed him all, except the bag which contained the powder. It was customary in the hôtel de Foix for Gaston and his bastard brother, Evan, to sleep in the same chamber; they loved each other dearly, and dressed alike, for they were of the same size and age. It happened one night that their clothes got mixed together; and the coat of Gaston being on the bed, Evan, noticing the powder in the bag, said to him, 'What is this, Gaston?' By no means pleased at the inquiry, Gaston replied, 'Give me back my coat, Evan; what have you to do with it?' Evan flung him his coat, and Gaston during the day became very pensive. Three days after this, as if God were interposing to save the life of the Count de Foix, Gaston quarreled with Evans at tennis, and gave him a box on the ear. Much vexed at this, Evan ran crying into the count's apartment, who immediately said to him, 'What is the matter, Evan?' 'My lord,' replied he, 'Gaston has been beating me, but he deserves beating much more than I do.' 'For what reason?' said the count. 'On my faith,' said Evan, 'ever since his return from Navarre, he wears a bag of powder in his breast. I know not what he intends to do with it; but

he has once or twice told me that his mother would soon return hither, and be more in your good graces than she ever was.' 'Ho,' said the count; 'be sure you do not mention to any one what you have just told me.' The Count de Foix then became very thoughtful on the subject and remained alone until dinner-time, when he took a seat as usual at the table. It was Gaston's office to place the dishes before him and taste them. As soon as he had served the first dish the count detected the strings of the bag hanging from his pourpoint, the sight of which made his blood boil, and he called Gaston towards him. The youth advanced to the table, when the count undid his pourpoint, and with his knife cut away the bag. Gaston was thunderstruck, turned very pale, and began to tremble exceedingly. The count took some powder from the bag, which he strewed over a slice of bread, and calling to him one of his dogs, gave it to him to eat. The instant the dog had eaten a morsel, his eyes rolled round in his head, and he died.

"The count was much enraged, and not without reason, and it was with great difficulty that the knights and squires who were present, prevented him from slaying his son. 'Ho, Gaston,' he said, 'thou traitor; for thee, and to increase thine inheritance, have I made war, and incurred the hatred of the kings of France and England, Spain, Navarre, and Arragon;' then, leaping over the table, with a knife in his hand, he was about to thrust it into his body, when the knights and squires interfered; and on their knees besought him—'My lord, for Heaven's sake, consider you have no other child. Let him be confined, and inquiry made into the matter. Perhaps he was ignorant of what the bag contained, and, therefore, may be blameless.' 'Well, then, confine him in the tower,' said the count; 'only be careful that he is forthcoming.' As soon as Gaston was placed in confinement, many of those who served him escaped, but fifteen were arrested and afterwards put to death.

"This business made a great impression upon the count; and in presence of all the nobles and prelates of Foix and Béarn, he declared his intention of putting Gaston to death. They, however, would not sanction such severity, and it was at last determined that Gaston should be confined in prison

for two or three months, and then sent on his travels for a few years, until his ill conduct should be forgotten, and himself feel grateful for the lenity of his punishment. News of this circumstance spread far and near, and came to the ears of Pope Gregory XI., at Avignon, who immediately sent off the Cardinal of Amiens as his legate to Béarn, in order to accommodate the affair; but the cardinal had scarcely traveled as far as Beziers when he heard that it was useless for him to continue his journey, for that the son of the Count de Foix was dead. Since I have said so much upon the subject," continued my informant, "I must tell you how he died. At the count's orders he was confined in a room of the dungeon, where there was little light; there he remained ten days, scarcely eating or drinking anything. It is even reported, that after his death all the food that had been brought to him was found untouched; so that it is marvelous how he could have lived so long. From the time he entered the dungeon he never put off his clothes, and the count would permit no one to remain in the room to advise or comfort him. On the day of his death, the person who waited upon him, seeing the state he was in, went to the count, and said, 'My lord, for God's sake, do look to your son; he is certainly starving himself.' On hearing which the count became very angry, and went himself to the prison. It was an evil hour: the count had in his hand a knife, with which he had been paring his nails, and which he held tight between his fingers, with scarcely the point protruding, when pushing aside the tapestry that covered the entrance of the prison, through ill luck, he hit his son on a vein of the throat with the point of the knife, as he rushed forward, addressing him, 'Ha! traitor! why dost thou not eat?' Then, without saying or doing more, he instantly left the place. The youth was much frightened at his father's arrival, and withal exceedingly weak from fasting. The point of the knife, small as it was, had cut a vein, and as soon as he felt it, he turned himself on one side, and died. Scarcely had the count reached his apartment when his son's attendants came to him in haste to inform him that Gaston was dead. 'Dead?' cried the count. 'Yes; God help me, he is indeed dead, my lord.' The count would not believe the report, and sent one of his knights to ascer-

tain the truth. The knight soon returned to confirm the account, when the count wept bitterly, crying out, 'Ha, ha, Gaston, how sad a business is this for thee and me! In an evil hour didst thou visit thy mother in Navarre. Never shall I be happy again.' He then ordered his barber to be sent for, and was shaven quite bare; he also clothed himself, as well as his whole household, in black. The body of the youth was borne with tears and lamentation to the church of the Augustine friars, at Orthes, where it was buried."

My heart was much moved at this sad recital of the squire of Béarn. I was truly sorry for the count, whom I found a magnificent, generous, and courteous lord; I thanked the squire for the narrative, and then bade him adieu.

We met frequently afterwards in the hôtel de Foix, and conversed much together. I once asked him about Sir Peter de Béarn, bastard brother to the count, whether he was rich or married. "Married, indeed he is," replied he; "but neither his wife nor children live with him; and I will tell you the reason. Sir Peter has a custom when asleep in the night-time, to rise, arm himself, draw his sword, and begin fighting as if he were in actual combat. The chamberlains and valets, who sleep in his chamber to watch him, on hearing him rise, go to him, and inform him of what he is doing, when he appears quite ignorant about it. Sometimes they remove his arms from the chamber, when he makes such a noise and clatter that one might suppose all the spirits of the nether world were in the room." I again asked whether he had a large fortune with his wife. "Yes, he had," said the squire; "but the lady keeps possession of all except a fourth part, which Sir Peter has." "And where does she reside?" "With her cousin, the King of Castille," he replied; "her father was Count of Biscay and cousin-german to Don Pedro, who put him to death." "Holy Mary!" said I to the squire, "how came Sir Peter to have such fancies that he cannot sleep quietly in bed, but must skirmish about the house?—this is very strange."

"Indeed," answered the squire, "they have frequently asked him; but he knows nothing about it. The first time it happened was on the night following a day when he had hunted a wonderfully large bear in the woods of Béarn. The

bear had killed four of his dogs, and wounded several others. Upon which Sir Peter drew his sword of Bordeaux steel, and advanced to attack the animal, and after much danger and difficulty slew him. Every one was astonished at the enormous size of the beast, and the courage of the knight who had attacked and slain it. When his wife, the Countess of Biscay, saw the bear, she instantly fainted, and was carried to her chamber, where she continued very disconsolate all that and the following day, and would not say what ailed her; on the third day she told her husband she could never recover until she had made a pilgrimage to St. James's shrine at Compostella. 'Give me leave,' she said, 'to go thither, and to take with me my son Peter, and my daughter Adrienne.' Sir Peter too easily complied; and the lady packed up all her jewels and plate, resolving never to return again. On her way she took an opportunity of visiting her cousins, the King and Queen of Castille, who entertained her so handsomely that she still remains with them, and will neither return herself nor send back her children."

Among the solemn rites which the Count de Foix observes, he most magnificently keeps the feast of St. Nicholas; he holds this festival even more splendidly than that of Easter. All the clergy of the town of Orthes, with the inhabitants, walk in procession to seek the count at the castle, who returns with them to the church of St. Nicholas, when is sung the psalm, "*Benedictus Dominus, Deus meus, qui docet manus meas ad prælium et digitos meos ad bellum,*" which is repeated as in the chapels of the Pope or the King of France. When I was present on St. Nicholas' day, the Bishop of Pamiers sang mass, and I there heard organs play as melodiously as I ever heard in any place. At the feast of Christmas, which the count keeps with great solemnity, crowds of knights and squires from Germany waited on him, to all of whom he gave most splendid entertainments.

I there saw the Bourg d'Espaign, of whose surprising strength Sir Espaign du Lyon had told me; I saw also many knights from Arragon and England, which last were of the household of the Duke of Lancaster, who resided at the time at Bordeaux. I moreover became acquainted with a Gascon squire, called Le Bastot de Mauléon, who lodged at the same

hotel as myself, and who, one night, while we were waiting for the count's supper-time, told me part of his history, which was as follows:—

“The first time I bore arms was under the Captal de Buch at the battle of Poitiers; by good luck I made three prisoners, who paid me, one with the other, 4,000 francs. The following year I was in Prussia, with the Count de Foix and his cousin, the captal, under whose command I was. On our return from Prussia we found the Duchess of Orleans, and several other ladies, shut up in Meaux in Brie. The peasants had confined them in the market-place of Meaux, and would have done violence to them if God had not sent us thither, for the ladies were completely in their power. Upwards of 6,000 Jacks were killed upon the spot. At this time there was a truce between France and England, but the King of Navarre continued the war on his own personal quarrel with the regent of France. The Count de Foix returned to his own country, and my master and myself remained in the pay of the King of Navarre, who made a very sharp war upon France.

“At length a treaty was concluded, according to the terms of which, it was necessary for all men-at-arms and free companies to quit the fortresses and castles held by them. Many companions, who had learned the art of war under different commanders, held councils as to what they should do, for, of course, they must live. All marched into Burgundy, upwards of 12,000 in number, and of these three or four thousand as good men-at-arms as any that could be found, whether to plan an engagement, to seize the proper moment to fight, or to surprise and scale towns and castles. I was with them as a captain in many engagements, and I think we showed what we could do at the battle of Briganais, where we overpowered the Constable of France, with full 2,000 lances, knights, and squires. This battle, indeed, was of great advantage to the companions, who enriched themselves by good prisoners, and by the towns and castles which they took in the archbishopric of Lyons. After this, by an arrangement with the pope and the cardinal, the largest number of the companions marched into Lombardy, to serve the Marquis de Montferrat, who was at that time at war with the Lord of

Milan; but myself and several others remained behind, having possession of many towns, and upwards of sixty castles in the Maconnois, Forêts, Velay, and in the lower part of Burgundy.

“Shortly after this I joined Sir John Aymeray in his intended attack upon the town and castle of Sancerre. We had, however, scarcely crossed the Loire, when we found ourselves in the midst of the enemy. Sir John Aymeray was dangerously wounded; we kept our ground as long as we were able, but at last were completely surrounded. Very many were killed and wounded, and a still larger number made prisoners; indeed, the free companies never suffered such loss in France as they did that day. I also served in Brittany under Sir Hugh Calverley, where I made such good prisoners that they paid me 2,000 francs. I then accompanied Sir Hugh into Spain against Don Pedro; and when treaties were entered into between Don Pedro and the Prince of Wales, who wished to enter Spain, I was then in company with Sir Hugh Calverley, and returned to Aquitaine with him.

“The war was now renewed between the King of France and the prince; it was vigorously carried on, and we had enough to do. I will tell you how I conquered the town and castle of Thurie, in the Albigeois, which castle has since been worth to me about 100,000 francs. On the outside of the town there is a beautiful spring, where every morning the women of the place came to fetch water; observing this, I formed my plan, and taking with me about fifty men from the castle of Cuillet, we rode all day over heaths and through woods, and about midnight I placed an ambuscade near Thurie. Myself, with only six others, disguised as women, with pails on our heads, entered the meadows very near the town, and hid ourselves in a heap of hay. It was about St. John’s day, and the meadows were mown. When the usual hour for opening the gates arrived, and the women were coming to the fountain, each of us took his pail, and having filled it, placed it on his head, and made for the town, our faces being covered with handkerchiefs, so that no one could know us. Many women as they met us said, ‘Holy Mary! you are out early this morning.’ We replied in feigned voices, and passed on to the gate, where we found no other

guard but an old cobbler mending shoes. One of the party then sounded his horn, as a notice to those in the ambuscade to advance.

“The cobbler, who at first paid no attention to us, on hearing the horn cried out, ‘Holla! who blows that horn?’ ‘Some priest,’ we answered, ‘who is going into the country.’ ‘True,’ he replied, ‘it is Sir Francis, our priest—he likes to be early in the fields in search of hares.’ Our companions joined us at once, and on entering the town we found no one prepared to defend it, so it quietly passed into our hands.”

Soon after Bastot de Mauléon had finished his narrative, the watch of the castle sounded his horn to assemble those in the town of Orthes who were engaged to sup with the Count de Foix. We who were at the inn immediately got ourselves ready, and having lighted our torches, set out for the castle. Too much praise cannot be given to the state and magnificence of the Count de Foix; during my stay at his court I found him such as far to exceed all that I can say of him, and I saw many things which gave me the greatest pleasure. On Christmas day there were seated at his table four bishops of his own country, two Clementists and two Urbanists. The bishops sat at the top of the table, and next to them the count himself, and then several noble viscounts and others. At another table were seated knights and squires from Gascony and Bigorre; at another many knights from Béarn; Sir Espaign du Lyon and three others were chief stewards of the hall. The count’s bastard brothers waited, and his two bastard sons, Sir Evan and Sir Garcien—the former placed on the dishes, and the latter served him with wine. There were many minstrels in the hall, as well those belonging to the count, as to the strangers who were present. This day the count gave to the minstrels and heralds five hundred francs among them; he also clothed the minstrels of the Duke of Touraine with cloth of gold trimmed with ermine; the dresses were valued at two hundred francs. Dinner lasted till four o’clock in the afternoon.

During my residence at Orthes, it was my own fault if I did not collect information from every country, for the gentle knight, Sir Espaign du Lyons, to whom I told all my wants,



made me acquainted with such knights and squires as were able to give me true information of all those things I was desirous of knowing.

## v

You who delight in this history must know, that on my leaving the castle of the noble Count Gaston de Foix, I returned through Auvergne and France in company with the gallant Lord de la Riviere, and Sir William de la Tremouille, who had conducted the Lady Jane of Boulogne to the Duke of Berry, in the town of Riom, where he married her. I then went to Paris, and met there the noble Lord de Coucy, one of my patrons, who had lately married a daughter of the Duke of Lorraine. From Paris I went to Valenciennes, and after staying there a fortnight set out to Holland to visit my gallant patron and lord the Count de Blois, whom I found at Schoenhoven. I then returned to France to learn the particulars of the conference which was being held at Leulinghem, between the English and French, and likewise to be present at the magnificent feasts which were to be given on the occasion of Queen Isabella's public entry into Paris, where as yet she had never been.

It was on Sunday, the 20th day of June, in the year of our Lord 1399, that the queen entered Paris. In the afternoon of that day the noble ladies of France who were to accompany the queen assembled at St. Denis, with such of the nobility as were appointed to lead the litters of the queen and her attendants. The citizens of Paris, to the number of 1,200, were mounted on horseback, dressed in uniforms of green and crimson, and lined each side of the road. Queen Joan and her daughter the Duchess of Orleans entered the city first, about an hour after noon, in a covered litter, and passing through the great street of St. Denis, went to the palace, where the king was waiting for them.

The Queen of France, attended by the Duchess of Berry and many other noble ladies, began the procession in an open litter most richly ornamented. A crowd of nobles attended, and sergeants and others of the king's officers had full employment in making way for the procession, for there were such numbers assembled that it seemed as if all the world had

come thither. At the gate of St. Denis was the representation of a starry firmament, and within it were children dressed as angels, whose singing and chanting was melodiously sweet. There was also an image of the Virgin holding in her arms a child, who at times amused himself with a windmill made of a large walnut. The upper part of this firmament was richly adorned with the arms of France and Bavaria, with a brilliant sun dispersing his rays through the heavens; and this sun was the king's device at the ensuing tournaments. The queen, after passing them, advanced slowly to the fountain in the street of St. Denis, which was decorated with fine blue cloth besprinkled over with golden flower-de-luce; and instead of water, the fountain ran in great streams of Clairé, and excellent piment. Around the fountain were young girls handsomely dressed, who sang most sweetly, and held in their hands cups of gold, offering drink to all who chose it. Below the monastery of the Trinity a scaffold had been erected in the streets, and on it a castle, with a representation of the battle with King Saladin performed by living actors, the Christians on one side and the Saracens on the other. The procession then passed on to the second gate of St. Denis, which was adorned as the first; and as the queen was going through the gate two angels descended and gently placed on her head a rich golden crown, ornamented with precious stones, at the same time singing sweetly the following verse:—

Dame enclose entre fleurs de Lys,  
Reine êtes vous de Paris.  
De France, et de tout le país,  
Nous en r' allons en paradis.

Opposite the chapel of St. James a scaffold had been erected, richly decorated with tapestry, and surrounded with curtains, within which were men who played finely on organs. The whole street of St. Denis was covered with a canopy or rich camlet and silk cloths. The queen and her ladies, conducted by the great lords, arrived at length at the gate of the Châtelet, where they stopped to see other splendid pageants that had been prepared. The queen and her attendants thence passed on to the bridge of Notre Dame, which was covered with a

starry canopy of green and crimson, and the streets were all hung with tapestry as far as the church. It was now late in the evening, for the procession, ever since it had set out from St. Denis, had advanced but at a foot's pace. As the queen was passing down the street of Notre Dame, a man descended by means of a rope from the highest tower of Notre Dame church, having two lighted torches in his hands, and playing many tricks as he came down. The Bishop of Paris and his numerous clergy met the queen at the entrance of the church, and conducted her through the nave and choir to the great altar, where, on her knees, she made her prayers, and presented as her offering four cloths of gold, and the handsome crown which the angels had put on her head at the gate of Paris. The Lord John de la Riviere and Sir John le Mercier instantly brought one more rich with which they crowned her. When this was done she and her ladies left the church, and as it was late upwards of 500 lighted tapers attended the procession. In such array were they conducted to the palace, where the king, Queen Joan, and the Duchess of Orleans were waiting for them.

On the morrow, which was Monday, the king gave a grand dinner to a numerous company of ladies, and at the hour of high mass the Queen of France was conducted to the holy chapel, where she was anointed and sanctified in the usual manner. Sir William de Viare, Archbishop of Rouen, said mass. Shortly after mass the king, queen, and all the ladies entered the hall: and you must know that the great marble table which is in the hall was covered with oaken planks four inches thick, and the royal dinner placed thereon. Near the table, and against one of the pillars, was the king's buffet, magnificently decked out with gold and silver plate; and in the hall were plenty of attendants, sergeants-at-arms, ushers, archers, and minstrels, who played away to the best of their ability. The kings, prelates, and ladies, having washed, seated themselves at the tables, which were three in number: at the first, sat the King and Queen of France, and some few of the higher nobility; and at the other two, there were upwards of 500 ladies and damsels; but the crowd was so great that it was with difficulty they could be served with dinner, which indeed was plentiful and sumptuous. There

were in the hall many curiously arranged devices: a castle to represent the city of Troy, with the palace of Ilion, from which were displayed the banners of the Trojans; also a pavilion on which were placed the banners of the Grecian kings, and which was moved as it were by invisible beings to the attack of Troy, assisted by a large ship capable of containing 100 men-at-arms; but the crowd was so great that this amusement could not last long. There were so many people on all sides that several were stifled by the heat, and the queen herself almost fainted. The queen left the palace about five o'clock, and, followed by her ladies, in litters or on horseback, proceeded to the residence of the king at the hotel de St. Pol. The king took boat at the palace, and was rowed to his hotel, where, in a large hall, he entertained the ladies at a banquet; the queen, however, remained in her chamber where she supped, and did not again appear that night. On Tuesday, many superb presents were made by the Parisians to the King and Queen of France, and the Duchess of Touraine. This day the king and queen dined in private, at their different hotels, for at three o'clock the tournament was to take place in the square of St. Catherine, where scaffolds had been erected for the accommodation of the queen and the ladies. The knights who took part in this tournament were thirty in number, including the king; and when the justs began they were carried on with great vigor, every one performing his part in honor of the ladies. The Duke of Ireland, who was then a resident at Paris, and invited by the king to the tournament, tilted well; also a German knight from beyond the Rhine, by name Sir Gervais di Mirande, gained great commendation. The number of knights made it difficult to give a full stroke, and the dust was so troublesome that it increased the difficulty. The Lord de Coucy shone with brilliancy. The tilts were continued without relaxation until night, when the ladies were conducted to their hotels. At the hotel de St. Pol was the most magnificent banquet ever heard of. Feasting and dancing lasted till sunrise, and the prize of the tournament was given, with the assent of the ladies and heralds, to the king as being the best tilter on the opponent side; while the prize for the holders of the lists was given to the Halze de Flandres, bastard brother to the Duchess

of Burgundy. On Wednesday the tilting was continued, and the banquet this evening was as grand as the preceding one. The prize was adjudged by the ladies and heralds to a squire from Hainault, as the most deserving of the opponents, and to a squire belonging to the Duke of Burgundy, as the best tenant of the field. On Thursday also the tournament was continued; and, this day, knights and squires tilted promiscuously, and many gallant justs were done, for every one took pains to excel. When night put an end to the combat there was a grand entertainment again for the ladies at the hotel de St. Pol. On Friday the king feasted the ladies and damsels at dinner, and afterwards very many returned to their homes, the king and queen thanking them very graciously for having come to the feast.

After this grand festival was over, the King of France, seeing that his kingdom was now at peace, and that there was a truce with England, had a great desire to visit the more distant parts of his government, particularly Languedoc. At the advice of his ministry, he also prepared to visit the pope and cardinals at Avignon. Before he set out upon his journey he yielded to the request of the Lord de Coucy, and gave orders that the Duke of Ireland should quit France about Michaelmas, 1399. The King of France set out from the Castle of Beauté, near Paris, where he left the queen, and took the road to Troyes, in Champagne, on his way to Burgundy. He was accompanied by his uncles, the Duke of Bourbon, the Duke of Touraine, the Lord de Coucy, and many other knights, and continued his journey until he arrived at Dijon, where he was received with every respect and affection by the Duchess of Burgundy, and all who had come hither to do him honor. Grand entertainments were given on the occasion, and the king remained eight days at Dijon, and then went to Villeneuve, near Avignon, where his palace had been prepared. From Villeneuve he proceeded to the palace of Pope Clement, who was waiting for him in full consistory, seated in his robes, on his papal chair. When the king came into his presence he bowed, and when near to him, the pope rose up and the king kissed him. The pope then seated himself, and made the king sit by him. When dinner was ready, the pope took his place at a table alone

in much state, and the king was placed at another table below that of the pope, and alone also. The cardinals and dukes seated themselves according to their rank. The dinner was splendid, plentiful, and long continued: when over, the king retired to an apartment prepared for him in the palace. The pope and cardinals were much rejoiced at the visit of the King of France, as indeed they had good reason to be; for without his support they would have been in but small estimation. There were no kings in Christendom who paid the pope obedience, but such as were allied to France. The pope, on the joyful occasion of the king's visit, gave pardons to the clergy who were in his court, and plenary indulgences to all for one month to come. He likewise presented the king with the nominations to all his cathedrals and other churches, and in each church to reversions of two prebends, deferring all his former promises, that those now made to the king might have the precedency. He gave also reversions to the Dukes of Touraine, Berry, and Burgundy, and the Lord de Coucy; and was so courteous and liberal on this occasion that none left him discontented. The king remained with the pope about eight days; and, on leaving, he dismissed to their homes the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy, to their great dissatisfaction; and then continued his journey to Languedoc. At Montpellier he resided upwards to twelve days; indeed he appeared to enjoy himself much at this place, and danced and caroled with the frisky ladies of Montpellier all night.

You know, or must have heard it mentioned, that the intercourse of young gentlemen with the fair sex encourages sentiments of honor and love of fame. I mention this, because there were with the King of France three gentlemen of great valor and enterprise, which they were probably induced by that intercourse to display in the manner I shall relate. The names of the three were Sir Boucicaut the younger, Sir Reginald de Roze, and the Lord de Sainpi. These knights were chamberlains to the king, and much esteemed by him; and being desirous of advancing themselves in the estimation of all present, and especially the ladies, they offered to hold a field of arms on the frontier of Calais in the course of the ensuing summer, against all foreign

knights and squires, for the space of thirty days, and to tilt with blunt lances or others. The King of France was well pleased with the courageous challenge of his three knights, and declared his consent to it; moreover, he called them into his closet, and said, "Boucicaut, Reginald, and Saimpi, be attentive in this enterprise to guard your honor well, and that of our kingdom; let nothing be spared in the state you keep, for I will not fail to assist you as far as 10,000 francs." The king after this left Montpellier, following the road to Alipian, where he dined, and lay that night at St. Thibery.

On the morrow, after his morning draught, he set off and came to Beziers, where he was received most joyfully. He did not, however, remain long in this place, but made the best of his way to Toulouse, when, at the advice of his council, he summoned to him the Count de Foix, who had left Béarn, and fixed his residence in a town of Foix, called Mazeres, fourteen leagues from Toulouse. The Marshal of France and the Lord de la Riviere were appointed to acquaint the count with the king's request; and he at once consented to comply. "Tell the king," said he to the messengers, "that I will be with him in Toulouse in four days." The count accordingly made his preparations, and set forward to meet the king, attended by 200 knights and squires from Béarn; his two brothers, Sir Peter and Sir Arnold de Béarn, and his two bastard sons, whom he affectionately loved, also accompanied him. The count made his entry into Toulouse rather late in the evening, and remained all that night at the convent of the Friar Preachers, where he and his household were lodged. On the morrow he and his retinue passed through the streets of Toulouse to the castle where the king resided. The count entered the hall, whither the king had gone from his chamber to await his arrival, bare-headed, for indeed he never wore a cap; on seeing the king he bent his knee very low; he afterwards rose up and knelt a second time close to the king, who raised him with his hand, and embracing him, said, "Fair cousin of Foix, you are welcome, for your visit gives us great joy." "My lord," replied the count, "I thank you much for what you are pleased to say." A magnificent and sumptuous dinner was then provided; and after dinner, when the tables were removed, and

grace said, the company amused themselves in various ways. Wine and spices were afterwards brought, and the comfit-box was presented solely to the king by the Count de Harcourt. Sir Gerard de la Pierre did the same to the Duke of Bourbon, and Sir Menaut de Noailles to the Count de Foix. When this was done it was about four o'clock in the afternoon; the count then took his leave and returned to his lodgings, much pleased with the reception and entertainment which the King of France had given him. Not many days after this, the Count de Foix, attended by his barons and knights, waited on the king at the castle, and paid him homage for his country of Foix.

About this period Pope Urban VI. died, at Rome, to the sorrow of the Romans, who loved him much. He was buried with great solemnity in the church of St. Peter; and when the ceremony was ended, the cardinals formed a conclave to elect another pope, and hastened the matter, that it might be done before any intelligence of the death of Urban could be carried to Avignon. Pope Clement and his cardinals did not hear of the death of Urban until the tenth day after it had happened; however, they immediately assembled at the palace, when many proposals were discussed, for they had great hopes that the schism of the Church would be concluded, and a union formed of the two parties. This subject was canvassed far and wide, and at the University at Paris it became the occasion of great disputes among the students, who neglected their usual studies, and employed themselves in disputing how the cardinals would act, whether they would elect a pope in the room of Urban, or acknowledge the Pope of Avignon. It was very soon reported, however, that the Roman cardinals had assembled in conclave, and elected to the papacy the Cardinal of Naples, a prudent and courageous clerk, who took the name of Boniface. The King of France and his lords were much annoyed at this, for it seemed as if the schism in the Church would now continue for a long time.

## VI

THE time was now come for the three French knights, who had undertaken to maintain the lists against all comers at



St. Inglevere, near Calais, to make good their engagement. This tournament had been proclaimed in many countries, especially in England, where it caused much surprise, and several valiant knights and squires undertook to attend. Sir John Holland, half-brother to the King of England, was the first to cross the sea; and with him were more than sixty knights and squires, who took up their quarters in Calais. On the 21st of May, as it had been proclaimed, the three knights were properly armed, and their horses ready saddled, according to the laws of the tournament; and on the same day, all those knights who were in Calais sallied forth, as spectators or tilters, and being arrived at the spot, drew up on one side. The place of the tournament was smooth and green with grass. Sir John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, was the first who sent his squire to touch the war target of Sir Boucicaut, who instantly issued from his pavilion, completely armed, and having mounted his horse and grasped his spear, the two combatants took their distances. They eyed each other for some time, and then spurred their horses and met full gallop, with such force indeed that Sir Boucicaut pierced the shield of the Earl of Huntingdon, and the point of his lance slipped along his arm, but without wounding him. The two knights having passed, continued their gallop to the end of the list. This course was much praised. At the second course they hit each other slightly, but no harm was done; and their horses refused to complete the third. The Earl of Huntingdon, who was heated, and wished to continue the tilt, returned to his place, expecting that Sir Boucicaut would call for his lance; but he did not, and showed plainly that he did not wish to tilt more with the earl that day. Sir John, seeing this, sent his squire to touch the war target of the Lord de Saimpi. This knight, who was waiting for the combat, sallied out from his pavilion, and took his lance and shield. When the earl saw he was ready, he violently spurred his horse, as did the Lord de Saimpi. They crouched their lances, and pointed them at each other. At the onset their horses crossed, notwithstanding which they met, but by their crossing, which was blamed, the earl was unhelmed. He returned to his people, who soon rehelmed him; and, having resumed their lances, they met full gallop.

and hit each other with such force in the middle of their shields that they would have been unhorsed had they not kept tight seats, by the pressure of their legs against the horses' sides. They went to their proper places when they refreshed themselves and took breath. Sir John, who had a great desire to shine in the tournament, had his helmet braced, and grasped his spear again, when the Lord de Saimpi, seeing him advance in a gallop, did not decline meeting; but, spurring his horse on instantly, they gave blows on their helmets, that were luckily of well-tempered steel, which made sparks of fire fly from them. At this course the Lord de Saimpi lost his helmet; but the knights continued their career, and returned to their places. The tilt was much praised, and both French and English said that the Earl of Huntingdon, Sir Boucicaut, and the Lord de Saimpi had excellently well justed. The earl wished to break another lance in honor of his lady, but it was refused him. He then quitted the lists to make room for others, for he had run his six lances with such ability and courage as gained him praise from all sides. After this, various other combatants entered the lists, and the tilting was continued till evening, when the English returned to Calais, and the French to St. Inglevere.

On Tuesday after mass, and drinking a cup, all those who intended to tilt, and those who wished to see them, left Calais, and rode to the same place where the lists had been held the preceding day. That day and the next the tilting continued, until the tournament was at an end, by reason of no more tilters appearing on the part of the English. The English and French knights separated in a most friendly manner on the plain of St. Inglevere; the former took the road to Calais, where, however, they made no long stay, for on Saturday morning they went on board passage boats, and landed at Dover about mid-day.

From the time the English knights left Calais, I never heard that any others came from England to St. Inglevere to try their skill in arms. Three knights, however, remained there until the thirty days were fully accomplished, and then leisurely returned each to his own home. When they waited on the King of France, the Dukes of Touraine, and the other

lords at Paris, they were most handsomely received; indeed, they were entitled to such a reception, for they had behaved themselves gallantly, and well supported the honor of the king, and of the realm of France.

## VII

I MUST not forget, nor indeed defer any longer to mention a grand and noble enterprise there was undertaken by some knights of France, England, and other countries, against the kingdom of Barbary, at the solicitation of the Genoese. The cause of this expedition was that the Africans had attacked the country of Genoa, plundered the islands belonging to it, and carried off many prisoners. Moreover, the Genoese, who were rich merchants, bore great hatred to the town of Africa, situated on the sea-shore of Barbary, because its corsairs frequently watched them by sea, and fell upon and plundered their ships. Reports of the intended invasion of Barbary soon spread far and wide, and many gallant men-at-arms prepared to take part in it; on being mustered by the marshal, these amounted in all to 1,400 knights and squires, who, on St. John Baptist day, in the year of grace 1390, embarked from Genoa on board ships and galleys, which had been properly equipped for the voyage. It was a beautiful sight to see the fleet with the emblazoned banners of the different lords glittering in the sun, and fluttering with the wind; to hear also the minstrels and other musicians, sounding their pipes, clarions, and trumpets. When all were embarked, they cast anchor and remained that night at the mouth of the harbor; but the servants and horses were left behind on the shore. A horse worth fifty francs was on the embarkation sold for ten, as many of the knights and squires were uncertain when they should return, if ever. They, therefore, on departing, made of their horses what money they could, which was little enough. At daybreak they weighed anchor, and rowed coastwise that and the succeeding night. The third day they made Porto-fino, where they lay that night, and at sunrise rowed to Porto-Venere, and again cast anchor. The ensuing morning they took to the deep, putting themselves under the protection of God and St. George.

When they had passed the Island of Elba they encountered

a violent tempest, which drove them back into the Gulf of Lyons, a position always dangerous; they waited, therefore, the will of God: the storm lasted a day and a night, and dispersed the fleet. When the weather became calm and the sea tranquil, the pilots steered as directly as they could for the Island of Commeres, which is but thirty miles from the town of Africa, whither they were bent. But we must leave the Genoese expedition in Commeres for a while, to speak of events that happened in France, more particularly in Auvergne.

During the time of the assembling of this body of men-at-arms in France, for an expedition to extend the Christian faith, and gain renown, there were other men-at-arms wholly given up to plunder in Limousin, Auvergne, and Rouergue, who, in spite of the truce, were continually doing mischief to the countries which thought themselves in security. The King of France had caused the truce to be publicly notified to the captains of the freebooters, particularly to Perrot le Béarnois, governor of Chalucet, Amerigot Marcel, and others, who were publicly named in the act, and were assured that if the truce were in the smallest degree infringed, those guilty of it should be corporally punished, without hope of mercy. Some of the captains, fearful of a disgraceful death, or of incurring the king's indignation, kept the peace very well; others did not, for which they paid severely, as you will hear in the continuation of this history.

You have before heard it related in these chronicles, indited and arranged by me, Sir John Froissart, treasurer and canon of Chimay, how peace had been agreed upon with many of the captains of castles in Auvergne and other places, by the mediation of John, Count d'Armagnac, and the Dauphin of Auvergne, to whom they had surrendered their castles for different sums of money; and that they had undertaken to accompany the count to Lombardy, or whithersoever he might lead them. Count d'Armagnac and the dauphin had labored hard to gain over these captains, and the country had submitted to be heavily taxed in order to get rid of them: however, Amerigot Marcel and his garrison still continued to do much mischief, and could not be induced to join the count. Fond of plunder-

ing, he resolved to continue it, and having a desire to gain possession of a strong fort called La Roche de Vendais, he and his companions set out thither, and when they had gained the place fortified it, and made it as strong as they could. This done, they began to overrun the neighboring country—to make prisoners and ransom them. They laid in stores of flesh, meal, wax, wine, salt, iron, steel, and other necessaries; for nothing came amiss to them that was not too hot or too heavy.

The inhabitants of the country were much astonished at this, for they thought themselves in perfect security on account of the truce; but these robbers seized whatever they pleased in their houses, or in the fields, calling themselves the Adventurers. Amerigot and his men became the terror of the whole neighborhood. The countries of Auvergne and Limousin were in a continual state of alarm because of him, and the knights and squires with the townsmen of Clermont, Montferrant, and Riom, and the towns on the Allier, resolved to send notice of their situation to the King of France. When it was known to those companies who had been disbanded, and were now out of pay, that Amerigot Marcel was continuing the war, many of them came to offer him their services, and he had very soon more than he wished; none of them asked for pay, but solely to be retained by him, for they well knew that those under him would gain a sufficiency from the overplus of the plunder which he gave up to his men. Sometimes he made excursions in the upper parts of the district, and sometimes in an opposite direction; nothing was talked of in Auvergne and Limousin but the robbers of La Roche de Vendais, and greatly was the country frightened by them. The garrison of Chalucet, under command of Perrot le Béarnois, steadily adhered to the truce, and were much angered when they learnt that Amerigot was thus harassing the country. The King of France and his council, on hearing the harm that Amerigot and his companions were doing, immediately turned their attention to the matter, and sent the Viscount de Meaux with a large body of men to oppose them. Amerigot was preparing to ravage the country between Clermont and Montferrant, when it was told him that the viscount was advanc-

ing, and this intelligence made him defer his intended excursion, for he foresaw that his fortress would be attacked. Tolerably near to La Roche de Vendais was another fort, called St. Soupery, under the government of Amerigot, where his wife resided, and whither he had sent the greater part of his wealth; he gave orders for the servants and horses to be received into the fort until better times. La Roche de Vendais was naturally strong, and the present garrison had fortified it by every means in their power; it was separated from the high mountains that surround it, and seated on an isolated rock, one side of which the garrison had so strongly fortified, that it could only be approached in front, and attacked by skirmishes. The force under command of the Viscount de Meaux advanced and laid siege to the place; it was about the middle of August, the weather was warm and pleasant, and all the knights were comfortably lodged under huts made of green boughs.

The siege of La Roche de Vendais lasted nine weeks, and during it there were constant skirmishes between the two parties, in which many were wounded. The garrison had much the advantage of the besiegers, and I will tell you how; they could sally out whenever they pleased, for it would have required at least 6,000 men to have completely surrounded this castle. When the siege first took place Amerigot felt that he was acting wrong; but to turn the matter as much to his advantage as he could, and if possible to preserve La Roche de Vendais, he determined to send one of his men to England with credential letters to the king and the Duke of Lancaster. Accordingly, with the advice of his uncle Guyot du Sel, who was with him in the fort, he instructed a well-educated varlet, and sent him off with three letters, one to the king, another to the Duke of Lancaster, and the third to the king's council. The man performed his journey satisfactorily, and was fortunate enough to find the king, his two uncles of Lancaster and York, with the council, at the palace of Westminster, considering the affairs of Northumberland, and what force they should send thither, for the Scots no way observed the truce. The messenger of Amerigot soon obtained a hearing, and having been well tutored, and not afraid of speaking, after delivering the letters, he explained

so eloquently the reason of his coming, and the wishes of his master, that he was attentively listened to, and was at length told that the king would write to the Viscount de Meaux, and the Duke of Berry, in the manner Amerigot had desired. The Duke of Lancaster promised to do the same, and that the letter should be delivered by an English squire attached to him; that Derby the herald should cross the sea, and accompany them when they gave their letters, in order to aid their success, for he was well known to many lords in Auvergne, particularly to the Duke of Berry.

Amerigot was delighted on his messenger's return, and told him that he had done justice to his commission, for which he would reward him handsomely. The English squire and Derby set out at once for La Roche de Vendais, and, when arrived at the place where the besiegers lay, inquired for the quarters of the Viscount de Meaux, to whom they presented their letters. The viscount, after examining the seals, read the contents of the letters several times over, and then said to the squire and the herald, "My fair sirs, the intelligence you have brought demands full consideration; I will advise upon it, and you shall soon have my answer." The squire and herald then withdrew, and a council was moved, before which the viscount laid the letters he had received; the knights were much surprised how intelligence of the siege could have been carried to England for such letters to come from them, as the siege had not lasted one month. "I will tell you what I imagine," said the viscount, "this Amerigot is a cunning fellow, and the moment he perceived we intended to besiege him, he sent a person to England to request such letters might be written as these now before you, which I shall obey or not, as I please." Upon this the messengers were introduced again, and the viscount told them to take back word that he was a subject of the King of France, and had been ordered thither by him; "In consequence, my fair sirs," he continued, "I shall strictly obey the commands I have received, and loyally acquit myself of my duty; of course, then, I shall not move hence until I have possession of the fort and garrison, which now holds out against me and my companions."

The squire and herald then took their leave, by no means

contented with the message they had received. "We have had ill-success," said the squire, "we must wait on the Duke of Berry." "Yes, he is lord of the whole country," said Derby, "and if he will order the viscount to decamp he must do so, for he dare not disobey him." They went accordingly to the duke, who when he received the letters read them twice over, and then gave such courteous answers that both were satisfied, for he said from his affection to his cousins he would do all in his power to comply with their request; he therefore exerted himself to have the siege of La Roche de Vendais raised, and wrote to the viscount to this effect, engaging that if Amerigot Marcel were left in quiet possession of his fort, he should not hereafter molest the country, and that he should make reparation to the King of France for having offended him. The viscount, on receiving this intimation, said to his companions, "Gentlemen, we shall never have peace, since the Duke of Berry supports Amerigot; the duke commands me to raise the siege the instant I have read his letter; but, by my faith, I will do no such thing."

I must now relate what happened to Amerigot, and to his fort. Amerigot had a quick imagination, and concluding from the continuance of the siege that the letters from the King of England and the Duke of Lancaster had failed, he thought of another expedition, which was to leave his castle, and ride night and day to the garrisons in Perigord, and other places, to seek succor from other pillagers, and entice them by fair speeches to enter Auvergne for the sake of plunder, and then to advance some morning or evening to La Roche de Vendais, and capture the knights and squires before it, which would bring them more than 100,000 francs for their ransoms, without counting smaller articles of pillage. He explained his whole plan to his uncle Guyot du Sel, and asked his opinion. Guyot replied that he very much approved of it. "Well, uncle," said Amerigot, "since you approve I will undertake it, only I must beg that during my absence you never sally out of the castle, nor open the barriers." "It shall be so," answered Guyot, "we will remain shut up here until we hear from you." Within three days after Amerigot left the castle attended only by a page, and without the besiegers being aware of his absence. The



castle continued to be assaulted as usual, and on one occasion Guyot du Sel, forgetful of his promise to Amerigot, was induced to sally forth, when he was surprised by an ambuscade, and obliged to surrender the place. News of the loss of La Roche de Vendais was carried to Amerigot Marcel as he was raising troops to break up the siege, and on learning that it was occasioned by an imprudent sally of Guyot du Sel, he exclaimed, "Ah, the old traitor! by St. Marcel, if I had him here I would slay him; he has disgraced me and all my companions; this grievous misfortune can never be recovered."

Amerigot Marcel was indeed sadly cast down; he knew not from whom to ask advice, nor whether to return to Auvergne or to go to Bordeaux, send for his wife, and have his fortune brought thither by little at a time. If he had followed this plan, he would have done well; but he acted otherwise, and, as the event will show, suffered for it. It is thus Fortune treats her favorites; when she has raised them to the highest pitch of her wheel, she suddenly plunges them in the dirt—witness Amerigot Marcel. The foolish fellow was worth, as was believed in Auvergne, more than 100,000 francs in money, which he lost in one day, together with his life. I, therefore, say, that Dame Fortune played him one of her tricks, which she has played to several before, and she will do the same to many after him. In his tribulation, Amerigot bethought himself of a cousin he had in Auvergne, a squire, by name Tournemine, to whom he resolved to apply and ask for advice. This he did, and attended only by one page entered the castle of his cousin, with whom he thought to meet with a good reception, but he was disappointed; for his cousin immediately arrested him, and shortly after he was conveyed to Paris, where his head was cut off, and his four quarters affixed over four different gates. Such was the sad end of Amerigot Marcel; I know not what become of his wife, or of his wealth. I have dwelt very long on his actions, that I might illustrate his life and death; for in such a history as this, both good and bad actions must be spoken of, that they may serve as an excitement or warning in times to come. Had Amerigot turned his mind to virtue he would have done much good, for he was an able man-at-arms, and of great

courage; but having acted in a different manner, he came to a disgraceful death.

We will now return to the noble enterprise which the knights of France and other countries had undertaken against Africa, and continue our narrative from the place where we left off.

It was at the Island of Comino that the knights assembled after encountering the great storm in the Gulf of Lyons, to wait for those who had separated from the fleet, as that island was but thirty miles from Africa. They remained there nine days, and then reëmbarked on board their galleys with a good will to meet their enemies, the Saracens. The sea was now calm and the weather fine; it was a pleasure to see the rowers force their vessels through its smooth surface, which seemed to delight in bearing these Christians to the shores of the infidels. Late in the evening the Christians saw the town of Africa; every one was rejoiced at the sight, and not without cause, as they had in part accomplished the object of their voyage. The Saracens, who observed them from the town, were astonished at the number of vessels which were coming to besiege them; however, they were not cast down, for they knew the place was strong, well fortified, and plentifully stored with artillery and provisions. On first noticing the fleet, the Saracens, according to custom, sounded a number of bells in the towers to alarm the country. There were encamped, near the town, a large body of barbarians and infidels, whom the Kings of Tunis and Bugia had sent thither to defend the coast.

As I, John Froissart, the author of these chronicles, never was in Africa, I sought all the information I could from those knights and squires who had been on this expedition, and made several journeys to Calais, to learn the truth of all that had passed. The town of Africa was reported to me to be in the form of a bow, like Calais, extending its arms towards the sea; wonderfully strong, and surrounded with high walls at proper distances. The entrance of the harbor was defended by a tower larger than the rest, on which was placed a bricole. When the Christians approached the harbor, the walls of the town seemed hung with cloths or tapestry similar in appearance to the coverlids of beds. They

cast anchor about one league from the port, rejoicing that through God's pleasure they had so far succeeded as to have the town of Africa now before them. The Saracens this night held a council as to their future proceedings; when, by advice of an ancient lord, named Bellius, of great influence among them, it was determined to avoid all general engagements with the Christians, and remain quietly in their quarters while they landed and encamped.

The next morning the Christians entered the port of Africa, and took up their quarters. The Duke of Bourbon, as commander-in-chief, lodged in the center of his army. The device of his banner, powdered over with flowers-de-luce, was a figure of the Virgin Mary in white, seated in the center, and an escutcheon of Bourbon at her feet; and all the great lords who accompanied him were quartered on the right and left. When the Christians were encamped, it was necessary for them to be careful of the provisions they had brought, for they could not venture to forage in the country, nor even collect wood or boughs for huts; they, therefore, kept their provisions on board the vessels, and there were boats continually employed in bringing different articles for them as they were needed. Moreover, the inhabitants of the neighboring islands, such as Sicily and others, exerted themselves to supply them with all they wanted.

You must know, that these infidels, the Saracens, had for a long time been menaced by the Genoese, and had made preparations accordingly. The better to resist them they assembled on the present occasion the most experienced warriors from the kingdoms of Bugia, Morocco, and Tunis. They took advantage of a large and thick wood in their rear, to avoid danger from ambuscades or skirmishers on that side. According to estimate, they amounted to about 30,000 archers, and 10,000 horse, and they received continually supplies of fresh provisions which were brought on the backs of camels.

The second day after the Christians had landed, the Saracens about dawn came to attack the camp; indeed, during the whole of this siege the Christians were never quiet: for every night and morning the camp was attacked by the enemy.

Among the Saracens was a young knight, by name Agadinquor Olinerne, excellently mounted on a beautiful courser, which he managed as he willed, and which, when he galloped, seemed to fly with him. From his gallantry he showed he was a good man-at-arms; and when he rode abroad he had with him three javelins well feathered and pointed, which he dexterously flung according to the custom of his country. He was completely armed in black and had a kind of white napkin wrapped round his head. His seat on horseback was graceful, and from the vigor and gallantry of his actions the Christians judged he was excited thereto by his affection to a young lady of the country. True it is, he most sincerely loved the daughter of the King of Tunis, who, according to the report of some Genoese merchants who had seen her, was very handsome. During the siege this knight performed some handsome feats of arms to testify his love.

The Saracens within the town of Africa were anxious to know on what pretense the Christians had come with so large an army to make war upon them; and they resolved to send a person who could speak Genoese to ascertain. The Christians told the messenger that they were come to revenge the injuries which the Saracens had done to their God and faith; and that to effect this, they would exert themselves to the utmost of their power. Shortly after this message, the Saracens determined in council to remain quiet for seven or eight days, and when the Christians should think themselves in perfect security to fall upon their camp like a deluge. This plan was adopted; and the ninth evening, a little before midnight, they secretly armed their men and marched silently in a compact body towards the Christian camp. They had proposed making a severe attack on the opposite quarter to the main guard; and they would no doubt have succeeded in this mischievous endeavor, if God had not in his mercy watched over and preserved them by miracles.

As the Saracens were approaching they saw before them a company of ladies dressed in white, one of whom, their leader, was incomparably more beautiful than the rest, and bore in front a white flag, having a vermilion cross in the

center; and at this vision they were so greatly terrified that they lost all strength and inclination to proceed.

The Genoese crossbows, as I heard, had brought with them a dog from beyond sea, but whence no one could tell, nor did he belong to any person in particular. This dog had been very useful to them, for the Saracens never came to skirmish, but by his noise he awakened the army; in consequence of which, they called him "the dog of our Lady." This night the dog was not idle, but made a louder noise than usual; so that when the Saracens were approaching, the Christians were prepared to receive them.

By an exact account, the siege lasted sixty-one days, during which many were the skirmishes before the town and at the barriers. The Saracens, however, were well defended, for the flower of the infidel chivalry was in the town. Night and day the two parties studied how they could most effectually annoy each other. At length the Saracens resolved to send a challenge to the Christians, offering a combat, ten of their men against ten Christians. Most persons in the Christian army were loud in praise of this offer, except the Lord de Coucy, who said, "Hold your tongues, you youngsters; I see no advantage in this combat for many reasons: one is, that ten noble and distinguished gentlemen are about to fight with ten Saracens. How do we know whether the opponents are gentlemen; they may, if they choose, bring to the combat ten varlets or knaves, and if they are defeated, what is the gain?" But, notwithstanding this speech, the Lord de Coucy armed himself with the rest, and went in good array to meet the Saracens. The challenge was accepted, and at the time the whole army was ordered to be drawn up in proper order; so that if the Saracens had formed any bad designs, they might be prepared to meet them. The ten knights and squires appointed to engage were advanced on the plain waiting for their opponents, but they came not; for, when they saw the Christians so handsomely drawn out, they were afraid to approach, though they were thrice their numbers. This was the hottest day they felt; it was so entirely oppressive, that the most active among them were almost stifled in their armor, and yet they remained, expecting the ten Saracens; but in vain, for they never heard one word from them.

The army was then ordered forward to attack the town; which it did, and gained by storm the first enclosure; but no one inhabited that part, and the Christians paid dear for an inconsiderable advantage: for the heat of the sun and its reflection on the sands added to the fatigue of fighting, which lasted until evening, caused the death of several valiant knights and squires. Thus was the siege of Africa continued. To say the truth, this was a very great enterprise, and those who engaged in it showed much courage and perseverance in continuing the siege in so unhealthy a climate, and after the great losses they had suffered, without assistance from any one. But we must now leave the affairs of Africa to speak of the handsome feasts which at this time were given in London.

## VIII

To continue this noble and pleasant history, undertaken at the request of that very liberal and potent prince, my very dear lord and patron, Guy de Chastillon, Count de Blois, Lord of Avesnes, Chimay, Beaumont, Schoenhoven, and Turgow; I, John Froissart, priest and chaplain to my very dear lord before named, and at this time treasurer and canon of Chimay and Lille in Flanders, set myself to work at my forge to produce new and notable matter relative to the wars between France and England and their allies, as clearly appears from the various treaties which are of this date, and which excellent materials, through the grace of God, I shall work upon as long as I live; for the more I labor at it, the more it delights me; just as a gallant knight or squire-at-arms, who loves his profession, the longer he continues in it, so much the more delectable it appears.

You have had it before related that a truce had been agreed upon at Leulinghem between France and England for three years, and that ambassadors from France had accompanied the Dukes of York and Lancaster to London, to learn the intention of the king and parliament of England in regard to the advances which had been made at Amiens towards a solid peace between the two nations. These ambassadors had returned to France, for they were told nothing could be done in the matter till the meeting of the parliament, which was

appointed to be holden at Westminster at Michaelmas. When it was known in England how grievously the King of France was afflicted, the business was much retarded; nevertheless the king and the Duke of Lancaster were desirous of peace, and if it had depended on them, the matter would have been at once concluded; as it was, after considerable discussion, it was determined that a truce should take place between the two countries, and their respective allies, by sea and land, to last from Michaelmas to St. John the Baptist's day, and one year longer.

Not long after this a marriage took place between a young squire of Vermandois and a damsel of the queen, both of the royal household; the court was much pleased at it, and the king resolved that the wedding feast should be kept at his expense. It was held at the hotel of St. Pol, and great crowds of nobility attended, among whom were the Dukes of Orleans, Berry, and Burgundy, with their duchesses. The wedding-day was passed in dancing and rejoicing; the king entertained the queen at supper in great state, and every one exerted himself to add to the gayety, seeing how much delighted the king appeared. There was in the king's household a Norman squire, a near relative to the bridegroom, who thought of the following piece of pleasantry to amuse the king and the ladies. In the evening he provided six coats of linen covered with fine flax the color of hair; in one of them he dressed the king, and the Count de Joigny, a young and gallant knight in another, Sir Charles de Poitiers had a third, Sir Evan de Foix the fourth, the son of the Lord de Nantouillet, a young knight, had the fifth, and Hugonin dressed himself in the sixth. When thus dressed they appeared like savages, for they were covered with hair from head to foot. This masquerade pleased the king greatly, and he expressed his pleasure to his squire; it was so secretly contrived that no one knew anything of the matter but the servants who attended them. Word was sent to the room where the ladies were, commanding in the king's name that all the torches should be placed on one side, and that no person come near six savage men who were about to enter; the torchbearers, therefore, withdrew on one side, and no one approached the dancers so long as the savages stayed in the

room. The apartment was now clear of all but ladies, damsels, and knights and squires, who were dancing with them. Soon after the Duke of Orleans entered, attended by four knights and six torches, ignorant of the orders that had been given, and of the entrance of the savages; he first looked at the dancing, and then took part himself, just as the King of France made his appearance with five others dressed like savages, and covered from head to foot with flax to represent hair; not one person in the company knew them, and they were all fastened together, while the king led them dancing. Every one was so occupied in examining them, that the orders about the torches were forgotten; the king, who was their leader, fortunately for him, advanced to show himself to the ladies, and passing by the queen, placed himself near the Duchess of Berry, who, though his aunt, was the youngest of the company. The duchess amused herself in talking with him, and as the king rose up, not wishing to discover himself, the duchess said, "You shall not escape thus; I will know your name." At this moment a most unfortunate accident befell the others, through the youthful gayety of the Duke of Orleans, who, could he have foreseen the mischief he was about to cause, would not on any consideration have acted so. Being very inquisitive to find out who they were, while the five were dancing he took one of the torches from his servants, and holding it too near, set their dresses on fire. Flax, you know, is instantly in a blaze, and the pitch with which the cloth had been covered to fasten the flax added to the impossibility of extinguishing it. They were likewise chained together, and their cries were dreadful; some knights did their utmost to disengage them, but the fire was so strong that they burnt their hands very severely. One of the five, Nantouillet, broke the chain, and rushing into the buttery, flung himself into a large tub of water, which was there for washing dishes and plates; this saved him, or he would have been burnt to death like the rest, but he was, withal, very ill for some time. The queen was so much alarmed that she fainted, for she knew that the king was one of the six; the Duchess of Berry, however, saved the king by throwing the train of her robe over him. This terrible accident happened about twelve o'clock at night, in



the ball-room of the hôtel de St. Pol, and it was a most melancholy spectacle—of the four that were on fire, two died on the spot; the other two, the bastard of Foix and the Count de Joigny, were carried to their hotels, and died two days afterwards in great agonies. This sad affair made a great disturbance in Paris, and the next morning the king and his attendants mounted their horses, and rode through Paris, from the hôtel de St. Pol to the church of Notre Dame, to appease the people. The accident by degrees was forgotten, and obsequies, prayers, and alms were made for the dead. Ah! Count Gaston de Foix, hadst thou been alive and heard the cruel death of this thy favorite son, I know not how thou wouldst have been consoled.

## IX

I MAY perhaps be asked how I became acquainted with the events of this history so as to be enabled to speak so circumstantially about them. I reply that I have, with great attention and diligence, sought, in divers kingdoms and countries, for the facts which have been or may hereafter be mentioned by me, for God has given me grace and opportunity to see and be acquainted with the greater part of the principal lords of France and England. It should be known, that in the year 1390 I had labored at this history more than thirty-seven years, and at that time I was fifty-seven years old. During my youth, I was five years attached to the court of the King and Queen of England, and also kindly entertained in the household of King John of France, and King Charles his son.

Now, it was reported through England that a new tax was to be levied on every fire, and that each was to pay a noble, the rich making up for the deficiencies of the poor. The king's uncles, upon this, caused it to be reported in the principal towns how greatly the inhabitants would be oppressed by such taxes, and that, as there must remain great sums in the treasury, the people ought to insist upon having an account of the expenditure. It is a well-known maxim, that no one pays willingly, or takes money from his purse, if he can avoid it. These rumors soon spread, especially in London, which is the chief key of the realm, so that the

people rose in rebellion to inquire into the government of the country. The Londoners first addressed themselves to Sir Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, entreating him to institute an inquiry into the expenditure of the country, and to provide a remedy. The duke replied, "That if they wished to succeed in having their grievances redressed, they should enter into a confederacy with the principal towns, and with some of the nobles and prelates, and come before the king, when he and his brother would advocate their cause. When you shall have made your remonstrance to the king," said the duke to the Londoners, "if he should say we will consider of it, cut the matter short and declare you will have no delay; say, boldly, the country will suffer it no longer. My brother and myself will be with the king, and also the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earls of Arundel, Salisbury, and Northumberland; but should we not be present, say nothing, for we are the principal personages in England, and will second your remonstrance by adding, that what you require is only reasonable and just." The Londoners replied, "My lord, you have well spoken; but it will be difficult for us to find the king, and so many lords as you have named at one time in his presence." "Not at all," said the duke; "St. George's day will be within ten days, and the king will then be at Windsor; you may be sure the Duke of Ireland and Sir Simon Burley will be there also. Do you come and act according to circumstances." The Londoners promised to be at Windsor on St. George's day, and left the Duke of Gloucester, well pleased with their reception.

When the day came, the Londoners, with sixty horse, and those from York and other principal towns in like numbers, lodged themselves in the town. On being introduced to the royal presence in the lower hall, without the new building where the palace stood in former times, the commons found the king, attended by his two uncles, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Winchester, Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Northumberland, and several others of the nobility. They made their harangue to the king, by their spokesman, a citizen of London, by name Simon de Sudbury, who formed his speech from what the Duke of Gloucester had said to them, which I need not repeat.

The king, on hearing it, replied, "Ye commons of England, your requests are great and important, and cannot immediately be attended to, for we shall not long remain here, and all our council are not with us. I, therefore, bid you return quietly to your homes, and there remain peaceably until Michaelmas, when the parliament shall be assembled at Westminster." The commons, at this, were by no means satisfied, and declared that they would have an account, and that too very shortly, from those who had governed the kingdom since the coronation; that they would know what great sums had been collected for these last nine years, and whither they had passed; and they finished a long speech by saying to the king, "If those who have been your treasurers shall give a just account, or nearly so, we shall be rejoiced, and shall leave them in office; but those who shall not produce honest acquaintances for their expenditure, shall be treated accordingly." The king, at this, looked towards his uncles, to see if they would say anything, when the Duke of Gloucester replied, "That he saw nothing but what was just and reasonable in the demands made by the people;" and others of his party approved the sentiment. Commissioners of accounts were therefore appointed, and a meeting was fixed for a week after St. George's day, to be holden at Westminster. The commission sat for a whole month, and there were present the prelates, barons, and deputies from the principal towns of England. Some of those who appeared before the commission, not producing fair and honorable accounts, were punished corporally, and by confiscation of whatever they possessed. Sir Simon Burley was charged with defalcation to the amount of 250,000 francs. When called upon to give an account of it, he cast the blame on the Archbishop of York, Sir William Neville, and others, saying that he had never acted but with them and by their advice; but these, when examined, excused themselves and flung the whole fault back again upon him. The Duke of Ireland said to Simon privately, "I understand you are to be arrested and sent to prison until you shall pay the sum with which you are charged. Don't dispute the matter, but go whither they may order. I will make your peace with the king." Sir Simon Burley put too much confidence in these words of the

Duke of Ireland; and when condemned, went quietly to the Tower. Many, when he was in prison, came forward against him: indeed, he was so overpowered, that nothing he could say in his defense availed; and after a short delay, he was carried forth from the Tower and beheaded as a traitor, in the square before it.

Notwithstanding I thus relate the disgraceful death of Sir Simon Burley, which I am forced to do by my determination to insert nothing but truth in this history, I was exceedingly vexed thereat, and personally much grieved; for in my youth I found him a gentle knight, and of great good sense. The accounts of Sir Thomas Trivet and Sir William Elmham were next examined; but before any determination could be arrived at, the former was killed by being thrown from his horse, and the latter was afterwards acquitted.

When King Richard, who was in Wales, heard of the death of Sir Simon Burley, he was very wroth, and swore it should not remain unrevenged, for it was an act of cruelty, and without the smallest plea of justice. The queen also bewailed his loss; for he had been the principal promoter of her marriage, and had conducted her from Germany to England.

In like manner, as the king's uncles and the new council were devising means of reforming abuses in the government, and of having the king and realm under their power, the Duke of Ireland and his council were plotting day and night how they could keep their places and destroy those who opposed them. King Richard fixed his residence at Bristol, which is a handsome and strong town. Those in Wales, and at a distance, thought he had done this to favor the Duke of Ireland, who had caused it to be reported that he intended going thence to Ireland. In such a situation was the kingdom of England; but to bring its history to a conclusion, I will continue the subject from the information I then received.

The Duke of Ireland kept close to the king during his residence at Bristol and in Wales, solely occupied night and day with the means of succeeding in his plans. He was assiduous in his attentions to the king and queen, and to all knights and squires who waited on them at Bristol, and

at the hunts in that neighborhood; he took infinite pains in visiting all the gentlemen near to Bristol; and went frequently into Wales, where he complained to all who would listen to him, that the king's uncles, from their ambition to obtain the government, had driven from the council the most noble and wisest members; that they had put to death, without any just cause whatever, that valiant knight Sir Simon Burley; and if they continued to govern as they had begun, they would soon destroy all England. He repeated this so often, that the greater part of the knights and squires of Wales, and of the adjoining counties, believed him, and came to Bristol to ascertain from the king if what he said had his sanction. The king replied that it had, and begged of them to put every confidence in the duke, adding, that his uncles were too ambitious, and that he had his fears they intended to deprive him of his crown. Now, consider if I had not good cause to say that England was, at this period, in the greatest peril of being ruined past recovery. The king was exasperated against his uncles and his principal nobility; and so were they against him. The cities and towns were quarreling with each other, and the prelates were in mutual hatred; so that no remedy for all these evils could be looked for, but from God alone.

## X

I, SIR JOHN FROISSART, treasurer and canon of Chimay, had, during my stay at Abbeville, a great desire to see the kingdom of England; more especially since it was a time of truce. Several reasons urged me to make this journey, but principally because in my youth I had been educated at the court of King Edward, and that good Lady Philippa, his queen, with their children. I had taken care to form a collection of all the poetry on love and morality that I had composed during the last twenty-four years, which I had caused to be fairly written and illuminated. I was also minded to go to England from a desire to see King Richard, whom I had not seen since the time of his christening in the cathedral of Bordeaux; and my book of poesy, finely ornamented, bound in velvet, and decorated with silver-gilt clasps and studs, I took as a present for him.

Having provided myself with horses, I crossed from Calais to Dover, on the 12th day of July, and on Wednesday by nine o'clock arrived at Canterbury, to visit the shrine of St. Thomas and the tomb of the late Prince of Wales, who had been buried there. I heard high mass, made my offerings at the shrine, and returned to my inn to dinner; when I heard that the king was to come on a pilgrimage to St. Thomas I thought, therefore, that it would be well to wait his arrival, which I did; and on the morrow he came in great state, accompanied by lords and ladies, with whom I mixed; but they were all new faces to me. I did not remember one of them; times and persons had greatly changed since I was last in England, eight-and-twenty years past.

I addressed myself to Sir Thomas Percy, High Steward of England, whom I found gracious and of agreeable manners; and who offered to present me to the king. He went to the king's apartment for that purpose, to see if it were proper time, but finding he had retired to rest, he bade me return to my inn. When I thought the king might be risen, I went again to the palace of the archbishop, where he lodged; but Sir Thomas Percy and his people were preparing to set out for Ospringe, whence he had come that morning. I asked Sir Thomas's advice how to act. "For the present," he said, "do not make farther attempts to announce your arrival, but follow the king, and I will take care when he comes to his palace in the country, which he will do in two days, that you shall be well lodged as long as the court tarries there." The king was going to a beautiful palace in the county of Kent, called Leeds Castle, and I followed Sir Thomas Percy's advice, by taking the road to Ospringe. I lodged at an inn where I found a gallant knight of the king's chamber, who had that morning stayed behind on account of a slight pain in his head with which he had been seized on the preceding night. This knight, Sir William de Lisle, seeing that I was a foreigner and a Frenchman, made acquaintance with me, and I with him, for the English are courteous to strangers. He asked my situation and business in England, which I related to him at length, as well as what Sir Thomas Percy had advised me to do. He replied, that I could not have better advice, for that the king would, on

Friday, be at Leeds Castle, and would there find his uncle the Duke of York. I was well pleased to hear this, for I had letters to the duke, and when young was known to him.

As a means of gaining greater intimacy with the king's household, I courted the acquaintance of Sir William de Lisle. On the Friday we rode together, and by the way I asked, if he had accompanied the king on his expedition to Ireland. He said he had. I then asked if there were any foundation in truth for what was said of St. Patrick's Hole. He replied, there was; and that he and another knight, during the king's stay at Dublin, had been there. They entered it at sunset, remained there the whole night, and came out at sunrise the next morning. I requested he would tell me whether he saw all the marvelous things which are said to be seen there. He made the following answer:—

“When I and my companion had passed the entrance of the cave, called the Purgatory of St. Patrick, we descended three or four steps, (for you go down into it like a cellar,) when we found our heads so much affected by the heat, that we seated ourselves on the steps which are of stone, and such a drowsiness came over us that we slept the whole night.” I asked if, when asleep, they knew where they were, and what visions they had. He said they had many strange dreams, and they seemed, as they imagined, to see more than they would have done if they had been in their beds. This they were both assured of. “When morning came, and we were awake, the door of the cave was opened, for so we had ordered it, and we came out, but instantly lost all recollection of everything we had seen, and looked upon the whole as a phantom.”

I did not push the conversation further, although I should have much liked to have heard what he would say of Ireland; but other knights joined us, and so we rode to Leeds Castle, where the king and his court arrived shortly after. The Duke of York was there already, and I made myself known to him by presenting letters from his cousins, the Count of Hainault and the Count d'Ostrevant. On being introduced to the king, I was graciously and kindly received. He took all the letters I presented to him; and having read them attentively, said I was welcome, and that since I had belonged to the house-

hold of the late king and queen, I must consider myself still as of the royal household of England. This day I did not offer him the book I had brought; for Sir Thomas Percy told me it was not a fit opportunity, as he was much occupied with serious business.

The council was deeply engaged on two subjects: first, in respect to a negotiation with France to treat of a marriage between the king and the Lady Isabella, eldest daughter of the King of France, who at that time was about eight years old; and, secondly, in respect to the chief magistrates of Bordeaux, who had come to England and greatly persecuted the king since his return from Ireland, for an answer to their petitions and remonstrances on the gift the king had made his uncle, the Duke of Lancaster, of all Aquitaine with its lordships, baronies, and dependencies. In order that these matters might more fully be considered, the king summoned the principal barons and prelates of the realm to meet him on Magdalene day, at his palace of Eltham, seven miles from London, and the same distance from Dartford. And when the king and his council quitted Leeds Castle on his way thither, I set out with them. The king arrived at Eltham on a Tuesday, and the next day the lords came from all parts.

The parliament was holden in the king's apartment; and the knights from Gascony, and the deputies from the cities and towns, as well as those sent by the Duke of Lancaster, were present. I cannot say what passed at this parliament; for I was not admitted, nor were any present but the members of it. It sat for upwards of four hours. When it was over, I renewed my acquaintance after dinner with an ancient knight whom I well knew in my youth. His name was Sir Richard Sturry, and he was one of the principal advisers of the king. He immediately recollected me, though it was twenty-four years since we had seen each other, and from him I learned many particulars respecting the dispute with Gascony and Aquitaine. On the Sunday the whole council went to London except the Duke of York, who remained with the king, and Sir Richard Sturry. These two, in conjunction with Sir Thomas Percy, mentioned me again to the king, who desired to see the book I had brought for him.

I presented it to him in his chamber, and laid it upon his



bed. He opened it and looked into it with much pleasure. He ought to have been pleased, for it was handsomely written and illuminated, and bound in crimson velvet, with ten silver-gilt studs, and roses of the same in the middle, with two large clasps of silver-gilt, richly worked with roses in the center. The king asked me what the book treated of. I replied—Of love. He was pleased with the answer, and dipped into several places, reading parts aloud; for he read and spoke French perfectly well; and then gave it to one of his knights to carry to his oratory, and made me many acknowledgments for it.

## XI

It happened the same Sunday after the king had received my book so handsomely, that an English squire called Henry Castide made acquaintance with me, and having been informed that I was an historian, he addressed me thus: "Sir John, have you as yet found any one to give you an account of the late expedition to Ireland, and how four kings of that country submitted themselves to King Richard?" I replied, I had not. "I will tell it you then," said the squire, who might be about fifty years old, "in order that, when you return home, you may at your leisure insert it in your history, to be had in perpetual remembrance."

He began as follows: "It is not in the memory of man that any King of England ever led so large an armament of men-at-arms and archers to make war on the Irish as the present king. He remained upwards of nine months in Ireland at a great expense, which, however, was cheerfully defrayed by his kingdom. Only gentlemen and archers had been employed on the expedition, and there were with the king 4,000 knights and squires, and 30,000 archers, all regularly paid every week. To tell you the truth, Ireland is one of the worst countries to make war in or to conquer, for there are such impenetrable and extensive forests, lakes, and bogs, that there is no knowing how to pass them and carry on the war advantageously; it is so thinly inhabited, that whenever the Irish please they desert the towns and take refuge in the forests, living in huts made of bows like wild beasts. Moreover, whenever they perceive any parties advancing with

hostile intentions, and about to enter their country, they fly to such narrow passes, that it is impossible to follow them. When they find a favorable opportunity to attack the enemies to advantage, which from their knowledge of the country frequently happens, they fail not to seize it; and no man-at-arms, be he ever so well mounted, can overtake them, so light of foot are they. Sometimes they leap from the ground behind a horseman and embrace the rider so tightly, that he can in no way get rid of them. The Irish have pointed knives with broad blades, sharp on both sides, like a dart head, with which they kill their enemies; but they never consider them as dead, until they have cut their throats like sheep, opened their bellies, and taken out their hearts, which they carry off with them; and some, who are well acquainted with their manners, say, that they devour them as delicious morsels. They never accept of ransom for their prisoners; and when in any skirmishes they find they have not the advantage, they instantly separate and hide themselves in hedges, bushes, or holes under ground, so that they seem to disappear, no one knows whither. Sir William Windsor, who had made war in Ireland longer than any other English knight, has never been able during his residence among them to learn correctly their manners, nor the condition of the people. They are a very hardy race, of great subtlety, and of various tempers, paying no attention to cleanliness, nor to any gentleman, although the country is governed by kings, of whom there were several; but seem desirous to remain in the savage state in which they have been brought up. True it is, that four of the most potent kings of Ireland have submitted to the King of England, but more through love and good humor than by battle or force. The Earl of Ormond, whose lands join their kingdoms, took great pains to induce them to go to Dublin, where the king our lord presided, and to submit themselves to him and to the crown of England. This was considered by every one as a great acquisition, and the object of the armament accomplished; for, during the whole of King Edward's reign, he had never such success as King Richard. The honor is great, but the advantage little; for with such savages nothing can be done.

“I will tell you an instance of their savageness; you may

depend upon its truth, for I was an eye-witness of what I shall relate, as they were about a month under my care and governance at Dublin, to learn the usages of England, by orders of the king and council, because I knew their language as well as I did English and French; for in my youth I was educated among them, and Earl Thomas, father of the present Earl of Ormond, kept me with him out of affection for my good horsemanship.

“It happened that the earl above mentioned was sent with 300 lances and 1,000 archers, to make war on the Irish. The Earl of Ormond, whose lands bordered on his opponent’s, had that day mounted me on one of his best horses, and I rode by his side. The Irish having formed an ambuscade, advanced from it; but were so sharply attacked by the English archers that they soon retreated. The earl pursued them and I kept close by him; it chanced in their pursuit, that my horse took fright and ran away with me into the midst of the enemy. My friends could never overtake me; and in passing through the Irish, one of them, by a great feat of agility, leaped on the back of my horse and held me tight with both his arms, but did me no harm; for more than two hours he pressed my horse forward, and conducted him to a large bush in a very retired spot, where he found his companions, who had run thither to escape the English. He seemed much rejoiced at having made me his prisoner, and carried me to his house, which was strong and in a town surrounded with wood, palisades, and stagnant water. His name was Bryan Costeret, and a very handsome man he was. I have frequently made inquiries after him, and hear that he is still alive, but very old. This Bryan kept me with him seven years, and gave me his daughter in marriage, by whom I have two girls.

“I will tell you how I obtained my liberty. It happened in the seventh year of my captivity, that one of the kings, Arthur Macquemaire, King of Leinster, raised an army against Lionel, Duke of Clarence, son of Edward, King of England, and both armies met very near the city of Leinster. In the battle that followed many were slain and taken on both sides; but the English gaining the day, the Irish were forced to fly, and the King of Leinster escaped. The father of my wife was made prisoner, under the banner of the Duke of

Clarence; and, as Bryan Costeret was mounted on my horse, which was remembered to have belonged to the Earl of Ormond, it was then first known that I was alive, that he had honorably entertained me at his house in Herpelin, and given me his daughter in marriage. The Duke of Clarence, Sir William Windsor, and all of our party, were well pleased to hear this news; and Bryan was offered his liberty, on condition that he gave me mine, and sent me to the English army, with my wife and children. He at first refused the terms, from his love to me, his daughter, and our children; but when he found none other would be accepted, he agreed, provided my eldest daughter remained with him. I returned to England and fixed my residence at Bristol; my two children are married—the one in Ireland has three boys and two girls, and her sister four boys and two daughters.

“Because the Irish language is as familiar to me as English, for I have always spoken it in my family, I was chosen by our lord and king to teach and accustom to the manners of the English these four Irish kings, who have sworn obedience forever to England. I must say, that these kings were of coarse manners and understanding; and, in spite of all that I could do to soften their language and nature, very little progress has been made, for they would frequently return to their former coarse behavior.

“I will more particularly relate the charge that was given me over them, and how I managed it. The King of England intended that these four kings should adopt the manners, appearance, and dress of the English; for he wanted to create them knights. He gave them, first, a very handsome house in the city of Dublin, for themselves and attendants, where I was ordered to reside with them, and never to leave the house without absolute necessity. I had been with them for three or four days without any way interfering, that we might become accustomed to each other. I observed that, as they sat at table, they made grimaces, and I resolved in my own mind to make them drop that custom. When these kings were seated at table, and the first dish was served, they would make their minstrels and principal servants sit beside them. eat from their plates, and drink from their cups. They told me this was a praiseworthy custom in their country, where

everything was in common but their bed. I permitted this to be done for three days; but on the fourth I ordered the tables to be laid out and covered properly, placing the four kings at an upper table, the minstrels at another below, and the servants lower still. They looked at each other and refused to eat, saying, I had deprived them of the old custom in which they had been brought up. In order to appease them, I replied, with a smile, that their custom was not decent nor suitable to their rank, nor would it be honorable for them to continue it: for, that now they should conform to the manners of the English; and to instruct them in these particulars was the motive of my residence with them. When they heard this, they made no farther opposition to whatever I proposed. They had another custom which I knew to be common in that country, which was the not wearing breeches. I had, in consequence, plenty of breeches made of linen and cloth, which I gave to the kings and their attendants, and accustomed them to wear them. I took away many rude articles as well in their dress as in other things, and had great difficulty at first to induce them to wear robes of silken cloth, trimmed with squirrel-skin or miniver; for the kings only wrapped themselves up in an Irish cloak. In riding, they neither used saddles nor stirrups; and I had some trouble to make them conform in this respect to the English manners. I once made inquiry concerning their faith; but they seemed so much displeased, that I was forced to silence; they said they believed in God, and the Trinity, without any difference from our creed. I asked what pope they were inclined to; they replied, without hesitation, 'to that of Rome.' I inquired if they would like to receive the order of knighthood, for the king would willingly create them such after the usual mode of France and England, and other countries. They said, they were knights already, which ought to satisfy them. I asked when they were so made. They answered, at seven years old: that, in Ireland, a king makes his son a knight, and should the child have lost his father, then the nearest relation; and a young knight begins to learn to tilt with a light lance, against a shield fixed to a post in a field, and the more lances he breaks, the more honor he acquires. 'By this method,' added they, 'are our young knights trained, more especially kings'

sons.' Although I asked this, I was before well acquainted with the manner of educating their children to arms. I made no further reply than by saying, that this kind of childish knighthood would not satisfy the King of England, and that he would create them in another mode. They asked in what manner. I answered, 'In church, with most solemn ceremonies.' And I believe they paid attention to what I said.

"About two days after this, the king was desirous to create these kings knights; and the Earl of Ormond, who spoke Irish well, was sent to wait on them, that they might have more confidence in the message from the king and council. On his arrival they showed him every respect, which he returned, and they seemed happy at his coming. The result of the interview was, that the four kings were made knights in the cathedral of Dublin, by the hand of the King of England on the Feast of our Lady, in March, which that year fell on a Thursday. The four kings watched all the Wednesday night in the cathedral; and on the morrow, after mass, they were created knights with much solemnity. They were very richly dressed, and that day dined at the table of King Richard. It was certainly, Sir John, a great novelty, to see four Irish kings."

"I readily believe you," I said, "and would have given a great deal to have been there. Last year I had made arrangements for coming to England, and should have done so had I not heard of the death of Queen Anne. But I wish to ask you one thing which has much surprised me; I should like to know how these four Irish kings have so readily submitted to King Richard, when his valiant grandfather, who was so much redoubted everywhere, could never reduce them to obedience, and was always at war with them? You have said, it was brought about by a treaty, and the grace of God: the grace of God is good, and of infinite value to those who can obtain it; but we see few lords now-a-days augment their territories otherwise than by force."

To this, Henry Castide answered, "In truth, Sir John, I cannot fully explain how it was brought about; but it is generally believed by most of our party that the Irish were exceedingly frightened at the great force the king landed in Ireland, where it remained nine months. The coasts were so

surrounded, that neither provisions nor merchandise could be landed. The inland natives, however, were indifferent to this, as they are unacquainted with commerce, and live like wild beasts. Those who reside on the coast opposite to England are better informed, and accustomed to traffic. King Edward of happy memory had in his reign so many wars to provide for, in France, Brittany, Gascony, and Scotland, that his forces were dispersed in different quarters, and he was unable to send any great armament to Ireland. Formerly, when Saint Edward, who had been canonized, and was worshiped with much solemnity by the English, was their king, they defeated the Danes on sea and land. This Saint Edward, King of England, Lord of Ireland and of Aquitaine, the Irish loved and feared more than any other king of England, before or since. It was for this reason, that, when our king went thither last year, he laid aside the leopards and flowers-de-luce, and bore the arms of Saint Edward, emblazoned on all his banners: these were a cross pateneé or, on a field gules, with four doves argent on the shield or banner as you please.

“This we heard was very pleasing to the Irish, and inclined them more to submission; for, in truth, the ancestors of these four kings had done homage and service to St. Edward: they also considered King Richard to be a prudent and conscientious man. Thus have I related to you how our king accomplished the object of his expedition to Ireland. Keep it in your memory, and when you return home insert it in your chronicles.”

“Henry,” said I, “you have well spoken, and it shall be done.” Upon this, we separated; and meeting soon after the herald March, I said, “March, tell me what are the arms of Henry Castide, for I have found him very agreeable, and he has kindly related to me the history of the king’s expedition to Ireland?” “He bears for arms,” replied March, “a chevron gules on a field argent, with three besants gules, two above the chevron and one below.”

I remained in the household of the King of England as long as I pleased; but I was not always in the same place, for the king frequently changed his abode. He went to Eltham, Leeds Castle, Kingston, Shene, Chertsey, and Windsor. I was told, for truth, that the king and his council had

written to the Duke of Lancaster to return to England, for those from Aquitaine had lately declared they would not submit to any other lord than the King of England.

I will now say something of the Earl of Rutland, the Earl Marshal, and other English ambassadors, who had been sent to France, to treat of a marriage between King Richard and the young daughter of the King of France. These ambassadors, during their stay at Paris, were frequently with the king, who, together with his brother and uncles, showed them every attention, out of respect to the King of England. They were, however, some time before they could obtain an answer to their proposals; for it was a matter of great surprise to every one, that the English should be so forward to offer such an alliance, after the bitter wars that had been carried on between the two nations for such a length of time. Some in the council said, "We think, that before such a measure can take place, there ought to be a solid peace established between France, England, and their allies."

The Chancellor of France, at this period Sir Arnaud de Corbie, was a very wise man, who saw far into events likely to happen, and knew well the different interests that swayed the kingdom; at his advice principally it was determined that the ambassadors from England should receive kind answers, and have hopes given them, before their departure, that their proposal would be complied with. The Queen of France resided at the hotel of St. Pol, on the banks of the Seine; and the better to please the English lords, their request to visit the queen and the children was granted. They had been at first refused, for the council excused themselves by saying, that the princess was but a child; and that, at her age of eight years, nothing could be judged as to what she might turn out. She had, however, been well educated, and this she showed the English lords when they waited on her; for when the Lord Marshal had dropped on his knees, saying, "Madame, if it please God, you shall be our lady and queen;" she instantly replied, without any one advising her, "Sir, if it please God, and my lord and father, that I shall be Queen of England, I shall be well pleased thereat: for I have been told that I shall then be a great lady." She made the Earl Marshal rise, and taking him by the hand led him to



the queen, who was much pleased at her answer. The appearance and manners of the young princess were very agreeable to the English ambassadors, and they thought among themselves that she would be a lady of high honor and great worth.

When they had stayed at Paris more than twenty days, having had their expenses defrayed by the King of France, they received favorable answers to their demands from the king and council, with great hopes that the object of their mission would be accomplished, but not immediately; for the princess was very young, and had likewise been betrothed to the son of the Duke of Brittany. This obstacle, they were told, must first be got over before anything could be done in the matter; it must, therefore, remain in this state the ensuing winter; and during Lent the King of France would send to England information of what had been done. The ambassador then took leave of the queen, her daughter, the Lady Isabella, and the rest of the court, and left Paris for England. The king was much rejoiced at their return, and at the answer which they brought.

## XII

It happened about Christmas-tide that John, Duke of Lancaster, fell dangerously ill of a disorder, which to the great grief of all his friends ended his life. He had been for some time very low-spirited on account of the banishment of his son, and also in consequence of the manner in which his nephew Richard governed the kingdom, which, if persevered in, he foresaw must be its ruin. The King of England, as it seemed, was little affected by his uncle's death, and he was soon forgotten. The news of the death of the Duke of Lancaster was soon made public in France; King Richard wrote to the king an account of it, but he did not notice it to his cousin the Earl of Derby. The earl, however, knew of it as soon, if not sooner, than the King of France: he clothed himself and his attendants in deep mourning, and had his father's obsequies performed on a very grand scale. The Earl of Derby was now Duke of Lancaster—the most potent baron in England, and second to none but the king himself; and if King Richard had acted prudently, remembering how very unpopular he himself was, he would instantly on the death

of his father have recalled him. But he had no such inclination; on the contrary, he sent officers to take possession of his lands, and to seize his rents, declaring that during his banishment neither the earl nor his family should receive any of his revenues in England; also, to the great vexation of such as were attached to the earl and his children, he disposed of several estates in the duchy of Lancaster to some of his knights.

In France as well as in England this conduct on the part of King Richard was deemed strange and unjustifiable: in truth the King of France and his family were perfectly well disposed towards the Earl of Derby, whom they greatly respected; moreover, it was considered that he was a widower, likely to marry again, and that the Duke of Berry had a daughter, who, though so young, was a widow of two husbands. Mary of Berry, for such was her name, was not more than twenty-three years old, and this marriage between her and the Earl of Derby was talked of and nearly concluded. The Duke of Berry well knew that the Earl of Derby was the greatest heir apparent in England, as also did the King of France, who was anxious that this match should take place on account of his daughter being Queen of England. It was natural to imagine that two such ladies, so nearly related, would be agreeable companions to each other, and that the kingdoms of France and England would on this account enjoy longer peace, and be more intimately connected: all this would probably have been true, if it could have been accomplished; but King Richard and his council broke off all these measures. Whatever misfortunes fate has decreed, must have their course; those which befell King Richard are wonderful to reflect upon. He might have avoided them, but what must be will be.

I, John Froissart, author of these chronicles, will truly say what in my younger days I heard at a mansion called Berkhamstead, thirty miles from London, and which, in the year of grace 1361, at the time I am speaking of, belonged to the Prince of Wales, father to King Richard. As the prince and princess were about to leave England for Aquitaine, the King of England, Queen Philippa, my mistress, the Dukes of Clarence and Lancaster, the Lord Edmund, who was afterwards

Earl of Cambridge and Duke of York, with their children, came to the mansion to visit the prince and take leave of him. I was at the time twenty-four years old, and one of the clerks of the chamber to my lady the queen. During this visit, as I was seated on a bench, I heard the following conversation from a knight to some of the ladies of the queen: "There was in that country," said the knight, "a book called Brut, which many say contains the prophecies of Merlin. According to its contents, neither the Prince of Wales, nor the Duke of Clarence, though sons to King Edward, will wear the crown of England; but it will fall on the house of Lancaster." When the knight said this, the Earl of Derby was not born: his birth took place seven years after. This prophecy, however, has been verified, for I have since seen Henry, Earl of Derby, King of England.

The moment King Richard heard that a treaty of marriage was going on between the Earl of Derby and the Lady Mary of Berry, he became much displeased thereat, and resolved to send the Earl of Salisbury to Paris, to entreat the king to be aware of allowing such an alliance to be formed, as the Earl of Derby was a traitor to his sovereign. The Earl of Salisbury was by no means pleased at being appointed to so delicate and difficult an office; however, the king would receive no excuses, and he went. On his arrival at Paris, he lodged at the White Horse in the square of the Greve, and lost no time in waiting on the king and queen; to whom he related very minutely everything with which he had been charged by the King of England, and called the Earl of Derby a traitor to his natural lord. The king on hearing this expression was much angered, and gave back to the earl the letters he had brought, saying, "Earl of Salisbury, our son of England bears too great hatred to our cousin of Derby; we wonder he has continued it so long, for we think that his court would be adorned if the Earl of Derby were near his person." "Very dear sire," replied the Earl of Salisbury, "I can only act as I have been ordered." "That is true," said the king, "we are not angry with you; execute the commission you have been charged with." The earl then, in compliance with the orders he had received, waited on the Duke of Berry and delivered the same message. The duke made no answer, but

went forthwith to the king at the hôtel de Saint Pol, and asked if he had received any news from England.

The king told him all that had occurred, and a privy council was summoned on the occasion, at which it was agreed, that as they ought to be more attached to the King of England than to the Earl of Derby, it would be advisable to break off the marriage of the earl with the Countess d'Eu. The Earl of Salisbury, having completed the business on which he was engaged, left Paris after this resolution had been adopted. The King of France, however, showed that he was more displeased than otherwise at the intelligence which the earl had brought, and returned to him his credential letters, refusing to accept them from his partiality to the Earl of Derby. The Earl of Salisbury returned to Calais without once speaking to the Earl of Derby, at which the latter was much displeased, and augured from it nothing favorable. However, about a month after his departure, his commissioners renewed the matter of the marriage with the Lady Mary of Berry; but those on the part of the Duke of Berry replied, "Tell my Lord of Derby that when he is in the presence of the king and his brother the Duke of Orleans, he may propose this business himself; we cannot say more on the subject, since it is not agreeable to our employers that we longer interfere in it." The Earl of Derby at the time suspected nothing more was meant by these words than to hasten the marriage, for the king and his lords had shown outwardly as much eagerness as ever for the match. He remembered what had been told him, and at a proper opportunity, when the king and his lords were together, renewed his proposal for the marriage. The Duke of Burgundy, who had been previously charged with the answer, replied, "Cousin of Derby, we cannot think of marrying our cousin to a traitor." The earl, on hearing this expression, instantly changed color and said, "Sir, I am in the presence of my lord the king, and must interrupt your speech. I never was, and never thought of being a traitor; and if any one dare to charge me with treason, I am ready to answer him now or at whatever time it may please the king to appoint." "No, cousin," said the king, "I don't believe that you will find any man in France that will challenge your honor. The expression my uncle has used comes from Eng-

land." The Earl of Derby, casting himself on his knees, replied, "I willingly believe you: may God preserve all my friends, and confound mine enemies." The king made the earl rise, and said, "Be appeased, this matter will end well; and when you shall be on good terms with every one, we will then talk of the marriage. It will be first necessary for you to take possession of your duchy of Lancaster; for it is the custom of France and of many countries on this side the sea, that when a lord marries with the consent of his lord paramount, should he have one, he settles a dower on his wife." Wine and spices were brought, and thus the conversation ended. The Earl of Derby, on his return to the hôtel de Clisson, was bitterly enraged, and not without reason. He had been accused of treason when he prided himself upon being one of the most loyal knights in the universe and that in the presence of the King of France, who had shown him so much affection and courtesy. Moreover, that this accusation should have been brought from England by the Earl of Salisbury, galled him much. His knights endeavored to pacify him; but he was more cast down than man ever was.

It was known in England that the Earl of Salisbury had been sent to France, and the Londoners especially were exceedingly enraged against the king and his ministers for their conduct towards the Earl of Derby. "Ah, gallant and courteous Earl of Derby," they said, "how great are the jealousies and hatreds against thee: to overwhelm thee with disgrace and vexation, they charge thee with treason! It was not enough for the king and his minions to force thee out of the kingdom, but they must add this charge also; however, all things have an end, and their turn may come." "Alas," cried some, "what have his children done? when the king seizes their inheritance—an inheritance which ought to be theirs by direct succession from grandfather to father. There must be some change in public measures, we neither can nor will suffer them to go no longer."

Soon after the return of the Earl of Salisbury, King Richard had proclaimed throughout his realm and in Scotland, that a tournament would be held at Windsor by forty knights and forty squires, (clothed in green, with the device of a white falcon,) against all comers; and that the Queen of

England, well attended by ladies and damsels, would be at the feast. When the day came, the queen, indeed, was present at the tournament in magnificent array, but very few of the barons attended, so disgusted were they with the king for the banishment of the Earl of Derby, the injuries he was doing the earl's children, the murder of the Duke of Gloucester, which had been committed in the castle of Calais, the death of the Earl of Arundel, whom he had butchered in London, and the perpetual exile of the Earl of Warwick.

After this tournament, King Richard prepared to go to Ireland: and although many knights and squires made ready to join him, none took part in this expedition with good will. The Earl of Northumberland, and his son Sir Henry Percy, after a special summons, sent excuses, for which they were banished England, never to return until recalled by the king. This sentence caused the greatest astonishment throughout England, and tended much to increase the general discontent. The earl and his son consulted their friends as to how they should act under the disgrace which the king had so undeservedly heaped upon them, and it was agreed that they should seek an asylum in Scotland until affairs should mend or the king's anger be pacified. King Robert of Scotland and his barons readily granted the request, and moreover assured the earl, that five or six hundred lances were at his service whenever he might require them. Things, however, remained as they were; for King Richard and his advisers in a short time had so much to do, that they had no leisure to attend to the earl nor to enforce his banishment.

The king on his way to Ireland held his court at Bristol; and while he was there a general insurrection of the people of England took place. The courts of justice were closed, and a stop was put to all traffic; plunder and robbery prevailed, farmers' houses were pillaged of grain, and their bees, pigs, and sheep, carried away. Nothing but complaints were heard throughout the land. The citizens of London, who, being rich from trade, and by whom the other parts of England are generally governed, foresaw that most dangerous consequences would ensue, unless they stepped forward as they had formerly done against King Edward and the D'Espencers, who had forced Queen Isabella and the Prince of

Wales out of the kingdom. Their remedy on the present occasion they believed to be in the Earl of Derby. "We must send for him," they said, "and on his arrival appoint him regent of the kingdom. Richard of Bordeaux must be arrested and confined in the Tower of London; his acts are so infamous, that they will condemn him." Many councils were held among the citizens on this subject, and it was at last agreed to request the Archbishop of Canterbury to go over to France and communicate with the earl. The archbishop willingly undertook the office, and as secretly as possible prepared for his journey: in order to escape observation, he traveled not as an archbishop, but as a simple monk on a pilgrimage; and on arriving at Paris, had a private interview with the earl, to whom he explained the real object of his coming.

The Earl of Derby listened attentively to all that the archbishop told him, and to the request of the citizens of London, that he would come over and be their king. He did not, however, immediately reply, but leaning in a window that looked into the garden he mused a while, and then said, "My lord, your speech requires much consideration. I should be unwilling to begin an enterprise and be forced to leave it unfinished. Should I accept the offers and kind promises which you and my good friends the citizens of London make, I must subject myself to their will, arrest King Richard, and put him to death. For this I shall be universally blamed; and I would not willingly do it, if other means can be adopted."

"My lord," replied the archbishop, "I am sent hither with every good disposition towards you; call in your council, and lay before them the propositions I have made." To this the earl consented, and when his knights and squires came together, they were unanimous in persuading him to accept the offer of the archbishop.

Matters were soon arranged; but in everything the greatest secrecy was observed; and the earl took leave of the King of France, under pretense of paying a visit to the Duke of Brittany, and staying some time at his court. His stay in Brittany however, was not many days; for after he had explained his plans to the duke, and received his offer of assistance of

men-at-arms and crossbows, he set out for England, and landed at Plymouth. The next day he took the road to London, accompanied by the archbishop, Sir Peter de Craon, who had attended him from Brittany, and also by the escort which the duke had given him.

The Mayor of London and the chief citizens went out to meet the earl on the road; and as they approached London, multitudes came out to receive him, shouting, "Welcome! long wished-for Earl of Derby and Duke of Lancaster, may all joy and prosperity attend you." The mayor rode by the side of the earl, and in this manner they entered the city. So great indeed was the public rejoicing on the occasion, that every shop was shut, and no more work done than if it had been Easter day.

To bring this matter to a conclusion, it was determined to march against the king, whom the citizens of London and the other towns now so hated, that they would call him by no other title than Richard of Bordeaux. Indeed, the Earl of Derby was already treated as king, and he engaged to undertake the government on condition that the crown was settled on him and his heirs forever. An army was collected, chiefly of Londoners, who, with the earl at their head, marched without delay to Bristol, prepared to make King Richard a prisoner. Richard was thunderstruck when the information first reached him; and at the advice of those who were about him, he quietly left Bristol, and retired to Flint Castle. Thither, however, the Earl of Derby followed him with two hundred lances, being determined to have possession of his person by surrender or by force.

The earl and his men on arriving at Flint Castle knocked loudly. "Who is there?" asked the guard. "I am Henry of Lancaster," replied the earl, "and I am come to demand of the king my inheritance of the duchy of Lancaster: tell him so for me."

This message was instantly conveyed to the king, who, on hearing it, looked at his knights, and asked how he was to act. "Sire," replied they, "this request is by no means an improper one; you may allow him to come into your presence with eleven others, and then you can hear what he has to say." The king consented, and the Earl of Derby was con-



ducted into his presence. Richard on seeing the earl changed color, and appeared very uneasy; but the earl, without paying him any reverence or honor, spoke aloud: "Have you broken your fast?" he said. "No," replied the king; "why do you ask?" "Because," continued the earl, "you have a long way to ride." "What road?" said the king. "You must come to London," answered the earl, "and I advise you to eat and drink heartily, that you may perform the journey gayly." The king becoming alarmed, said, "I am not hungry, nor have I any desire to eat." Upon this his knights, perceiving that things were taking a serious turn, said, "Sire, have confidence in my Lord of Lancaster, your cousin, he can but wish you good." "Well, well," said the king, "I am willing so to have it; let the tables be prepared." The earl ate nothing, and the king made a most uneasy breakfast, after which he was told that the intention was to carry him to London, and place him as a prisoner in the Tower; to which, as resistance was useless, he quietly submitted.

Richard had not long been confined in the Tower when he expressed a desire to speak with the Earl of Derby, who was now styled Duke of Lancaster. The duke came to him without loss of time, when Richard addressed him thus: "Fair cousin, I have been considering my situation, which is miserable enough, and I have no longer any thought of wearing my crown, or governing my people. As God may have my soul, I wish I were this moment dead, and the King of France had his daughter again; for since I brought her hither, I have lost the love of my people. All things therefore considered, I freely resign to you the crown of England." The duke replied, "It will be necessary that the three estates of the realm hear this. I have issued summonses for assembling the nobles, prelates, and deputies from the principal towns, and within three days you can make your resignation in due form before them. The common report in this country is, that I have a better right to the crown than you have; for it is believed that the Princess of Wales, your mother, was not faithful to her husband: but, however this may be, I will guard and preserve you as long as you like, and will likewise entreat the Londoners on your behalf." "Many thanks," replied the king, "I have greater confidence

in you than in any other person in England." "You are right," added the duke, "for had I not stepped forward between you and the people, they would have most disgracefully killed you, in return for all your wicked acts."

Upwards of two hours did the duke continue this conversation with the king, and on taking his leave he returned at once to his own house, and renewed his orders for the assembly of the three estates of the realm.

When the day arrived, Richard was released from his prison, and having entered the hall which had been prepared for the occasion, royally dressed, the scepter in his hand, and the crown on his head, he addressed the company as follows: "I have reigned King of England, Duke of Aquitaine, and Lord of Ireland, about twenty-two years, which royalty, lordship, scepter, and crown, I now freely and willingly resign to my cousin, Henry of Lancaster, and entreat of him, in the presence of you all, to accept this scepter." He then tendered the scepter to the duke, who, taking it, gave it to the Archbishop of Canterbury. King Richard next raised his crown from off his head, and, placing it before him, said, "Henry, fair cousin, and Duke of Lancaster, I present and give to you this crown, and all the rights dependent on it." And the duke receiving it, delivered it also to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

This done, and the resignation having been accepted, the duke called a public notary to him, and had an authentic account of the proceedings drawn up, and witnessed by the lords and prelates present. Richard was then conducted back to his prison, and the assembly broke up.

On Wednesday, the last day of September, 1399, a parliament was holden at Westminster, at which the Duke of Lancaster challenged the crown of England, and claimed it for his own, for three reasons—first, by conquest; second, from being heir to it; and third, from the pure and free resignation which King Richard had made of it. The parliament then declared, that it was their will he should be king, and the day of coronation was fixed for the feast of Saint Edward, which fell on a Monday, the 13th day of October.

On Saturday before the coronation, the new king went from Westminster to the Tower of London, attended by great

numbers, and those squires who were to be knighted watched their arms that night; they amounted to forty-six; each squire had his chamber and bath. The next day after mass the duke created them knights, and presented them with long green coats with straight sleeves lined with miniver, after the manner of the prelates. These knights had on their left shoulder a double cord of white silk, with white tufts hanging down.

This Sunday after dinner the duke left the Tower on his return to Westminster; he was bareheaded, and had round his neck the order of the King of France. The Prince of Wales, six dukes, six earls, and eighteen barons accompanied him; and of other nobility there were from 800 to 900 horse in the procession. The duke, after the German fashion, was dressed in a jacket of cloth of gold, and mounted on a white courser, with a blue garter on his left leg. He passed through the streets of London, which were at the time all handsomely decorated with tapestries and other rich hangings; there were nine fountains in Cheapside and other streets through which he passed, and these perpetually ran with white and red wine. He was escorted by prodigious numbers of gentlemen, with their servants in livery and badges; and the different companies of London were led by their wardens, clothed in their proper livery, and with the ensigns of their trade: the whole cavalcade amounted to 6,000 horse. That same night the duke bathed, and on the morrow confessed himself, and according to his custom heard three masses.

The prelates and clergy who had been assembled then came in procession from Westminster Abbey, to conduct the king to the Tower, and back again in the same manner. The dukes, earls, and barons wore long scarlet robes, with mantles trimmed with ermine, and large hoods of the same; the dukes and earls had three bars of ermine on the left arm a quarter of a yard long, or thereabout; the barons had but two; all the knights and squires had uniform cloaks of scarlet lined with miniver. In the procession to the church the duke had borne over his head a rich canopy of blue silk, supported on silver staves, with four golden bells at the corners. This canopy was borne by four burgesses of Dover, who claimed it as their right. On each side of the duke were the

sword of mercy and the sword of justice; the first being borne by the Prince of Wales, and the other by the Earl of Northumberland, Constable of England; the Earl of Westmoreland, the Marshal of England, carried the scepter. The procession entered the church about nine o'clock. In the middle of the church was erected a scaffold covered with crimson cloth, in the center of which was the royal throne of cloth of gold. When the duke entered the church, he seated himself on the throne, and was thus in regal state, except having the crown on his head. The Archbishop of Canterbury proclaimed from the four corners of the scaffold how God had given them a man for their lord and sovereign, and then asked the people if they were consenting parties to his being consecrated and crowned king. Upon which the people unanimously shouted "ay," and held up their hands, promising fealty and homage.

The duke then descended from the throne and advanced to the altar to be consecrated. Two archbishops and ten bishops performed the ceremony. He was stripped of all his royal state before the altar, naked to his shirt, and was then anointed and consecrated at six places: *i. e.*, on the head, the breast, the two shoulders, before and behind; on the back, and hands: a bonnet was then placed on his head, and while this was being done, the clergy chanted the litany, or the service that is performed to hallow a font. The king was now dressed in a churchman's clothes, like a deacon; and they put on him shoes of crimson velvet, after the manner of a prelate. Then they added spurs with a point, but no rowel; and the sword of justice was drawn, blessed, and delivered to the king, who put it again into the scabbard, when the Archbishop of Canterbury girded it about him. The crown of Saint Edward, which is arched over like a cross, was next brought and blessed, and placed by the archbishop on the king's head. When mass was over the king left the church, and returned to the palace, in the same state as before. In the courtyard of the palace there was a fountain that ran constantly with red and white wine. The king went first to his closet, and then returned to the hall to dinner. At the first table sat the king; at the second, five great peers of England; at the third, the principal citizens of London;

at the fourth, the new created knights; at the fifth, all knights and squires of honor. The king was served by the Prince of Wales, who carried the sword of mercy; and on the opposite side by the constable, who bore the sword of justice. At the bottom of the table was the Earl of Westmoreland with the scepter. At the king's table there were only the two archbishops and seventeen bishops.

When dinner was half over, a knight of the name of Dymock entered the hall completely armed, and mounted on a handsome steed, richly barbed with crimson housings. The knight was armed for wager of battle, and was preceded by another knight bearing his lance. He himself had his drawn sword in one hand, and his naked dagger by his side. The knight presented the king with a written paper, the contents of which were, that if any knight or gentleman should dare to maintain that King Henry was not a lawful sovereign, he was ready to offer him combat in the presence of the king, when and where he should be pleased to appoint.

The king ordered this challenge to be proclaimed by heralds, in six different parts of the town and the hall; and to it no answer was made.

King Henry having dined and partaken of wine and spices in the hall, retired to his private apartments, and all the company separated. Thus passed the coronation of King Henry.

**THE END**









# SIR PHILIP DE COMINES

THE FIRST MODERN HISTORIAN: THE FIRST WATCHFUL OBSERVER  
OF THE HUMANNESS OF KINGS

1445-1509

## (INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

If Froissart was the most brilliant of the chroniclers of feudal splendor, Comines is the first modern historian, the first observer who could look beyond the gorgeous trappings of chivalry and note the worthlessness of the decaying soul within. Even in battle Comines continues to look within himself, to note his own feelings and those of others around him, much as Petrarch had done in quieter moments. It is doubtful, for example, if the battle of Montlheroy was particularly different from any other medieval battle, except that no earlier battle had a Comines to note its heedless muddle and to write such a vivid and perhaps unintentionally sarcastic account of it.

Comines was, like Froissart, a Fleming. His father was a prominent citizen of the great city of Ghent, and so the Burgundian Dukes who nominally owned the city flattered young Philip de Comines and took him into court service. The shrewdly observant youth soon saw that he stood far better chances at the French court, and so transferred his services from Duke Charles the Bold, of Burgundy, to the wily King Louis XI of France. He served under three successive French Kings and held high rank under all, though during the opening years of the reign of Louis XI's successor, Charles VIII, Comines was in disgrace and was even for some two years imprisoned.

Being finally removed from office in old age, Comines devoted his declining years to his memoirs. They are far more personal than those of Froissart, for Comines might well say with Ulysses:

“I am a part of all that I have met.”

He speaks of kings as one who has literally slept in the same bed with them, and found them to be men like himself. Sir Walter Scott took his great historical novel of “*Quentin Durward*” almost bodily from the pages of Comines and refers to him as “one of the most profound statesmen, and certainly the best historian of his age.”

## THE MEMOIRS OF PHILIP DE COMINES, LORD OF ARGENTON

It was your request, my Lord Archbishop of Vienne, that I should give you in writing an account of what I knew and had heard of the transactions of the late King Louis XI., our master and benefactor—a prince, indeed, whose actions well deserve to be remembered. In compliance with your Lordship's desire I have done it, as near the truth as my memory would permit me.

Of the occurrences that happened in his youth I can say little besides what I have heard his Majesty state in conversation; but, from the time of my first being entertained in his service to his death, at which I was present, I was more constantly in attendance on him than any one about the court, being always one of his chamberlains, and employed in the most important affairs of the kingdom. In him, and in all the rest of the princes that I have either served or known, I perceived ever a mixture of good and bad; for they are but men like us, and perfection belongs only to God Himself. But when in a prince virtues and good qualities outweigh vices, he is certainly worthy of more than ordinary commendation and applause; because persons of such rank are more inclinable to excess in their actions than other people, by reason that their education in their younger years is less strict; and when they are grown up to man's age, the generality of those who are about them make it their endeavor to conform themselves to their caprices and humors.

As I have been unwilling to dissemble the matter, I may, perhaps, in several places have said something that seems to lessen the character of my master; but I hope the reader will consider the reasons that have induced me to do so. This I dare affirm in his praise, that I never knew any prince less faulty in the main, though I have been as conversant among great princes as any man in my time in France; and not only with those who have reigned in this kingdom, but in Bretagne, Flanders, Germany, England, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, princes spiritual as well as temporal; besides several whom I never saw, but knew by their letters and instructions, and by my conferences with their ambassadors, which gave me a

sufficient character of their natures and conditions. However, it is not my intention in the least to detract from the honor and renown of the rest, by praising my master. I send you only what has readily occurred to my mind, hoping you have asked for it in order to write it in some work which it is your design to publish in Latin (a language which your Lordship understands to perfection), by which will be shown the learning and abilities of the author, as well as the magnificence and grandeur of the prince of whom I speak. Where I am defective, you have the Lord du Bouchage and others to apply to, who can give you a better account, and in better language; though, considering the honor King Louis XI. did me, the possessions he gave me, the privacies he admitted me to, and his never discontinuing any of his favors to me to his dying day, no person ought to remember him better than myself; and if I could forget his good actions, my misfortunes and sufferings since his decease would be sufficient to remind me of them; though it is not unusual upon the death of such great and powerful princes to see confusion among their officers, some of them being advanced, whilst others are laid aside; for honors and preferments are not always distributed according to the inclination of those who desire them.

Though your Lordship seems only to demand of me an account of such occurrences as happened during the time that I was near the king's person, I am obliged to begin a little earlier; and, having deduced them from the time of my being first entertained in his service, I shall continue them in a regular method to his death.

#### BOOK THE FIRST

##### I

As soon as my childhood was over, and I was old enough<sup>1</sup> to mount on horseback, I was presented at Lisle to Charles, Duke of Burgundy,<sup>2</sup> at that time called the Count of Charo-

<sup>1</sup> Comines died in 1511, at the age of sixty-four; so that he was about seventeen years old when he entered the service of the Duke of Burgundy.

<sup>2</sup> Charles, Count of Charolois, and afterwards Duke of Burgundy, was the son of Philip the Good and Isabella of Portugal. He was born on the 10th of November, 1433, and married (1) Catherine the daughter of

lois, who took me into his service: this was in the year 1464.

About three days after my arrival at Lisle, the Count d'Eu, the Chancellor of France, called Morvillier, and the Archbishop of Narbonne, as ambassadors from the King of France, arrived there also; and, in the presence of Philip, Duke of Burgundy,<sup>3</sup> the Count of Charolois, and their privy council, were admitted to a public audience in open court.<sup>4</sup> Morvillier's speech was exceedingly arrogant, accusing the Count of Charolois of having (during his late visit to Holland) caused a small man-of-war belonging to Dieppe to be seized, in which was the Bastard of Rubempré, whom he had also caused to be imprisoned, upon pretense that his design was to have surprised and carried him into France; which report he had had published wherever he went, and especially at Bruges (a town of great resort for strangers of all nations), by Sir Oliver de la Marche, a Burgundian knight; for which cause the French king, finding himself, as he said, unjustly traduced, demanded of Duke Philip that Sir Oliver de la Marche might be sent prisoner to Paris, to receive such punishment as his offense deserved. To which Duke Philip made answer, that Sir Oliver de la Marche, being a native of Burgundy, and steward of his household, was in no respect subject to the crown of France; but if, however, it could be fairly proved that he had either done or spoken anything that reflected on the king's honor, he would take care to see him punished according to the nature of the crime. That as to the Bastard of Rubempré, he had been taken prisoner upon information of intelligence which he and his confederates held in the Hague, where his son Charles, the Count of Charolois, had his residence at that time. That if his son were more suspicious than he ought to be, he had not learned it from him (for he never was of a jealous temper), but rather from his mother,<sup>5</sup> who, he must confess, was the most fearful

King Charles VII. of France; (2) Isabella of Bourdon; and (3) Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV., King of England. He was killed at the battle of Nancy, on the 5th of January, 1477.

<sup>3</sup> Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, son of John the Fearless and Margaret of Bavaria, was born on the 30th of June, 1396.

<sup>4</sup> This took place on the 6th of November, 1464.

<sup>5</sup> Isabella, daughter of John I., King of Portugal, and Philippa of Lancaster, married the Duke of Burgundy on the 10th of January, 1430. She died on the 17th of December, 1472.

and apprehensive lady he had ever known. But yet, though he was not timorous himself, had he been in his son's place, when the Bastard of Rubempré was hovering about that coast, he should have caused him to be apprehended, as his son had done. However, if, upon inquiry, the said bastard should not be found to have conspired against his son, as was reported, he would cause him to be released immediately, and sent back to the king, as the ambassadors demanded.

No sooner had Duke Philip ended his speech, but Morvillier began again with great and dishonorable complaints against Francis, Duke of Bretagne; affirming that the said Duke of Bretagne and the Count of Charolois, at the time when the Count of Charolois paid his majesty a visit at Tours,<sup>6</sup> had interchangeably set their hands and seals to an instrument of amity, whereby they had become brothers-in-arms; which instrument was delivered by Messire Tanneguy du Chastel, who has since been made Governor of Rousillon, and borne great authority in this kingdom; and this action Morvillier heightened and exaggerated in such a manner, that he omitted nothing that could possibly be said on the subject, which might tend to the shame and dishonor of a prince. The Count of Charolois, being nettled at the severe reflections he had cast upon his friend and ally, often attempted to answer him; but Morvillier always interrupted him, saying, "My lord, I was not sent hither on an embassy to you, but to the prince your father." The count, however, repeatedly entreated his father to give him leave to speak, who at last replied, "I have answered for you as, in my judgment, a father ought to answer for his son. Nevertheless, since your desire is so great, think over it to-day, and to-morrow you shall have liberty to say what you please." Morvillier still urged the matter farther, and declared, that he could not imagine what could have induced the Count of Charolois to enter into that association with the Duke of Bretagne, unless it were a pension the king had given him, together with the government of Normandy, but which, for some reasons, his majesty had since taken from him.

<sup>6</sup> The Count of Charolois paid Louis XI. a visit at Tours in 1461. He arrived there on the 22d of October, and left the king on the 11th of December following.

The next morning, before the same audience, the Count of Charolois, kneeling upon a velvet cushion, addressed himself first to his father, and began his discourse about the Bastard of Rubempré, alleging that the causes of his apprehension and imprisonment were just and reasonable, as would appear upon his trial. Yet I am of opinion that nothing was ever proved against him, though the presumptions were great; and I afterwards saw him discharged out of prison, where he had been kept five years. Having cleared this point, his next business was to vindicate the Duke of Bretagne and himself. He confessed that the Duke of Bretagne and he had entered into an alliance and friendship together, and had sworn to be brothers-in-arms; but that the said alliance was not intended in any way to prejudice the king or his kingdom, but rather to serve and support him when occasion required. And lastly, as concerning the pension that had been taken from him, he said, he had only enjoyed it for one quarter, and that amounted to nine thousand francs; and that, for his part, he never was solicitous either for that pension, or for the government of Normandy; for as long as he was so happy as to be in favor with his father, he could afford to dispense with the bounty of other people. I really believe that, if it had not been for the respect he bore his father, who was there present, and to whom he directed his speech, he would have answered in much sharper terms than he did. However, Duke Philip concluded his discourse with great modesty and wisdom, beseeching his majesty to continue to regard him with favor, and not easily to entertain an ill opinion of him or his son. After which, he called for wine and sweetmeats; and then the ambassadors took their leave of them both. When the Count d'Eu and the Chancellor had taken their leave of the Count of Charolois, who stood at some distance from his father, the Archbishop of Narbonne coming last, the count said to him, "Present my most humble respects to the king, and tell him that he has handled me very roughly by his chancellor; but before the year is at an end, his majesty may have reason to repent it." The archbishop delivered his message punctually to the king at his return, as you will find hereafter; and these words bred a mortal hatred between

his majesty and the count, which was augmented by the king's late redemption of certain towns upon the Somme—namely, Amiens, Abbeville, St. Quentin, and others; delivered formerly to Duke Philip by King Charles VII., in pursuance of the treaty of Arras, to be enjoyed by the said duke and his heirs male, till the sum of 400,000 crowns should be paid. How this affair was managed, I can give no certain account; only this I can say, that the affairs of the duke in his declining years, were so entirely governed by two brothers, the Lords of Croy and Chimay, and others of their family, that he consented to take the king's money, and restore the towns that were mortgaged to him, to the great concern and disadvantage of the Count of Charolois; for they were the frontiers and limits of their dominions, and they lost, in parting with them, several thousands of brave soldiers and good subjects. The count charged the whole matter upon the house of Croy; and when his father was grown decrepit and superannuated, which at that time he was very near, he drove all the said Lords of Croy from his father's palace, took away all their employments, and confiscated their estates.

## II

A VERY few days after the departure of the king's ambassadors, John, late Duke of Bourbon, came to Lisle, pretending a visit to his uncle Philip, Duke of Burgundy, who loved the family of Bourbon most of all the families in the world. This Duke of Bourbon was the son of Duke Philip's sister: she was a widow, and was at that time with him, with several of her children—three daughters and one son. However, this was not the true cause of the Duke of Bourbon's visit; but his coming thither was to persuade the Duke of Burgundy to consent to the raising of an army in his dominions, as the rest of the princes of France had agreed to do; in order to demonstrate to the king the injustice and ill-management of his kingdom, and to put themselves into a condition to compel him to reform the State, if fair application could not prevail. This war was afterwards called the Public Good, it being undertaken upon that pretense. Duke Philip, who since his death has been called the Good, consented to

the raising of men; but the real object of the business was never made known to him, nor did he ever think they would ever have proceeded to blows. Immediately they began to enlist forces in his countries; and the Count of St. Paul (afterwards Constable of France), being come with the Marshal of Burgundy (who was of the house of Neufchâtel) to wait upon the Count of Charolois at Cambray, where Duke Philip then was, the count assembled the council, and others of his father's chief subjects, in the palace of the Bishop of Cambray, and there declared all the members of the house of Croy mortal enemies both to his father and himself, though the Count of St. Paul had long before married one of his daughters to a son of the Lord of Croy, and alleged it would be much to his prejudice. In short, the whole family were forced to fly out of the Duke of Burgundy's territories, and lost great part of their estates. These proceedings were highly displeasing to the Duke of Burgundy, whose chief chamberlain was one of them, called afterwards Lord of Chimay; a young gentleman of good parts, and nephew to the said Lord of Croy. This gentleman, for the security of his person, went away without taking leave of his master, otherwise (as he was informed) he would have been made prisoner, or killed.<sup>1</sup> The old age of Duke Philip forced him to endure this patiently; but the true reason of this declaration against his favorites, was the restitution of the towns upon the River Somme, which the duke had restored to King Louis for 400,000 crowns, and the Count of Charolois charged the house of Croy with having persuaded him to do it.

The Count of Charolois having made up this business, and reconciled himself to his father as well as he could, immediately took the field with his army, being attended by the Count of St. Paul, as chief manager of his affairs, and general of his forces under him. His troops consisted of

<sup>1</sup> According to Du Clercq, he threw himself at the duke's feet, "thanking him for the favors he had bestowed upon him, and begging him to think with favor of his services; beseeching him to give him leave to quit his court, and in great terror telling him that his life was in danger. . . . When the duke had heard this he was greatly troubled, and forbade him to depart, and very angrily took a truncheon or spear in his hand, and went out of his chamber, saying that he would see whether his son would kill his servants."



about 300 men-at-arms, and 4,000 archers, besides a large number of good knights and squires from Artois, Hainault, and Flanders, all under his command, by the appointment of the Count of Charolois. There were other brigades as great and considerable, under the command of the Lord of Ravestain, brother to the Duke of Cleves, and Lord Anthony, the Bastard of Burgundy; besides several other eminent officers, whose names, for brevity's sake, I shall omit. But above all the rest, there were two officers in more than ordinary reputation with the Count of Charolois. One of them was called the Lord of Haultbourdin, an old soldier. The other was the Lord of Contay, much about the age of the first: both of them were wise and valiant commanders, and of high rank in the army. The whole army consisted of about 1,400 men-at-arms, neither well armed nor well exercised, by reason of the long peace which these princes had enjoyed; for since the treaty of Arras they had had little or no wars; only some small differences with the citizens of Ghent, which lasted not long; so that (if I am not mistaken) they had been at peace for more than thirty-six years. However, the men-at-arms were well mounted, and well attended; for few or none were to be seen without five or six lusty horses in his equipage. The archers might be about 8,000 or 9,000; out of whom, at the general muster, they selected the best; but more of them were disbanded than retained.

The subjects of the house of Burgundy were at that time very wealthy, by reason of the long peace they had enjoyed, and the goodness of their prince, who laid but few taxes upon them; so that in my judgment, if any country might then be called the land of promise, it was his country, which enjoyed great wealth and repose; more than ever it has since; and it is now probably three and twenty years since their miseries began. The expenses and dresses both of women and men were great and extravagant: and their entertainments and banquets more profuse and splendid than in any other place that I ever saw. Their baths and other amusements with women, lavish and disorderly, and many times immodest: I speak of women of inferior degree. In short, the subjects of that house were then of opinion that no prince was able to cope with them, at least to impoverish

them: and now in the whole world I do not know any people so desolate and miserable as they are: and I question not but the sins they committed in their prosperity are, in some measure, the occasion of their present adversity, and have brought down this heavy judgment upon them; especially since they did not own and acknowledge that all good things proceed from God, who distributes and disposes of them according to his pleasure.

The Count of Charolois having got his army in readiness as it were in an instant, and being furnished with all things necessary for a campaign, marched forward with all his troops, which were all on horseback, except those who were attached to the train of artillery, which was large and fine for those times, and accompanied by such a vast number of wagons, that, with his own only, he could enclose the greatest part of his army. At first he marched towards Noyon, and besieged a small castle called Nesle (in which there was a garrison), and took it in a few days.<sup>2</sup> Joachim, a Marshal of France, having drawn what forces he could out of the garrison of Peronne, observed his motions, but was too weak to attempt anything against him; and, therefore, when the Count of Charolois drew near Paris, he threw himself into that town. The Count of Charolois, during the whole of the march, would not suffer the least act of hostility to be committed, but made his soldiers pay wherever they came; so that the towns upon the Somme, and all the others by which he marched, received his troops, in small bodies, within their walls, and furnished them with what they wanted for their money; being desirous (as it seemed) to watch whether the king or the princes would be master of the field. The count advanced so far, that he came to St. Denis, about a league from Paris, where all the lords of that kingdom had promised to meet him, but none of them came.

The next day, in the morning, a council of war was held, in which it was debated whether or no they should march forward to meet the Dukes of Berry and Bretagne, who were not far off, as the Chancellor of Bretagne affirmed, and produced letters to that effect; but the truth is, he had written them upon his master's blanks, and knew nothing of

<sup>2</sup>The attack began on the 7th of June, 1465.

them besides. The decision was, that they should pass the River Seine with their army. The greatest part of the officers opposed this; and were of opinion, it was best to return home, since the rest of the princes had not been punctual to their day; saying, it was enough for them to have passed the Somme and the Marne, without endeavoring to pass the Seine too. Some even began to start great difficulties in this undertaking, upon the account of not having any places behind us to retreat to in case of necessity; yet, notwithstanding all this, the Count of Charolois passed the river with his whole army, and posted himself at Pont Saint Cloud, which made the whole army murmur extremely against the Count of St. Paul and the Vice-Chancellor of Bretagne.

The next day after his arrival, news was brought (from a certain lady of that kingdom, written with her own hand) that the king was come out of the county of Bourbon, and advancing against him with forced marches.

### III

As soon as the Count of Charolois was informed of the king's departure, that he had left Bourbonnois, and (as he at least supposed) was marching directly to fight him, he resolved also to advance forward and meet the king. Then, communicating the contents of the letter he had received from the above-mentioned lady (still concealing her name), he declared his resolution of venturing a battle, and encouraged his soldiers to behave themselves like men. Upon this, he immediately advanced with his army, and took up his quarters at Longjumeau, a village not far from Paris; but the Count of St. Paul, with the whole vanguard, marched forward to Montlhery, which is about two leagues beyond; from whence several scouts and spies were immediately sent out, to discover which way the king took, and to give notice of his approach. After some deliberation, Longjumeau was chosen for the place of battle, in the presence of the Count of St. Paul, the Lord Haultbourdin, and the Lord of Contay; and thither, by agreement amongst themselves, the Count of St. Paul was to retire, upon the first notice of the king's arrival.

In the meantime the king had called a council of war, at

which the Count of Maine, Monsieur de Brezey, the Grand Seneschal of Normandy, the Admiral of France, who was of the house of Montauban, and several other officers, assisted: and in conclusion, whatever had been said either for or against it, his majesty resolved not to fight, but only to throw himself into Paris, without coming near the place where the Burgundians were encamped; and in my judgment, his resolution was good. He had no great confidence in the Grand Seneschal of Normandy, and therefore asked him one day very seriously, whether or no he had given anything in writing under his hand and seal to the princes who were confederate against him; to which the grand seneschal replied that he had, and they might keep it, but his body should be the king's: and he said this jocularly, as his custom was to speak.

The king was satisfied, and gave him the command of his vanguard, and the charge of his guides, because, as is said before, he wished to avoid a battle. But the seneschal being resolved to have his own way, privately told some of his confidants: "I will bring the armies so close together this day, that he must be a very experienced general who will part them without fighting:" and, indeed, he was as good as his word, and the first men killed were himself and his troops. This expression of his the king afterwards told me himself; for at that time I was in the service of the Count of Charolois.

In short, on the 27th of July, 1465,<sup>1</sup> the king's vanguard was advanced near Montlhery, where the Count of St. Paul was posted, who immediately informed the Count of Charolois (who was encamped at Longjumeau, about two leagues off, at the place marked out for the field of battle) of their arrival; desiring him to send him a reënforcement with all speed, for all his men-at-arms and archers were dismounted and on foot, and so encumbered with their wagons, that they could not possibly retreat to Longjumeau, according to the orders he had received, without seeming to run away, which would involve the whole army in great danger. Upon receiving this message, the Count of Charolois immediately

<sup>1</sup>The battle of Montlhery was really fought on Tuesday, the 16th of July.

sent a large detachment of troops under the command of the Lord Anthony, Bastard of Burgundy, to reënforce the Count of St. Paul with all diligence; and was himself in suspense whether he should follow him or no; but at length he marched after the rest of the army, and arrived about seven in the morning. Five or six of the king's standards were, however, already planted along the side of a great ditch, which separated the two armies.

There was still in the host of the Count of Charolois the Vice-Chancellor of Bretagne, called Rouville, and with him an old soldier, called Maderey. These two were in no little fear, in respect that the whole army murmured against them, seeing the battle was ready to begin, and the forces they had so much boasted of were not yet arrived to join the army. Whereupon, before the fight began, they both betook themselves to their heels, and fled that way by which they presumed they would find the Bretons. The Count of Charolois found the Count of St. Paul on foot, and his troops ranged themselves in order of battle as they marched up; and we found all the archers dismounted, and every man with a stake planted before him; several pipes of wine had been broached, and were set for them to drink; and from the little I saw, never men had more desire to fight, which I took to be a good omen, and which comforted me extremely.

Our first orders were, that every man should alight, without any exception: but that was countermanded afterwards, and nearly all the men-at-arms mounted again. However, several good knights and squires were ordered to remain on foot; and among the rest, the Lord des Cordes and his brother. The Lord Philip de Lalain was likewise on foot (for at that time, among the Burgundians, it was most honorable to fight in that manner among the archers), and there was always a large number of these volunteers among them, to encourage the infantry, and make them fight the better; which custom they had learned from the English, when Duke Philip made war upon France, during his youth, for two-and-thirty years together without any truce.

But the greatest part of the burden of the war lay upon the English, who were powerful and rich, and governed at that time by that wise, graceful, and valiant prince, King

Henry V., who had many wise and brave men under him, and very great commanders, such as the Earl of Salisbury, Talbot, and others whom I pass by, as being before my time, though I have seen some few of them who survived; for when God was, as it were, weary of doing them good, that wise king died at the Bois de Vincennes, and his son, a weak prince, was crowned King of France and England at Paris: after which factions began to stir, and civil wars arose in England, which have almost lasted till this present time, by reason of the usurpation of the crown by the house of York. But whether their title was good or not, I cannot determine, for the disposal of those things is from heaven.

But to return to my subject. The dismounting and mounting again of the Burgundians took up a great deal of time, and occasioned the loss of abundance of men; and by this means, that valiant gentleman, Philip de Lalain, was slain, being but slightly armed. The king's troops defiled through the forest of Torfou, and were not, at their first appearance, above four hundred men-at-arms; so that, if they had been charged at once, in all probability there had been but little or no resistance; because, as I have said, they were forced to march one abreast; but their numbers still increasing, the Lord of Contay, who was an experienced officer, rode up to the Count of Charolois, and told him, that if he had a mind to win the battle, it was high time to charge the enemy; giving his reasons for it, and telling him, that if he had attacked them sooner, he would have routed them already, for then they were but few, but now they increased visibly; and indeed, this was true. Upon which the whole order and disposition of the battle was altered, every man throwing in his advice; whilst, in the meantime, a great and smart skirmish was begun at the end of the village of Montlhery, between the archers on both sides.

The king's troops, consisting of all the archers of his guard glittering in their liveries, and very well disciplined, were commanded by Poncet de Riviere; those of the count's party, being volunteers, were in no regular order, and under no command. However, in this manner they began the engagement, in which the Lord Philip de Lalain, and James du Mas (an excellent officer, afterwards master of the horse to

Charles, Duke of Burgundy), fought on foot among the archers. The Burgundians, who were superior in numbers, possessed themselves of a house, and unhinging two or three of the doors, made use of them, instead of shields; after which they advanced into the street, and set fire to one of the houses. The wind did them service, driving the fire upon the king's forces, who began to give ground, retire to their horses, and fly. Upon which the noise and shouting was so great, that the Count of Charolois marched forward, and abandoned the whole order which he had first adopted.

By the count's first orders, his troops were to halt twice by the way, because of the great distance between the vanguard and the main battle. The king's forces were drawn up towards the castle of Montlhery, with a large hedge and ditch in their front; and besides, the fields that lay behind them were full of corn and beans, and such kind of grain, the soil being very rich and good. All the count's archers marched on foot before him in very ill order; though I am of opinion, that the chiefest strength of an army in the day of battle consists in the archers; but they must be strong and very numerous, for few are of no avail. I would have them also but indifferently mounted, that they may not be afraid of losing their horses, or rather that they had none at all; and for one day it is better to have raw soldiers that have never been in any action, than those that have been trained up in the wars; and in this I am of the same opinion with the English, who, without dispute, are the best archers in the world.

It was said, that orders had been given that the army should halt twice by the way, to give the infantry time to breathe, because it was a great distance which they had to march, and the stiffness and stubbornness of the corn hindered their progress extremely. However, all things were done as perfectly contrary, as if they designed to lose the battle on purpose; whereby God did plainly manifest to all the world, that all battles are in his hands, and that he disposes of victory as he pleases. And indeed I cannot be persuaded, that the abilities of any one man are sufficient to manage and command so great a number, nor that things can be executed in the field in the same manner as they have been concerted in

the council; and I am of opinion, that any man possessed of natural reason, who is so arrogant as to think himself able to effect this, assumes much of the honor that is due only to God. For though every man is obliged to perform his duty, and to endeavor to do what lies in his power, yet at the same time he ought to acknowledge, that war is one of God's means of accomplishing his will which he often begins upon small and trivial occasions, and gives the victory sometimes to one and sometimes to another; and this is a mystery so great, that from it all the kingdoms and governments of the world do take their rise and increase as well as their end and dissolution.

But to return from this digression; the Count of Charolois advanced, without giving any breath either to his archers or foot soldiers. The king's troops (being all men-at-arms) marched out at both ends of the hedge, and when they came near enough to make use of their lances, the Burgundian men-at-arms broke through the ranks of their own archers (who were the flower and hope of their army), without giving them leisure to discharge one arrow. The whole number of our horse was, I believe, not above 1,200, and of them scarce fifty understood how to lay a lance in rest; there were not 400 of them armed with cuirasses, and very few of their servants had any arms at all; and the reason of it was, because of the long peace, and because, for the ease of their subjects, the house of Burgundy had not been used to keep any standing forces in pay: but since that time that country has not enjoyed any repose, but is rather grown worse than better at this very day. However, though the strength and flower of their army was thus broken and thrown into disorder by themselves, God (who disposes of these mysteries as he pleases) ordered things so, that on the right wing towards the castle, where the Count of Charolois commanded, victory declared on his side without any considerable opposition.

It was my fortune to be with him all that day, during the whole action, in less fear than in any engagement I have ever been in since, which I impute to my youth, as not having a just sense and apprehension of the danger, but I rather wondered at the presumption of any man that durst venture



to oppose the prince I served, whom I believed to be, without comparison, the greatest monarch in the world. Such vain notions inexperienced people frame to themselves; whence it arises that they often maintain strange and irrational arguments, without any ground or foundation at all; for which reason it is good to make use of the advice of him who says, that "A man never repents of speaking little, but often of speaking too much."

The left wing was commanded by the Lord Ravestain, the Lord Jacques de St. Paul, and several other men of quality, who plainly perceived that their body of men-at-arms was too weak to encounter the enemy; but they were too near to alter the order of battle. To be short, this wing was entirely broken, and driven, some of them to their wagons; but the greatest part of them made towards a forest, which was nearly half a league from the field of battle. At their wagons some of the Burgundian infantry rallied and stood to their arms. The chief of those who pursued us, were the nobles of Dauphiny and Savoy, with a great party of men-at-arms, who verily believed they had won the victory; and not without reason, for the Burgundians on that wing, among whom were several persons of note and distinction, fled in great numbers; and most of them fled upon the spur towards Pont St. Maxence, which they supposed still held out for the Count of Charolois. However, a good number still maintained their ground in the forest, amongst whom was the Count of St. Paul, who had retreated thither with a good body of forces; for he was pretty near to the forest, and he plainly showed afterwards that he did not think the battle utterly lost.

## IV

THE Count of Charolois pursued the enemy on the side where he commanded, about half a league beyond Monthery, and with a very small body of forces; for though the enemy were numerous, yet they made no resistance, and therefore he concluded the victory was his own; but it was not long before one Monsieur Anthony le Breton, an ancient gentleman of Luxembourg, came up to him and told him the French had rallied their forces on the field of battle, and if he fol-

lowed the pursuit any further he would certainly be lost; yet, though he repeated his opinion over and over, the count would not stop for him; but presently the Lord of Contay (whom I have mentioned before) came in also, brought him the same intelligence as the old gentleman had done, and delivered it with such eagerness, that he began to hearken to his counsel, and quickly faced about; and it was well he did; for had he advanced but two bow-shots further, in my judgment he had been taken prisoner, as several were that had got before him.

In his return, near the village of Montlhery, he discovered a flying body of foot, whom he pursued (though he had scarce a hundred horse with him); and of that whole brigade, but one single footman made any opposition, who gave the count such a blow on the stomach with a spear, that the mark of it was to be seen at night. Most of the rest saved themselves in the gardens, but he who struck the count was killed upon the spot. As we marched by the castle, we discovered the archers of the king's guard drawn up before the gate, who did not stir upon our coming up to them, at which the count was extremely surprised; as he imagined there was not a man left to oppose him.

As he wheeled about to march into the field (part of his men had already become separated from him), he was so furiously attacked on a sudden by about fifteen or sixteen men-at-arms, that at the very first charge they slew Philip D'Oignies, his esquire-carver, who bore his guidon. The Count of Charolois himself was in imminent danger in this encounter, and received several wounds, but especially one in the neck with a sword (the mark of which remained to his dying day), for want of his beaver, which, being slightly fastened on in the morning, dropped from his head in the battle, and I myself saw it fall. The enemy immediately laid hands on him, crying out, "My lord, surrender yourself; we know you well; do not obstinately throw away your life."

However, he still made a gallant defense, and at that very instant one John Cadet, a physician's son of Paris, who was in his service (a tall, stout, lusty person), mounted on a horse as large as himself, broke in, and parted them by riding between them; upon which the French party wheeled, and

marched off to the ditch, where they had been drawn up in the morning; for they were afraid of another party which they perceived advancing towards them.

The count, covered with blood, marched out to them into the field. They were the colors of the Bastard of Burgundy, which were so torn when they came, there was scarce a foot of them left; and under the banner of the count's archers, there were not above forty left in all, to whom we joined ourselves (being about thirty) in no little fear. The Count of Charolois changed his horse immediately, and had another given him which belonged to Simon de Quingy, who was at that time his page, but has since been very well known. The count, as I said before, drew out into the field to rally his men, but for the half hour we stayed there, we thought of nothing but running away, provided we had seen a hundred of the enemy advancing to attack us. There came to us about ten or twenty men, both horse and foot. Most of our infantry were either wounded or extremely fatigued with the battle and their long march in the morning; and for an hour together our whole body did not exceed a hundred, but by degrees it increased. The corn was very high and thick, and the dust was most terrible; the whole field was scattered with dead horses and men, yet none of the dead men could be recognized on account of the dust.

Immediately afterwards, we discovered the Count of St. Paul marching out of the forest, at the head of about forty men-at-arms, under his own colors, and advancing directly towards us, still increasing in numbers as he moved on; but they still seemed very far from us. We sent to him three or four times to pray him to hasten his march; but he kept his own pace, marching on very slowly and in good order, and causing his men to gather up the lances that lay scattered on the ground, which sight greatly rejoiced and animated our troops. With him a great number rallied again, and at last came and joined us, so that we found ourselves to be a complete body of about eight hundred men-at-arms; but we had few or no foot, which prevented the count from gaining a complete victory, for there was a ditch and a thick hedge between the two armies.

On the king's side there fled the Count of Maine with

several other persons of quality, and not fewer than eight hundred men-at-arms. Some will have it, that the Count of Maine held correspondence with the Burgundians; but to speak truth, I think there was no such thing. Never was there a greater rout on both sides; but (which is remarkable) the two princes themselves kept the field. On the king's side there was a person of note who fled as far as Lusignan without stopping, and on the count's there was another ran as far as Quesnoy-le-Comte; which two gentlemen certainly had no intention or desire to encounter one another.

While both armies stood thus drawn up in order of battle facing one another, the cannon began to play on both sides, which killed abundance of men, but neither party desired to venture a second engagement. Our army was more numerous than the king's: yet so powerful was his royal presence, and so efficacious the obliging language he used to his soldiers, that I verily believe had it not been for him, they would certainly have all fled; as indeed I have since learned was the case. Some few there were on our side who were for fighting again, and particularly the Lord Haultbourdin, who affirmed he saw the enemy filing off, and preparing to run: and doubtless had we had but a hundred archers to have shot through the hedge, the victory had been entirely ours.

Whilst both armies were in this posture and suspense, without offering to engage, the night came upon us, and the king retired to Corbeil, though we supposed he had encamped in the field. A barrel of their powder was accidentally blown up where the king had been, which set fire to several wagons that were placed along the hedge; and we imagined the blaze to be fires in their quarters. The Count of St. Paul, who seemed to be a great man among us, and the Lord Haultbourdin, who was a greater, commanded our carriages to be brought to us where we lay, and our whole body to be enclosed with them, which was presently done. As we stood thus rallied, and drawn up in order of battle, several of the king's soldiers, who had been following the pursuit, returned, believing the victory was their own; and being obliged to pass through our camp, were slain, and very few of them escaped.

The men of note that fell on the king's side were the Lord Geoffroy de St. Belin, the Grand Seneschal of Normandy,

and one Flocquet, a captain. On the Burgundian side there was slain Philip de Lalain. Of infantry and common soldiers we lost more than the king: but of horsemen the greatest loss was on the king's side. The king's forces took most of those who fled prisoners. On both sides there were at least two thousand men slain; however, the battle was well fought, for both sides had brave men, and both were thoroughly tired of it.

But in my opinion, it was an extraordinary action to rally in the field, and to face one another for three or four hours together; and certainly both princes had great reason highly to esteem those subjects that stood so firmly by them in this pinch: but in short they acted like men, and not like angels. One man lost his places and estates for running away, and they were given to others, who had fled ten leagues beyond him. One of our great men lost his employment, and was banished his master's presence, yet in a month's time he was restored again, and in greater authority than ever.

When we had thus surrounded ourselves with our wagons, every man reposed as well as he could: we had a great number of wounded men, and most of us were much dispirited and alarmed, fearing lest the Parisians, under the command of Marshal Joachim (who was the king's lieutenant in that city), should sally out upon us with two hundred men-at-arms, who were there in garrison; and we should be attacked on both sides. As soon as it was quite dark, fifty lances were commanded out, to get intelligence where the king was quartered; of which number about twenty only went forth. The place where we believed the king lay, was not above three bow-shots from our camp. In the meantime, the Count of Charolois ate and drank a little, and all the rest of the army did the same; after which the wound in his neck was carefully dressed. To make room for him, before he could sit down to eat, four or five dead bodies had to be removed, and two trusses of straw were brought for him to sit on. As we were removing the dead men, one of the poor stark naked creatures called out for some drink, and on putting a little of the ptisan (of which the count had drunk) into his mouth, he came to himself, and proved to be one Pierre Savarot, an

archer of the count's guard, and a very brave fellow; upon which his wounds were dressed; and he was cured.

It was then debated in council what measures were best to be taken. The Count of St. Paul, who was the first that gave his opinion, said, that we were posted in a very dangerous place, and advised that we should retreat towards Burgundy by break of day; that we should burn part of our wagons, preserving only such as belonged to the artillery; and that no man should carry off his wagon unless he had above ten lances under his command; and that it was impossible for us to remain without provisions in the camp we were in, between Paris and the king's army. Next to him the Lord Haultbourdin made a speech much to the same purpose, without waiting to hear what intelligence the scouts we had sent out would bring us. After him three or four more spoke, and all of them concurred. The last who gave his opinion was the Lord of Contay, who said, that, as soon as these resolutions should be spread abroad in the army, the soldiers would immediately prepare for flight, and would be taken prisoners before they could get twenty leagues: which opinion he strengthened with several substantial reasons; and therefore his advice was to rest themselves that night as well as they could, and that in the morning, by break of day, they should attack the king's army, with a full resolution either to conquer, or die upon the spot; which he conceived a much safer way than to take to flight.

The result of all was that the Count of Charolois took the Lord of Contay's advice, and gave orders that every man should repose himself for two hours, and be ready at sound of trumpet; and at the same time he desired several officers that were about him to go and encourage his men. About midnight the scouting party returned, and you may believe they went not far; for they brought word the king was encamped where the fires were seen: immediately, others were sent out, and about an hour after, every man put himself into a condition to fight, but the greatest part had more inclination to retreat.

About break of day, the party that had been sent out last met a wagoner of ours (whom the enemy had taken that morning) as he was bringing a pitcher of wine from the village,

who told them the enemy were all fled; whereupon they sent us back the news, and went on themselves to the place, and finding all true as he had said, they posted back to acquaint us with it; which greatly rejoiced the whole army; and abundance of them were then very eager for the pursuit, who but an hour before had been very doubtful. I had an extremely old and tired horse, which drank up a whole pailful of wine, into which he accidentally thrust his head; I let him finish it, and I never found him better or fresher.

As soon as it was broad day, we all mounted on horseback, and our troops made a rather thin appearance; however, a great number of them that had lain concealed in the woods, soon rejoined us. The Count of Charolois caused a friar to come in, and pretend he came from the Duke of Bretagne's army, and that they would be with us that day; which news comforted the whole army, though not a man of them gave any credit to it. However, about ten o'clock in the morning, the Vice-Chancellor of Bretagne, called Rouville, and Maderey with him (of both of whom I have spoken before), arrived in our camp, attended by two of the Duke of Bretagne's archers of the guard in their regimental clothes, which was a very welcome sight to us all. They were asked where they had been, and were highly praised for absenting themselves (considering the murmurs against them), but more for their return, and every one entertained and treated them kindly.

All that day the Count of Charolois kept the field, rejoicing extremely, and imputing the whole glory of this action to himself; which has cost him dear since, for after that he was governed by no counsel but his own; and whereas before he was altogether unfit for war, and took delight in nothing that belonged to it, his thoughts became so strangely altered upon this point, that he spent the remainder of his life in wars, in which he died, and which were the occasion, if not quite of the ruin of his family, at least, of the misery and desolation of it. Three illustrious and wise princes (his predecessors) had advanced it to a great height, so that few monarchs, except the King of France, were more powerful than he, and, in large and fair towns, none exceeded him. No man ought, but especially a great prince, to presume too

much upon himself; but ought freely to acknowledge, that it is God alone that grants us favors and success.

Two things more I will say of him; the one is, that I believe no man ever endured more fatigues than he in all sorts of bodily labor and exercise, when the occasion required it; and the other is, that, in my opinion, I never knew a person of greater valor and intrepidity; I never heard him complain of being weary, nor betray the least signs of fear, during the whole seven years I was in his service in the wars, though he was constantly every summer in the field, and sometimes winter and summer. His designs and enterprises were great; but no man could ever accomplish them, unless God added the assistance of his power.

## v

THE next day, which was the third after the battle, we took up our quarters in the village of Montlhery. The inhabitants had all fled, some to the church-tower, and others into the castle; but the Count of Charolois caused them all to return to their houses, and they lost not the value of a farthing, for every soldier paid his scot exactly as if he had been in Flanders. The castle held out for the king, and was never attacked.

After we had refreshed ourselves there for three days, the Count of Charolois, by the Lord of Contay's advice, marched from thence to possess himself of Estampes (which was good and convenient quarters, and situated in a plentiful country), that he might be there before the Bretons (who were marching that way), and lodge his sick and wounded men in the town, and encamp with the remainder of his forces in the fields round about the town; and these good quarters, and that little time which they stayed there, saved the lives of abundance of his men.

At Estampes arrived also the Lord Charles of France, at that time Duke of Berry, the king's only brother; the Duke of Bretagne, the Count of Dunois, the Count of Dammartin, the Marshal of Loheac, the Lord of Bueil, the Lord of Chaumont, and the Lord Charles of Amboise his son (who since that time has been a great man in this kingdom); all which lords, the king, upon his first accession to the crown, had



disappointed and dispossessed of their places, though they had done his father and the kingdom eminent service in his conquests in Normandy, and in several other of his wars.

The Count of Charolois, attended by all the officers of his army, went out to meet and greet them, and conducted them to their quarters that were prepared for them in the town, but their army encamped in the fields. In their train were 800 men-at-arms, very good soldiers, the greatest part of whom were Bretons, who had lately deserted the king's service (as I have stated elsewhere), and were a great improvement to their army; besides, they had a great number of archers and other soldiers, armed with good brigandines; so that one might compute them at about 6000 men on horse-back, all very well accoutered; and, to behold them drawn up was enough to convince a man that the Duke of Bretagne was a very great lord, for all of them were paid out of his treasury.

The king, who (as I have already said) was retired to Corbeil, did not forget what he had to do, but hastened into Normandy to raise men; and, to secure the country from any commotion, put some of his guards into the towns near Paris, where he conceived there was any necessity.

The princes spent the first night of their arrival at Estampes in relating their several adventures. The Bretons had taken some of the king's party that fled, and, had they been but a little forwarder in their march, they would either have taken or cut in pieces the third part of the army. At first, indeed, they had thought of sending a party out, judging that the two armies must be near, but those orders were afterwards countermanded; however, the Lord Charles of Amboise and several other officers, with a small detachment, advanced before the army, to see what they could meet with, and they took several prisoners, and some pieces of the king's artillery. The prisoners told them that for certain the king was dead, and they believed what they said; for they had fled as soon as the battle began.

The Lord of Amboise and his party brought this news to the army of the Bretons, where it was exceedingly welcome; every man fancying that the news was true, and hoping for mighty rewards when the Lord Charles of Berry should

come to the crown; and a council was immediately called (as I have been told since by a person of honor and credit that assisted at it), in which it was debated how they might rid themselves of the Burgundians, and send them packing; and the general opinion was, if nothing else would do, to do it by force. But their joy was not long-lived, from whence it may naturally be collected to what changes and revolutions this kingdom is exposed.

But to return to my subject, and the army at Estampes. When all had supped, and many people were walking with great liberty in the street, the Lord Charles of France and the Count of Charolois withdrew to a window and were discoursing of their affairs in a very friendly manner. It happened that among the Bretons there was a poor man who took great delight in throwing squibs into the air, and seeing them break and blaze among the people when they had fallen; and he was called Master John Boutefeu, or Master John of the Serpents, I know not which. This idle fellow, having hid himself in some house that he might not be perceived by anybody, from a garret where he was, cast two or three into the air, one of which, by accident, happened to strike against the bar of the window where the two princes were standing with their heads very near together. Both of them started in great surprise, and stared upon one another, suspecting it a design, and done on purpose to injure them. The Lord of Contay came up to the count, and having whispered a word in his ear, went down, and ordered all the guards of his household, and what other soldiers were at hand to stand immediately to their arms. And the Count of Charolois persuaded the Duke of Berry to do the same; so that in a moment there were 200 or 300 men-at-arms drawn up before the gate, and a great number of archers, who were employed to search everywhere, to find out from whence the fire had come. At last the poor fellow who had caused all this uproar came and threw himself at their feet, confessed the whole matter, and, by throwing two or three more of them into the air, entirely took away the suspicion several persons had conceived of one another. Thus was this surprising accident turned into a jest, and all laid down their arms and returned to their quarters.

The next day, early in the morning, the Count of Charolois called a great and splendid council of war, at which all the princes and their chief officers assisted, to consult what measures were best to be taken; and as they were of different parties and not all obeying the same lord (which is very much to be desired in such assemblies), their sentiments were also different; but of all that was said, nothing was so much taken notice of as some expressions of the Duke of Berry, who was but young, and had seen nothing of the war. By his words he seemed to be weary already, taking occasion to mention the great number of wounded men whom he had observed in the count's army, and by way of compassion he declared he had rather the war had never been begun, than that so much mischief should be occasioned through his means and on his account. Which language was very displeasing to the count and his party, as I shall show afterwards. Nevertheless, the result of this council was, that they should march towards Paris, to try if they could bring that city to join with them for the good of the kingdom, for which (as they pretended) they had taken up arms; and they were all of them fully persuaded, that if the capital would listen to them, all the rest of the towns in the kingdom would follow its example.

As I said before, the speech in council of the Duke of Berry so startled the Count of Charolois and his party, that they asked one another, "Did you hear this young duke? He is astonished at the sight of 700 or 800 wounded men in the town, who are nothing to him, nor does he know them; he would certainly be more troubled where he was concerned; and he would be a likely man to make his peace upon small invitation, and leave us in the lurch." And the Count of Charolois further said, "that on account of the ancient wars which had long continued in time past between King Charles (the Duke of Berry's father) and the Duke of Burgundy (his own father), it was to be feared they would easily unite, and turn all their forces against us; for which reason it would be necessary to look out for allies in time."

And it was purely on this suspicion that Messire William of Cluny, the prothonotary (who died afterwards Bishop of Poitiers) was dispatched into England to the court of

King Edward IV., who then reigned; and who had been always the mortal enemy of the Count of Charolois, who had supported against him the house of Lancaster, from which, by the mother's side, he was descended. In his private instruction, he had orders to propose a marriage with Margaret, the King of England's sister; but to treat only and negotiate, without coming to any conclusion: for the Count of Charolois, who knew how desirous the King of England was of this match, believed by this means, either to bring him over to his side, if he should have any occasion for his assistance, or at least to hinder him from attempting anything against him. However, though he had no real intention at first to consummate the marriage, upon account of his inveterate hatred to the house of York, yet affairs were so managed, that several years after, the match was concluded; and he moreover accepted the order of the garter, and wore it to his death.

Many such like actions as this have happened in the world upon suspicion only, especially among great princes, who are always much more suspicious than other men, by reason of the many false stories and groundless reports that are brought them often merely by court flatterers, without any manner of occasion.

## VI

I HAVE dwelt too long upon this subject, and therefore it is now time to return to my history.

As soon as the princes were arrived before Paris, they all began to tamper with the citizens, promising them great places and rewards, and everything that might any ways contribute towards advancing their design. By that time we had lain three days before the town, there was held a grand assembly in the Hotel de Ville of Paris, in which, after many and long harangues, upon hearing the princes' summons and propositions, which (as was pretended) were for no other end than the good of the public; it was unanimously resolved to send commissioners to them to treat of a peace. Whereupon a great number of substantial citizens went to wait on the princes at St. Maur; and Maître Guillaume Chartier (a person of great parts and eloquence, and

at that time Bishop of Paris) was their speaker; and the lords appointed the Count of Dunois to be theirs. The Duke of Berry, the king's brother, was president of the council, and sat in a chair of state, and all the rest of the princes stood round him: on one hand the Dukes of Bretagne and Calabria, and on the other the Count of Charolois, completely armed (all but his head-piece and gauntlets), with a very rich mantle thrown over his cuirass; for he had come from Conflans, and the Bois-de-Vincennes had in it a strong garrison for the king, so that it was necessary for him to come with a strong guard. The request and object of the princes were to be admitted into Paris, to hold friendly consultation with the citizens about reformation of the government, of which they sadly complained, and charged the king with numerous acts of injustice and mal-administration. The answer of the citizens was full of respect and modesty, yet not without some hesitation and demur. However, notwithstanding that, the king was afterwards displeased with the bishop, and with all that went with him.

In this manner the commissioners returned, and great practices and intrigues were still carried on; for every one of the princes had a private conference with the citizens; and I believe it was secretly agreed by some of them, that the lords in their own persons might enter the town, and their army pass through it in small bodies at a time, if they desired it. This admission of the princes would not only have been the means of gaining the town, but of finishing the whole enterprise; for the whole people would, for several reasons, have easily gone over, in imitation of their example, to their side, and by consequence the whole kingdom would have revolted. But God gave the king wise counsel, and he executed it vigorously: being informed of all their secret practices and cabals, before the commissioners, who had been to wait on the princes, had made their report, the king arrived in Paris,<sup>1</sup> in the condition of a prince that came to relieve and animate his subjects; for he came with a very great company, and brought above 2000 men-at-arms into the city, all the nobility of Normandy, a great number of volunteers, his household retainers, his pensioners, and

<sup>1</sup> August 28, 1465.

other persons of quality that were accustomed to attend so great a king upon such occasions.

Thus was the whole design quashed, and the minds of the people entirely changed; so that not a man, how active soever he had been formerly for us, durst now speak one word in our behalf. Some of the commissioners, who had been with us, fared but very ill; some lost their places, and others were banished; but the king used no farther cruelty or revenge; for which I think he is highly to be commended, considering that, if this intended design had succeeded, the best he could have expected had been to have escaped out of the kingdom; for he has told me many times since, that if the town had revolted, and refused to admit him, his resolutions were to have retired, either to the Swiss, or to Francis, Duke of Milan, whom he thought his great friend, and so indeed he afterwards showed himself to be, by the supplies which he sent him, which consisted of 500 men-at-arms, and 3000 foot, under the command of his eldest son Galeas (afterwards duke); who came as far as Forest, in Auvergne, and made war upon the Duke of Bourbon; but, upon the death of Duke Francis, they were recalled.

As far as I can remember, we had scarce been three days before Paris, when the king entered with his troops. Upon whose arrival the war began very briskly, and they often fell upon us; especially upon our foragers, whom we were forced to send under a strong guard on account of their foraging at a great distance from our camp. But it must needs be owned, that the city of Paris is admirably well placed in the Isle of France, to be able to supply two such powerful hosts with provisions.

As for our part, we never found a scarcity of anything in the camp; neither did the inhabitants that were in the town suffer any privation on our account. Nothing grew dearer except bread, which was sold for only a penny more than the usual price; and the reason was, because we had not blocked up the rivers above it, which were three, the Marne, the Yonne, and the Seine, besides several little rivers which fell into them. To say all in a word, Paris is surrounded by the finest and the most plentiful country I ever yet beheld, and it is almost incredible what vast quantities of

provisions are brought to it. Since that time, I have been there with King Louis, for six months together, and never stirred, lodging in the Tournelles, eating and sleeping with him very frequently; and besides, since his death (much to my sorrow) I was a prisoner twenty months in the Louvre, from whence I could see, out of my window, whatever came out of Normandy up the River Seine; and on the other side there came in incomparably much more, which I could never have believed, had I not been an eye-witness of it.

The Parisians made frequent sallies every day, which occasioned warm skirmishes on both sides. Our guards, consisting of fifty lances, were posted near the Grange-aux-Merciers; but our scouts went as near the town as they could, and were often attacked and beaten back to our main guard, sometimes retreating gravely step by step, sometimes at full trot, with the enemy at their heels, who sometimes drove them to our very wagons; upon which we used to send a fresh body of troops to reënforce the beaten party, who very often repulsed the enemy, and drove them back to the gates of Paris. And this happened daily and hourly, for there were in the town more than 2500 men-at-arms, well armed and in complete order, besides a great number of the nobility of Normandy, and volunteers; whom the sight of the ladies of Paris, who were constant spectators of their actions, inspired with an emulation of signalizing themselves.

## VII

It was one day resolved in Paris that they would sally out and venture a battle with us (I believe it was only a design of the great officers, and that the king was not privy to it). The project they had concerted, was to attack us in three several places at once; in one with a considerable body of forces that were to sally out of Paris; the other by the bridge of Charenton (but that party could have done us no great mischief): and the third, by a brigade of 200 men-at-arms from the wood of Vincennes. About midnight we were informed of this design by a page, who called to us over the river, by directions from some friends of the princes who were in the town, whose names he told us, and

immediately returned. Just at break of day, the Lord Poncet de Rivière appeared before the bridge of Charenton; and the Lord du Lau on the other side, towards the wood of Vincennes, charged up as far as our artillery, and killed one of our cannoneers: the alarm was very great, and everybody concluded it was the same design of which the page had given us notice in the night.

The Count of Charolois was immediately in arms, but not so soon as Duke John of Calabria, who, in all alarms, was always the first mounted, his horse barbed, and himself completely armed: he wore such a dress as the condottieri usually do in Italy, and indeed he had the air of a prince and a great general. Whenever he came forth upon any alarm, his first course was to ride up to the barriers of our camp, to keep our men from sallying out; and they obeyed his orders as readily as if the Count of Charolois had been there himself, and, to speak truth, he deserved it. In a moment our whole army was in arms, and drawn up within our wagons, all except 200 horse, who were abroad upon the guard: and, unless it were that day, I never knew any great likelihood of a battle, but then everybody expected it. By this time the Dukes of Berry and Bretagne were come in, whom before that time I never saw in arms: the Duke of Berry was armed at all points, but neither of them had any great body of troops with them, only they passed through the camp, and went to the Count of Charolois and the Duke of Calabria, with whom they had a conference.

Our scouts, being reënforced, marched up as near Paris as they could, and were able to discover several of the king's party, who were sent out to learn what was the matter in our army. When the Lord du Lau approached us, our cannon played briskly upon him; and the king, having a large train of artillery mounted on the walls of Paris, fired as briskly into our camp, notwithstanding it was two good leagues off; but I suppose they mounted their muzzles very high, and shot amongst us at random.

This prodigious cannonading made both sides believe some great design was in agitation: and, to be sure, we sent out our scouts, and the weather being cloudy and duskish, those who got nearest the town discovered a party of horse upon



the patrol, and beyond them (as they fancied) they perceived a great number of lances standing upright, which they imagined to be the king's battalions drawn up in the field, and all the people of Paris with them: which fancy proceeded merely from the darkness of the day; upon which they retired immediately to the princes (who were then riding before our camp), acquainted them with what they had seen, and assured them of a battle. The Parisian scouts seeing ours retreat, advanced continually upon them, which made their relation seem more probable.

The Duke of Calabria came then where the standard of the Count of Charolois was pitched, and most of the officers of his household stood ready to accompany it: his banner was ready to be displayed likewise, and the guidon, with his arms, which was the custom of that family; and being come up to us, Duke John said, "Well, gentlemen, we are now where we desired to be; the king and all his army (as our scouts inform us) are drawn out of Paris, and marching to engage us; so let each behave with courage and good will, and as they march out, we will march in, and measure out their commodities for them by the pike." And after this manner he rode from rank to rank, encouraging and animating the soldiers.

By this time our scouts, perceiving the enemy were weak, began to assume a little more courage, ventured something nearer the town, but still found the battalions in the same place and posture in which they had left them, which put them into a new quandary: however, they stole up to them as near as they could, but could make nothing of them; till at length the day cleared, and they discovered them to be tall thistles. From thence they marched up to the very gates, but found no troops posted there, of which word was dispatched to the princes, and they went immediately to mass, and from thence to dinner. Those who brought the first news were much out of countenance; but the page's intelligence in the night, and the duskishness of the day, did in some measure excuse them.

## VIII

HOWEVER, the treaty of peace between the king and the Count of Charolois still went on, and with greater vigor than ever; because the principal strength of both parties consisted in those two. The princes' demands ran very high: the Duke of Berry demanded all Normandy for his share, which the king positively refused. The Count of Charolois would have all the towns restored to him which were situated on the River Somme, and had been delivered up by Duke Philip to the king, about three months before, for 400,000 crowns; which towns had been surrendered to him upon the treaty of Arras, in the time of Charles VII. These towns were Amiens, Abbeville, St. Quentin, Peronne, and others. The Count of Charolois pretended, that during his life they ought not to have been ransomed, and put the king in mind of the great favors and obligations he had received from their family; how he had been entertained and protected by them for six years together, when he was in rebellion against his father King Charles VII., supplied with money for his subsistence, attended to Rheims to be inaugurated, and to Paris for his coronation; wherefore the Count of Charolois took it very ill that he should offer to redeem the said towns.

However, the negotiation went on so prosperously, that the king came one morning,<sup>1</sup> by water, right over against our camp, having drawn up a good body of horse upon the bank of the river, but, in the boat with him there were not above four or five persons besides the boatmen. The Count of Charolois and the Count of St. Paul were at the same time upon the bank of the river on our side, awaiting his majesty. The king saluted the Count of Charolois in these words,—“Brother [for his first wife was the king's sister], do you assure me?” The count replied, “Yes, my lord, as a brother.” I heard him, and so did many others. Then the king came on shore, and the lords with him.

The Count of Charolois and the Count of St. Paul received him with great honor (as reason was they should), and he being not sparing, began in this manner: “Brother, I know

<sup>1</sup>This is a mistake: two years had elapsed since their repurchase.

now you are a gentleman, and of the family of France." "Why so, my lord?" replied the Count of Charolois. "Because (said the king) when I sent my ambassadors lately to Lisle, to wait on my uncle your father, and yourself, and that fool Morvillier talked so saucily to you, you sent me word by the Archbishop of Narbonne (who is a gentleman, and, indeed, he has shown himself so, for every one is pleased with him) that before the year was at an end, I should repent of what Morvillier had said to you. You have been as good as your word, and much before your time was expired." The king spoke these words smilingly, and in a very pleasant manner, as knowing the humor of the person to whom he spoke to be such, that he would be delighted with an expression of that nature; and, indeed, he was wonderfully pleased with it. Then the king proceeded, "It is with such persons that I would deal, who are punctual to their promise;" and, afterwards, his majesty disavowed whatever Morvillier had said, and denied that he had ever given him any such commission. In short, the king walked a long time between the two counts, the Count of Charolois's guards standing by in great numbers, under arms, and observing their motions.

At this interview the Count of Charolois demanded the duchy of Normandy, the towns situated upon the Somme, and several other favors for his friends. Some proposals were made likewise for the good of the commonwealth, but those were least insisted upon, for the common was now turned into the private wealth. The king would not consent to part with Normandy upon any terms; but, as for the towns upon the Somme, his majesty was willing to gratify the Count of Charolois with them, and, for his sake, to make the Count of St. Paul Constable of France. After which they took their leave of each other very kindly. The king went into his boat, and in that to Paris, and the counts returned to Conflans.

After this manner the time was spent, one day in peace, and another in war: but, though the negotiation between the commissioners, at the Grange-aux-Merciery, was broken off, and absolutely discontinued, yet the private transaction between the king and the Count of Charolois went on still,

and several persons passed daily between them notwithstanding the war. But these messages and correspondences were not pleasing to everybody, the princes began to be jealous, and to grow weary; and, had it not been for an accident, which happened a few days after, they would all have marched shamefully home. I myself saw three several councils held in one chamber, where they were all assembled; and I saw one day, that the Count of Charolois was highly displeased with it, for it was done twice in his presence, which was a thing not fit to be done, to consult of anything when he was by in the chamber, and not communicate it to him, as he had the greatest force in the host.

He complained of it to the Lord of Contay, who, being a person of great wisdom and experience (as I said before), advised him to bear it patiently for the present; for, if he should anger them, they would make their peace better than he: and, as he was the strongest, so he persuaded him to be the wisest, to prevent them from separating and breaking the confederacy, to keep them together with all possible industry, and smother his resentment, whatever he thought. However, he told him that, indeed it raised the wonder of several people (and of some even about his person) that such inconsiderable persons as those two before mentioned, should be employed in managing so important an affair; and he said that it could not but be very dangerous, in respect of the bounty and liberality of the king. It is true the Lord of Contay hated Bische; however, he said no more than what others had said before him; and I am of opinion it was not his passion so much as the necessity of the matter, that made him speak as he did; however, the Count of Charolois was well pleased with his counsel, and applied himself to treat and be more merry with the princes than formerly, and to converse more freely both with them and their creatures, than he had been used; and, in my judgment, there was a necessity for this, in respect of the great danger, lest they should have forsaken him, and the whole confederacy have been dissolved.

In matters of this moment, a wise man is of great importance (but he must be believed), and then he is not to be purchased at too dear a rate. But I could never meet with

any prince that would distinguish the difference between men, till his necessity instructed him; and if he did, it was to no purpose, for they generally distribute their authority to such as are most agreeable to them, and suitable to their years, or complying with their humors; and sometimes they are managed by such as are only subservient to their pleasures. However, those princes who have any understanding, do quickly recollect themselves when they are in distress, and find their mistake; and so I observed our king did, as did also the Count of Charolois at that time, Edward IV., King of England, and several other princes; but these three especially I have seen in such exigence, that they have been glad of those very persons whom before they had despised. As for the Count of Charolois, when he was Duke of Burgundy, and fortune had exalted him to a greater height of glory and honor than ever any of his family had arrived at, and made him so great, that he thought no prince in Christendom equal to him, God was pleased to put a stop to his glory, and to infatuate him so, that, despising all counsel but his own, he lost his own life unhappily, sacrificed the lives of many thousands of his subjects, and brought his family to desolation, as is now visible to all the world.

## BOOK THE SECOND

## I

Soon after the pacification of the troubles of France, the Duke of Burgundy began a war against the Liegeois, which lasted for several years; and whenever the King of France had a mind to interrupt him, he attempted some new action against the Bretons, and, in the meantime, supported the Liegeois underhand; upon which he Duke of Burgundy turned against him to succor his allies, or else they came to some treaty or truce among themselves.

In the year 1466, Dinant was taken by the Duke of Burgundy, which is a town situated in the territory of Liege, very strong for its size, and very rich by reason of the works which they make in copper, commonly called Dinanderie—namely, pots, skillets, and frying-pans, and such like ware. The Duke of Burgundy (who died in June, 1467)

had so great an animosity to them, that he was carried in his old age to that siege in a litter. The reasons of his displeasure were, the great cruelty which they had exercised upon his subjects in the county of Namur, and especially at a little town called Bouvines, about a quarter of a league from Dinant, there being only the River Maes between them. Not long before that, the inhabitants of Dinant had besieged the town of Bouvines, on the other side of the river, for the space of eight months, committing numerous acts of hostilities, and bombarding it continually with two brass cannon and other great pieces of artillery, battering the houses about their ears, and forcing the inhabitants to shelter themselves in their cellars, where they continued during the whole siege. It is impossible to imagine the deadly hatred that these two towns, had conceived one against the other: yet their children married frequently together, there being no other towns of any consideration in that neighborhood.

The year before the destruction of Dinant (which was the summer in which the Court of Charolois arrived before Paris, and joined with the French lords who were in confederacy with him) the town made an agreement and peace with the count, by which they were obliged to pay to him a certain sum of money, and had separated from the city of Liege and managed their affairs apart. When people (whose interest binds them together in an alliance) divide and forsake one another, it is a certain sign of destruction, not only for towns and little states, but for princes and great potentates: but because I suppose everybody may have read or observed examples enough of this nature, I forbear to say any more than this, that King Louis our master understood breaking and dividing of leagues better than any prince that I ever knew, for he spared neither money nor pains, and that as well with the servants as the masters.

But to return; by degrees the Dinanters began to repent heartily of the above-mentioned treaty, and caused four of their chief citizens, who had been instrumental in concluding the peace, to be most barbarously executed, and began the war afresh in the county of Namur. For these reasons, and upon the earnest solicitation of the inhabitants of Bouvines, this siege was undertaken by Duke Philip; but the command

of the army was given to his son, to whom the Count of St. Paul, Constable of France, repaired, but, coming in a private capacity, and acting without any authority from the king, he could not bring any of the standing forces of the kingdom to the assistance of the Duke of Burgundy, but was forced to content himself with what forces he could assemble on the frontiers of Picardy.

The Dinanters made a bold sally one day; but it proved much to their disadvantage, for they were beaten so cruelly, that eight days after (their friends having no time to consider of their relief) the town was taken by storm and set on fire, and the prisoners (about 800) drowned before Bouvines at the earnest request of the men of Bouvines. Whether God permitted it as a judgment upon them for their malice, I cannot determine, but certainly it was a dreadful revenge.

The next day after the taking of the town, the Liegeois (contrary to their agreement) arrived in great numbers to have relieved it; for by that treaty they also had obliged themselves not to meddle with the affairs of the Dinanters, as the Dinanters had separated from them.

Duke Philip, on account of his great age, returned home; but his son with the whole army advanced against the Liegeois, whom we met with sooner than we expected, for, by accident and the fault of our guides, our vanguard lost their way, and our main body (in which most of the chief commanders were) encountered the enemy. It was already late when we met, and yet we prepared to engage them, when immediately certain deputies arrived from them, with a message to the Count of Charolois, beseeching him, that in honor to the blessed Virgin Mary (whose eve that was), he would commiserate their condition; and who also made the best excuse they could for breaking the treaty that was lately concluded between them.

However, the Liegeois did not seem so submissive as the deputies represented them to be, but set a good face on the matter, and made a show as if they intended to venture a battle. However, after the deputies had gone, and returned three or four times, the peace made the year before was confirmed, and a certain sum of money was to be paid;

and that the peace might be better observed than it had been before, they promised to deliver 300 hostages, who were to be named, and set down in a roll by the Bishop of Liege and some of his officers who were then in the army, and to be sent to the Count of Charolois by eight o'clock the next morning. During the whole night the Burgundian army was in great dread, for they were neither regularly encamped, nor enclosed within their wagons, but scattered up and down in separate bodies, and in a place very advantageous for the enemy, who were all foot, and much better acquainted with the country than we. Some of them had a desire to have attacked us, and if they had, in my opinion we must have been defeated; but those who transacted the peace, opposed and hindered that enterprise.

As soon as it was break of day, our army drew together in one body immediately; our battalions appeared drawn up in very good order, and our number was great, consisting of 3000 men-at-arms, good and bad, and 12,000 or 14,000 archers: besides a good body of foot out of the neighboring country. We marched directly towards them, to receive our hostages, or fight them if they failed. We found them separated, and marching off in small bodies, and in disorder, as people wholly ignorant of order and martial conduct.

It was by this time almost twelve o'clock, and no hostages delivered; the Count of Charolois asked advice of the Marshal of Burgundy, whether he should fall upon them or not; the marshal replied, Yes, he might do it without any danger, and they could not complain, for they themselves were in the fault. Then he asked the Lord of Contay (who has been often named), and he was entirely of the same opinion, affirming we should never have such an opportunity, showing us how they were divided and in disorder, and pressed hard for attacking them. The next he asked was the Count of St. Paul, Constable of France, who was absolutely against it, alleging that it would be inconsistent both with his honor and engagement to fall upon them, and that it was impossible for so many people to come to a final resolution and be agreed so soon, especially in a business of such a nature as choosing of hostages; and he advised the Count of Charolois rather to send to them, and see what they intended.



The argument between these three great officers before the Count of Charolois took up a considerable time, and he was much divided how to determine the matter. On the one hand, he saw his great and inveterate enemies defeated, and in his power, and that without any dangerous resistance; on the other, he found his honor was at stake, and it would interfere with his promise.

At last he concluded to send a trumpet towards them, who met them bringing the hostages, upon which all were hush, and every man returned to his post. But the soldiers were highly displeased with the constable's advice; for they saw good plunder before their eyes. An embassy was sent immediately to Liege to ratify and confirm the treaty of peace; but the people (being inconstant) said that the count was afraid to engage them, fired their guns upon him, and committed many insolences. The count after this returned into Flanders; and, his father dying that summer, he celebrated his obsequies with great pomp and solemnity at Bruges; and notified his death to the king.

## II

THESE commotions being over, the Duke of Burgundy retired to Ghent, where he was honorably and magnificently received. He entered the city in arms, and the citizens made a postern into the fields, that he might bring in or keep out what company he pleased. Several ambassadors were sent to him from the king, and others went from him to the king; the Duke of Burgundy also sent several embassies to the Duke of Bretagne, and in this manner all that winter was spent. The king was very solicitous and pressing with the Duke of Burgundy to abandon the Duke of Bretagne's interest, and made him several advantageous proposals to that purpose; but the duke would not consent, which was much to his majesty's dissatisfaction, especially when he considered what had happened to the Liegeois, his allies.

As soon as summer was come, the king could refrain no longer, but himself or his forces entered Bretagne, and made themselves masters of two small castles, one of them called Chantocé, and the other Ancenis. The Duke of Burgundy had notice immediately of the taking of these places; and at

the earnest solicitation and importunity of the Dukes of Normandy and Bretagne, he raised an army with all expedition, and wrote to the king, entreating him to desist from that enterprise, for they were his allies, and comprehended in his truce; but not being pleased with the king's answer, the duke took the field, and rendezvoused near Peronne with a considerable force. The king himself was at Compiègne, but his army was at Bretagne. The duke stayed at Peronne but three or four days, during which time the Cardinal Baluc, who made but a short stay, arrived as ambassador from the king. He made some overtures to the duke, and told him, that the Bretons could make their peace without his interposition; but the king's design was to separate them and break the confederacy. The cardinal was received very honorably, and dispatched with this answer, That the duke had not taken the field to invade his majesty, nor to make war upon him, but only to relieve his allies; and so they parted with fair words on both sides.

No sooner was the cardinal departed, but a herald arrived from the Dukes of Normandy and Bretagne with letters, importing that they had made their peace with the king, and renounced all their alliances, and particularly his; and that, in satisfaction of all his demands, the Duke of Normandy was to receive a pension of 60,000 livres per annum, for which he was to relinquish the interest which had been lately conferred upon him in Normandy. The Lord Charles of France was not at all pleased with his terms; but he was forced to dissemble his resentment. The Duke of Burgundy was extremely surprised at the news; for he had raised this army on purpose to relieve them; the herald also was in no little danger; for as he had passed through the king's quarters, the duke had a suspicion the king had forged the letters; but it was not long before they were confirmed from several places. The king thought he had now done his business, and that it would be no hard matter to persuade the duke to abandon them. Several messengers passed privately between them; and at length the king paid the Duke of Burgundy six score thousand crowns of gold in consideration of the expense which he had been at in raising his army; half of which sum was paid down before he broke up from

his camp. The duke sent to the king one John Bosuse, a gentleman of his bed-chamber (a person with whom he was more than ordinarily intimate); which the king taking very kindly, he took the confidence to propose an interview, hoping he might gain him entirely over to his party, considering how badly the two above-mentioned dukes had served him, and what a sum of money he had paid him himself; of which he gave him some hint and intimation by the said Bosuse, with whom he dispatched the Cardinal Balue a second time, and the Lord Tanneguy du Chastel, Governor of Roussillon, who represented to the duke the great desire his majesty had to give him a meeting.

They found the duke at Peronne: but he had no fancy to the interview; for the Liegeois seemed inclinable to rebel again at the instigation of two ambassadors whom the king had sent to them for that purpose before the truce, which was made for certain days between the king, the Duke of Burgundy, and their allies. The cardinal and his friends replied, that the Liegeois durst not attempt any such thing, since the duke had not only dismantled their fortifications the year before, but also demolished their walls; and if they had any such design in view, the news of this accommodation would be sufficient to prevent it. In this manner it was concluded, that the king should repair to Peronne (which was the place he had recommended); and the duke having written to him with his own hand, and delivered a passport (for his better security) to the ambassadors, they took their leave, and departed towards the king, who was at that time at Noyon. But to make all sure at Liege, the duke sent the bishop thither, upon whose score those tumults had happened, and with him the Lord of Humbercourt, his lieutenant in that country, with a considerable body of forces.

You have heard how it was agreed the king should come to Peronne. Thither he came, without any guard, more than the passport and parole of the Duke of Burgundy; only he desired that the duke's archers, under the command of the Lord des Cordes (who was then in the duke's service), might meet and conduct him; and so it was done, very few of his own train coming along with him. However, his majesty was attended by several persons of great quality and dis-

tion, and among the rest by the Duke of Bourbon, the Cardinal his brother, and the Count of St. Paul, Constable of France, who had no hand in this interview, but was highly displeas'd at it; for he was now grown haughty, and disdain'd to pay that respect to the duke which he had formerly done; for which cause there was no love between them. Besides these, there came the Cardinal Baluc, the Governor of Roussillon, and several others. When the king came near, the duke went out (very well attended) to meet him, conducted him into the town, and lodg'd him at the receiver's, who had a fine house not far from the castle; for the lodgings in the castle were but small, and no way convenient.

War between two great princes is easily begun, but very hard to be compos'd, by reason of the accidents and consequences which often follow; for many secret practices are used, and orders given out on both sides to make the greatest efforts possible against the enemy, which cannot be easily countermanded; as evidently appears by these two princes, whose interview was so suddenly determin'd, that neither having time to notify it to their ministers in remote parts, they went on performing the commands which their respective masters had given them before.

### III

It is the highest act of imprudence for any prince to put himself into the power of another, especially if they be at war; and it is no less advantageous to them to be well acquainted in their youth with the passages and surprising accidents of former times; for history shows them at large the success of such assemblies, the frauds, artifices, and perjuries wherewith they have inveigled, imprisoned, and killed such as, relying upon the honor of their enemies, have put themselves into their hands. I do not say that everybody has met with such treacherous dealings, but one example is sufficient to make many people more wise; and teach them to be careful of themselves.

It appears to me upon the experience of eighteen years' business (in which I have not only been conversant with great princes, but privy to all the greatest affairs which have been transacted in France, or the neighboring states),

that one of the greatest means to make a man wise is to have studied the histories of ancient times, and to have learned to frame and proportion our councils and undertakings according to the mode and example of our ancestors: for our life is but of short duration, and not sufficient to give us experience of so many things; besides our age is impaired, and the life of man is not so long, nor his body so strong and robust as formerly; and as our bodies are degenerated and grown weaker, so is our faith and fidelity one towards another, especially among princes, who are altogether wedded to their own humors, without regard to any reason that can be offered; and (which is still worse) they are commonly surrounded by persons whose only aim is to please their masters, and applaud whatever they do or say, whether it be good or bad; and if any wise man interposes, and endeavors to set things in a better light, the whole court is presently in an uproar.

Again, I cannot forbear blaming and discommending illiterate princes, who generally are led by the nose by certain lawyers and priests, whom they keep commonly about them, and indeed not without reason (for as they are very serviceable to a prince, and an ornament to his court, when they are persons of honor and probity, so they are as dangerous if they prove otherwise), who have always some law or precedent in their mouths, which they wrest and pervert as they please: but a wise prince, and one that has read history, will never be deluded; nor will any courtier be so audacious as to tell a lie in his presence. Believe me, God never designed the office of a king to be executed by beasts, or such as glory and pride themselves in giving such answers as these, "I am no scholar, I refer business wholly to my council, and commit all things to their management," and then devote themselves entirely to their pleasures, without further reason or expostulation. Had they been better educated in their youth, they would have been wiser, and have earnestly desired that their person and their virtues might have been valued and esteemed by all good men.

I do not say all princes employ such ill-conditioned people, but most of those whom I had ever the honor to con-

verse with, had always abundance of them. I have known indeed, upon an exigence of affairs, some wise princes that understood how to cull and select their ministers, and employ them frankly and without complaint; but of this sort I knew none comparable to the king my master, than whom no prince better understood the merit of brave and learned persons, nor more readily advanced such to the highest posts of honor and advantage. He was not unlearned himself; he delighted much in asking questions; and would know a little of everything: his judgment and natural parts were excellent, which is better and more preferable than all that we can learn in this world; for all the books that ever were written, are only so many helps and assistances to our memory by the recapitulation of passages of old. For this reason a man has a greater insight into affairs by reading one single book in three months' time, than can be observed or understood by the age or experience of twenty men living successively one after another.

So that, to finish this digression, I am of opinion that God cannot send a greater curse or affliction upon any nation than an unlearned and inconsiderate prince; for from hence all other misfortunes and miseries arise, and in the first place wars and division, by his committing to other persons his own peculiar authority (of which he ought to be more tender than of anything besides); and from this division famine and mortality arise, and all the dreadful consequences attending upon war; by which one may perceive how much all good subjects have reason to lament when they see the education of their young princes so miserably neglected, and left wholly in the power and management of persons of no qualifications nor desert.

## IV

I HAVE already given an account of the arrival of this Burgundian army at Peronen, almost at the same instant with the king; for being in Champagne long before this interview was determined, the Duke of Burgundy had no time to countermand the orders he had given them, and their coming was a great check and impediment, by reason of certain jealousies and suspicions which were entertained on

both sides. However, these two princes deputed some of their ministers of state to meet and negotiate their affairs in the most amicable way that could be thought on. But whilst the treaty was in a fair way of accommodation, and three or four days had been already spent in bringing it to a conclusion, news arrived of a strange turn of affairs at Liege, of which I shall give the following relation.

The king at his coming to Peronne had quite forgot his sending of two ambassadors to Liege to stir them up to a rebellion against the duke, and they had managed the affair with such diligence, that they had got together such a considerable number, that the Liegeois went privately to Tongres (where the Bishop of Liege and the Lord of Humbercourt were quartered with more than 2000 men) with a design to surprise them. The bishop, the Lord of Humbercourt, and some of the bishop's servants, were taken, but the rest fled and left whatever they had behind them, as despairing to defend themselves. After which action the Liegeois marched back again to Liege, which is not far from Tongres; and the Lord of Humbercourt made an agreement for his ransom with one Monsieur William de Ville, called by the French *Le Sauvage*, a knight, who, suspecting the Liegeois would kill him in their fury, suffered the Lord of Humbercourt to escape, but was slain himself not long after.

The people were exceedingly overjoyed at the taking of their bishop. There were also taken with him that day several canons of the church, whom the people equally hated, and killed five or six of them for their first repast; among the rest there was one Monsieur Robert, an intimate friend of the bishop's, and a person I have often seen attending him armed at all points, for in Germany this is the custom of the prelates. They slew this Robert in the bishop's presence, cut him into small pieces, and in sport threw them at one another's heads. Before they had marched seven or eight leagues, which was their full journey, they killed about sixteen canons and other persons, the majority of whom were the bishop's servants; but they released some of the Burgundians, for they had been privately informed, that some overtures of peace had already been made, and they were forced to pretend that what they had done was only

against their bishop, whom they brought prisoner along with them into their city.

Those who fled (as I said before) gave the alarm to the whole country, and it was not long before the duke had the news of it. Some said all of them were put to the sword; others affirmed the contrary (for in things of that nature, one messenger seldom comes alone); but there were some who had seen the habits of the canons who were slain, and supposing the bishop and the Lord of Humbercourt had been of the number, they positively averred that all that had not escaped were killed, and that they had seen the king's ambassadors among the Liegeois, and they mentioned their very names.

All this being related to the duke, he gave credit to it immediately; and falling into a violent passion against the king, he charged him with a design of deluding him by his coming thither; ordered the gates both of the town and castle to be suddenly shut up, and gave out, by way of pretense, that it was done for the discovery of a certain casket which was lost, and in which there were money and jewels to a very considerable value. When the king saw himself shut up in the castle, and guards posted at the gates, and especially when he found himself lodged near a certain tower in which a Court of Vermandois had caused his predecessor, one of the Kings of France, to be put to death, he was in great apprehension.

I was at that time waiting upon the Duke of Burgundy in the quality of chamberlain, and (when I pleased) I lay in his chamber, as was the custom of that family. When he saw the gates were shut, he ordered the room to be cleared, and told us who remained, that the king was come thither to circumvent him; that he himself had never approved of the interview, but had complied purely to gratify the king; then he gave us a relation of the passages at Liege, how the king had behaved himself by his ambassadors, and that all his forces were killed. He was much incensed, and threatened his majesty exceedingly; and I am of opinion, that if he had then had such persons about him as would have fomented his passion, and encouraged him to any violence upon the king's person, he would certainly have done



it, or at least committed him to the tower. None were present at the speaking of these words but myself and two grooms of his chamber, one of whom was called Charles de Visen, born at Dijon, a man of honor, and highly esteemed by his master. We did not exasperate, but soothed his temper as much as possibly we could.

Some time after he used the same expressions to other people; and the news being carried about the town, it came at last to the king's ear, who was in great consternation; and indeed so was everybody else, foreseeing a great deal of mischief, and reflecting on the variety of things which were to be managed for the reconciling of a difference between two such puissant princes, and the errors of which both of them were guilty, in not giving timely notice to their ministers employed in their remote affairs, which must of necessity produce some extraordinary and surprising result.

## V

HAVING thus fairly represented my judgment of such interviews, I shall now return from my digression, to speak of the king, who thought himself (as I said before) a prisoner in the Castle of Peronne, as he had good reason to do; for all the gates were shut and guarded by such as were deputed to that office, and continued so for two or three days; during which time the Duke of Burgundy saw not the king, neither would he suffer but very few of his majesty's servants to be admitted into the castle, and those only by the wicket; yet none of them were forbidden; but of the duke's none were permitted to speak with the king, or come into his chamber, at least such as had any authority with their master.

The first day there was great murmuring and consternation all over the town. The second, the duke's passion began to cool a little, and a council was called, which sat the greater part of that day and night too. The king made private applications to all such as he thought qualified to relieve him, making them large promises, and ordering 15,000 crowns to be distributed among them; but the agent who was employed in this affair acquitted himself very ill, and kept a good part of the money for his own use, as the king was informed afterwards. The king was very fear-

ful of those who had been formerly in his service, who, as I said before, were in the Burgundian army, and had openly declared themselves for his brother, the Duke of Normandy.

The Duke of Burgundy's council were strangely divided in their opinions; the greatest part advised that the passport which the duke had given to the king should be kept, provided his majesty consented to sign the peace as it was drawn up in writing. Some would have him prisoner as he was, without farther ceremony. Others were for sending with all speed to the Duke of Normandy, and forcing the king to make such a peace as should be for the advantage of all the princes of France. Those who proposed this advised that the king should be restrained, and a strong guard set upon him, because a great prince is never, without great caution, to be set at liberty after so notorious an affront. This opinion was so near prevailing, that I saw a person booted and ready to depart, having already several packets directed to the Duke of Normandy in Bretagne, and he waited only for the duke's letters; and yet this advice was not followed.

At last the king caused overtures to be made, and offered the Duke of Bourbon, the Cardinal his brother, the Constable of France, and several others, as hostages, upon condition, that after the peace was concluded, he might return to Compiègne, and that then he would either cause the Liegeois to make sufficient reparation for the injury they had done, or declare war against them. Those whom the king had proposed for his hostages proffered themselves very earnestly, at least in public; I know not whether they said as much in private; I expect they did not: and, if I may speak my thoughts, I believe that the king would have left them there, and that he would never have returned.

The third night after this had happened, the Duke of Burgundy did not pull off his clothes, but only threw himself twice or thrice upon the bed, and then got up again and walked about, as his custom was when anything vexed him. I lay that night in his chamber, and walked several turns with him. The next morning he was in a greater passion than ever, threatening exceedingly, and ready to put some great thing in execution; but, at last, he recollected

himself, and it came to this result: that if the king would swear to the peace, and accompany him to Liege, and assist him to revenge the injuries which they had done him and the Bishop of Liege, his kinsman, he would be contented. Having resolved on this, he went immediately to the king's chamber, to acquaint him with his resolutions himself. The king had some friend<sup>1</sup> or other who had given him notice of it before, and assured him that his person would be in no manner of danger, provided he would consent to those points; but that if he refused, he would run himself into so great danger, that nothing in the world could be greater.

When the duke came into his presence, his voice trembled, by the violence of his passion, so inclinable was he to be angry again. However, he made a low reverence with his body, but his gesture and words were sharp, demanding of the king if he would sign the peace as it was agreed and written, and swear to it when he had done. The king replied he would; and, indeed, there was nothing added to what had been granted in the treaty at Paris, which was to the advantage of the Dukes of Burgundy or Normandy, but very much to his own; for it was agreed that the Lord Charles of France should renounce the duchy of Normandy, and have Champagne and Brie, and some other places adjacent, as an equivalent. Then the duke asked him if he would go along with him to Liege, to revenge the treachery they had practiced by his instigation, and by means of that interview. Then he put him in mind of the nearness of blood between the king and the Bishop of Liege, who was of the house of Bourbon. The king answered, that when the peace was sworn, which he desired exceedingly, he would go with him to Liege, and carry with him as many or as few forces as he pleased.

The duke was extremely pleased at his answer, and the articles being immediately produced and read, and the true cross which St. Charlemagne was wont to use, called the Cross of Victory, taken out of the king's casket, the peace was sworn, to the great joy and satisfaction of all people; and all the bells in the town were rung. The Duke of Burgundy immediately dispatched a courier with the news of

<sup>1</sup>There can be no doubt that this friend was Comines himself.

this conclusion of peace into Bretagne, and with it he sent a duplicate of the articles, that they might see he had not deserted them, nor disengaged himself from their alliance; and, indeed, Duke Charles, the king's brother, had a good bargain, in respect of what he had made for himself in the late treaty in Bretagne, by which there was nothing left him but a bare pension, as you have heard before. Afterwards the king did me the honor to tell me, that I had done him some service in that pacification. . . .

## VI

THOSE who hereafter may read these Memoirs, may think I have spoken very disrespectfully, and with too much freedom, of these two great princes, or that else they were persons of but small honor or faith. I would not willingly speak ill of either of them; and what great obligations I have to the king my master all the world knows. But to continue my history in the same manner (as you, my good Lord Archbishop of Vienne, have desired me) I am obliged to give an impartial and true account of what I know, which way soever it happened. However, were they to be compared with the rest of the great princes that reigned in Europe at the same time, they would appear noble and conspicuous, and our king very wise, for he left his kingdom enlarged, and at peace with all his enemies. But now let us observe a little what artifices and stratagems they used to overreach and circumvent one another, that in case any young prince, who has the same game to play, should hereafter accidentally meet with this history, he may, by reading it, be prepared and defend himself the better; for though neither enemies nor princes are always alike, yet their affairs being often the same, it is not altogether unprofitable to be informed of what is past. To give then my opinion, I am very confident these two princes had the same desire of circumventing each other, and their ends (as you shall hear afterwards) were the same.

About this time (which was in the year 1472), I came into the King of France's service, who had also entertained most of the Duke of Guienne's servants: the king was then at Pont de Cé, having assembled all his forces against the

Duke of Bretagne, with whom he was at war. At this place arrived certain ambassadors from the Duke of Bretagne, and others were sent in return to his court. Among those who came in an embassy to the king, there was Philip des Essars, a servant of the duke's, and William de Soubs-Plainville, a servant of the Lord of Lescut, who, when he saw his master, the Duke of Guienne, past all hopes of recovery, embarked at Bourdeaux for Bretagne, whither he retired, fearing lest he might fall into the hands of the king, wherefore he made his escape early. And he brought with him the Duke of Guienne's confessor, and one of the equerries of his stable, who were suspected to have had a hand in the duke's death, and were kept prisoners for it in Bretagne for several years after.

These embassies forward and backward continued not long, before the king determined to have peace on that side, and to behave himself so handsomely to the Lord of Lescut, as to bring him back again into his service, and make him forget his old animosity; for the Duke of Bretagne had neither courage nor conduct but what he derived from him; yet so powerful a prince, with so cunning and wise a statesman, was not to be despised. The Bretons themselves (while he was with him) would willingly have accepted of a peace; and certainly the generality of them desired nothing more, for there are constantly many of them in the kingdom of France in great posts and reputation, and not without cause, for heretofore they have done his majesty signal service. Some persons (whose judgment in state affairs was not so good as the king's) condemned this accommodation; but in my opinion I think his majesty acted very prudently. He had a great value for the person of this Lord of Lescut, saying, that he could commit any affair to his management without danger, for he knew him to be a person of honor and integrity, and one who in all the late troubles would never hold any correspondence with the English, nor consent that any towns in Normandy should be put into their hands, but still advised to the contrary, which was the chief reason of his preferment afterwards.

For these reasons he desired Monsieur Soubs-Plainville to set down in writing what the Lord of Lescut his master's

demands were, both for the Duke of Bretagne and himself. Soubs-Plainville did so, and they were these: For the Duke of Bretagne, a pension of 80,000 francs: for the Lord of Lescut a pension of 6000 francs, half of Guinne, the two seneschalships of Lannes and Bordelois, the command of one of the castles of Bourdeaux, the captainships of Blaye, and of the two castles of Bayonne, of Dax and St. Sever, 24,000 crowns in ready money, the king's order of St. Michael, and the countship of Cominges. All was granted and made good; only the duke's pension was retrenched to half the sum, and that paid but two years. Besides, the king gave Monsieur Soubs-Plainville 6000 crowns; but he did not pay the ready money which I have mentioned both for his master and himself, till four years after the agreement. . . .

## BOOK THE THIRD

## I

IN the meantime the English took a gentleman's servant belonging to the King of France's court, named James de Grassé. This servant was brought immediately before the King of England and the Duke of Burgundy; and being ordered into a tent, after some slight examination of him, the Duke of Burgundy took his leave, and set out by the way of Brabant for Mazières, where part of his army lay. The King of England ordered the servant to be released, as being the first prisoner they had taken. Upon his departure, the Lords Howard and Stanley gave him a noble, and desired him "to present their most humble service to the king his master, when he had an opportunity of speaking to him."

The servant came with all speed to Compiègne (where the court was at that time) to give the king an account of their message; but his majesty was afraid of him, and suspected him to be a spy, because his master's brother Gilbert de Grassé, was then in Bretagne, and a great favorite of that duke. The servant had irons clapped upon him immediately, and a guard was set to watch him that night; yet several courtiers talked with him by the king's orders, and told his majesty that by his discourse he seemed a

very honest fellow, and that he might venture to see him without any manner of danger. Upon these assurances, the next morning the king spoke with him himself; and, after he had discoursed with him a little while, he ordered his irons to be knocked off, but kept him still in custody: from thence the king went to dinner, full of thought and consultation, whether he had best send to the King of England or not.

Before he sat down to the table he spoke something of it to me, for his way was (as you know, my Lord of Vienné) to speak privately and familiarly with those who were about them, as I was then, and others have been since; and he had a strange fancy to whisper into people's ears. He was thinking upon what the King of England's herald had told him, that he should send to the King of England for a passport for his ambassadors, as soon as that prince had landed, and that his negotiation should be addressed to the Lords Howard and Stanley. As soon as he was sat down, and had considered a little, according to his custom (which to those who were unacquainted with his fancy seemed strange, and might induce them to believe he was a prince of no great wisdom, but that his actions declared the contrary), he whispered me in the ear, and bade me rise and go dine in my chamber, and send for a servant belonging to the Lord des Halles, who was son to Merichon of Rochelle, and ask him whether he would venture with a message into the King of England's army, in the habit of a herald.

I obeyed his orders, and was much astonished at the sight of the servant, for he seemed to me neither of a stature nor aspect fit for such an undertaking; yet his judgment was good (as I found afterwards), and his manner of expressing himself tolerable enough; but the king had never talked with him but once. The poor man was confounded at the proposal, and fell down upon his knees before me, as one that thought himself ruined and undone. I did all I could to encourage him, and told him he should have money for his pains, and a place in the Isle of Ré; and for his greater assurance, I persuaded him that the English had made the first overture themselves. I made him dine with me, and (there being nobody but him and me, and one servant that

waited) by degrees I gave him instructions what he was to do, and how he was to behave himself in this affair.

Not long after, the king sent for me, and I gave him a relation of what had passed, and recommended others to him, who, in my opinion, were more proper for his design; but he would employ no other, and went and talked with him himself, and animated him more with one word than I could do with a hundred. There came along with the king into my chamber only the Lord de Villiers, at that time Master of the Horse, and now Bailiff of Caen. When the king had sufficiently prepared and encouraged his man, he sent the master of the horse for the banner of a trumpeter to make his herald a coat of arms, for the king was not so stately or vain as to have either herald or trumpeter in his train, as other princes have; wherefore the master of the horse and one of my servants made up the coat of arms as well as they could; and having fetched a scutcheon from a little herald (called Plein Chemin, in the service of the Admiral of France) they fastened it about him, sent for his boots and his cloak privately, and his horse being got ready, he mounted, and nobody perceived him, with a bag or budget at the bow of his saddle, in which his coat of arms was put; and having been well instructed what he was to say, away he went directly to the English army.

Upon his arrival in his herald's coat, he was immediately stopped, and carried to the King of England's tent; being asked his business, he told them he was come with a message from the King of France to the King of England, and had orders to address himself to the Lords Howard and Stanley. He was carried into a tent to dinner, and very civilly entertained. After the King of England had dined, he sent for the herald, who told him that his errand was to acquaint his majesty, that the King of France for a long time had had a desire to be at amity with him, that both their kingdoms might be at ease, and enjoy the blessing of peace; that since his accession to the crown of France, he never had made war, or attempted anything against him or his kingdom; and as for having entertained the Earl of Warwick formerly, he said he had done that more in opposition to the Duke of Burgundy than out of any quarrel with King Edward. Then



he went on to state that the Duke of Burgundy had invited him over, only in order to make his own terms the better with the King of France; and if others had joined with him, it was only to secure themselves against their former offenses, or to advance their own private affairs; which when they had once compassed, they would not regard the interest of the King of England, provided they had attained their own ends. He represented likewise the lateness of the season, that winter was approaching, that his master was sensible of the great charge the King of England had been at, and that he knew there were in England many, both of the nobility and merchants, who were desirous of a war on this side the water; yet if the King of England should be inclined to a treaty, his master would not refuse to come to such terms as should be agreeable both to himself and to his subjects; and if the King of England had a mind to be more particularly informed of these matters, if he would give him a passport for 100 horse, his master would send ambassadors to him with full instructions: or if the king should think it more proper to depute certain commissioners, and let them have a conference together in some village between the two armies, he would willingly consent, and send them a passport.

The King of England and part of his nobility were extremely pleased with these proposals; a passport was given to the herald according to his desire, and having been presented with four nobles in money, he was attended by a herald from the King of England to obtain the King of France's passport in the same form as the other; which being given, the next morning the commissioners met in a village near Amiens.

Some people (I believe) will think this too great a condescension in our king; but the wiser sort may see, by what I have said before, that his kingdom was in great danger, had not God himself supported it by disposing the king to so fortunate a resolution, and infatuating the Duke of Burgundy's understanding so as to make him commit so many irreparable errors, and lose that by his own obstinacy which he had been endeavoring so long to obtain. We had, besides, many private intrigues and secret cabals among us, which would have produced great and speedy troubles to this nation,

as well in the direction of Bretagne, as of other places, had not the king consented to this peace: so that what I have often said before, I must once again repeat and confirm, that I do certainly believe, by what I have seen in my time, that God has a particular and more than ordinary care of the preservation of this kingdom.

## II

As you have heard, our ambassadors met on the day after the return of our herald, for we were within four leagues of one another, or even less. Our herald was well treated, and had his money, and the office in the Isle of Ré, where he was born. Many overtures passed between our ambassadors. The English at first demanded, according to their custom, the crown of France, and by degrees they fell to Normandy and Guienne; our commissioners replied as became them: so that the demand was well urged on the one side, and well refused on the other: yet, from the very first day of the treaty, there was great prospect of an accommodation, for both parties seemed very inclinable to hearken to reasonable proposals: our commissioners came back, and the others returned to their camp. The king was informed of their demands, and the final resolution was, to have 72,000 crowns paid them down before they left the kingdom; a marriage was to be concluded between our present king and the eldest daughter of King Edward, who is now Queen of England, and for her maintenance either the duchy of Guienne was to be assigned, or a pension of 50,000 crowns, to be paid annually during nine years, in the Tower of London; at the end of which term, the present king and his queen were to enjoy quietly the whole revenue of Guienne, and our king was to be discharged from paying the pension for the future.

There were several other articles; but, as they were of no great weight or importance, I shall pass them over; only this I shall add that in this peace, which was to continue nine years between the two crowns, the allies on both sides were to be comprehended if they pleased, and the Dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne were named expressly by the English. The King of England offered (which was strange) to make a discovery of some persons who (as he said) were traitors to

our king and his crown, and to produce proofs of their treason under their own hands.

King Louis was extremely pleased with the progress that our commissioners had made in this affair. He held a council to consult what measures to take, and I was present at it: some were of opinion all this was but a trick and artifice in the English: but the king was of another mind, and he inferred it from the time of the year (it being pretty near winter), and their being unprovided with any place for a secure quarter; as also from the delays and disappointments which they had suffered from the Duke of Burgundy, who had (as it were) forsaken them already; and as for the Constable, he was well assured he would not deliver up any of his towns, for the king sent every hour to entertain and wheedle him, and prevent him from doing any harm. Besides, our king was perfectly acquainted with the King of England's temper, and that he loved to indulge himself in ease and pleasures: so that, by consequence, it plainly appeared that his majesty spoke more wisely, and had a better judgment of these affairs, than any of his council. Whereupon he resolved to raise the money with all expedition, and after debating the means of raising it, it was resolved it should be done by a loan, and that every one should advance something for greater dispatch. The king declared he would do anything in the world to get the King of England out of France, except putting any of his towns into his possession; for rather than do that, he would hazard all.

The Constable began to perceive these intrigues, to fear he had offended all parties, and to be jealous of the designs which he knew had been concluded against him at Bouvines; for which reason he sent very frequently to the king. At this very hour there arrived at court a servant of the Constable's, named Louis de Creville, and one of his secretaries, named John Richer, who are both still alive, who were ordered by the king to deliver their message to the Lord du Bouchage and to me. The message which they brought to the king pleased his majesty extremely; for he resolved to make his advantage of it, as you shall hear.

The Lord of Contay, who (as I have already mentioned) was a servant to the Duke of Burgundy, had not long since

been taken prisoner before Arras; and he traveled upon his parole between the duke and the king, who had promised him not only his liberty, but a considerable sum of money, if he could dispose his master to a peace. It happened that he was just returned from waiting on the Duke of Burgundy the very day the two gentlemen above mentioned arrived from the Constable. The king caused the Lord of Contay and myself to hide ourselves behind a great old screen that stood in his chamber, that the Lord of Contay might hear and report to the Duke of Burgundy the language with which the Constable and his creatures treated him.

The king seated himself upon a stool near the screen, that we might more distinctly hear what the said Louis de Creville (with whom none of the king's servants except the Lord du Bouehage were admitted) had to say; and he and his colleague began their discourse, telling the king that their master had sent them lately to wait on the Duke of Burgundy, and that they had used many arguments to induce him to a rupture with the English, and that they had found him in so great a passion against the King of England, that they were in a fair way to prevail upon him, not only to abandon, but also to fall upon and destroy his army, in their retreat; and to please the king the more, as he thought, when he spoke those words, Louis de Creville, in imitation of the Duke of Burgundy, stamped with his foot, swore by St. George, called the King of England Blaneborgne, the son of an archer who bore his name, with as many invectives besides, as could possibly be used against any man. The king pretended to be highly pleased at the relation, and desired him to tell him it over again, and to raise his voice, for of late he was grown a little deaf; De Creville was not backward, but began again, and acted it to the life.

The Lord of Contay, who was with me behind the screen, was the most surprised person in the world, and all the arguments that could have been used could never have made him believe it, had he not overheard it himself. In the conclusion, they advised his majesty, in order to prevent the imminent danger that threatened his affairs, to make a truce; and promised that the Constable should do all that lay in his power to forward the negotiation; and, to satisfy the English

in some measure, they proposed that the king should give them a small town or two for their winter quarters, which could not be so bad but they would be glad of them; yet, naming no towns, it was presumed they intended St. Valery and Eu.

By this means the Constable thought to reconcile himself to the English, and expiate the affront which he had put upon them by refusing to admit them into his towns. The king, having sufficiently acted his part, and made the Lord of Contay hear every word that was spoken, gave them no uncivil answer, but only told them that he would send to his brother, and give him an account of his affairs; and then they took their leave, and withdrew.

One of them swore to the king, that whatever secret he might be intrusted with that concerned his majesty's affairs, he would certainly discover it to him. The king could scarce dissemble his resentment at their advising him to give the English the towns; but, fearing lest it might provoke the Constable to do worse, he would not make such a reply as might lead them to suspect that he disliked the proposition; but he sent a messenger of his own to the Constable, for the way was but short, and it took up no great time to go thither and return.

When the ambassadors were gone out, the Lord of Contay and I came from behind the screen, and found the king very pleasant, and laughing heartily; but the Lord of Contay was out of all patience to hear such fellows speak so disrespectfully of his master the Duke of Burgundy, especially considering the great transactions which were at that time pending between the Constable and him. The Lord of Contay was impatient to be on horseback, and to make a relation of it to his master; and he therefore was immediately dispatched, with a copy of instructions written with his own hand, and a letter of credence under the king's hand.

Our negotiation with the English was already concluded, as you have heard, and all these intrigues were carried on at one time. The King of France's commissioners, who had had a conference with the English, reported their proposals, and the King of England's envoys returned to their camp. At last it was agreed upon by the ambassadors on both sides,

that the two kings should have an interview, and swear mutually to the performance of the articles; after which the King of England should return into his own country, upon the receipt of 72,000 crowns, and that the Lord Howard and Sir John Chene, his Master of the Horse, should be left as hostages till he was arrived in England. Lastly, a pension of 16,000 crowns a year was promised to the privy counsellors of the King of England—viz., to the Lord Hastings, 2000 crowns a year, who would never give an acquittance for it; to the Chancellor, 2000; and the rest to the Lord Howard, the Master of the Horse, Chalanger, Sir Thomas Montgomery, and several others; besides a great deal of ready money and plate that was distributed among the rest of the King of England's retinue.

The Duke of Burgundy, who was then at Luxemburg, having notice of these proceedings, came in mighty haste to the King of England, attended only with sixteen horse in his retinue. The King of England was extremely surprised at his unexpected arrival, and demanded what it was that brought him thither, for he saw by his countenance that he was angry. The duke told him he was come to discourse with him. The King of England asked whether it should be in public or private? Then the duke asked him if he had made a peace; the king told him, he had made a truce for nine years, in which the Duke of Bretagne and himself were comprehended, and he desired they would accept of that comprehension.

The duke fell into a violent passion, and in English, a language that he spoke very well, began to commemorate the glorious achievements of his predecessors on the throne of England, who had formerly invaded France, and how they had spared no pains, nor declined any danger, that might render them famous, and gain them immortal honor and renown abroad. Then he inveighed against the truce, and told the king he had not invited the English over into France out of any necessity he had of their assistance, but only to put them in a way of recovering their own right and inheritance; and to convince them he could subsist without their alliance, he was resolved not to make use of the truce till the king had been three months in England; and having delivered himself

after this manner, he took his leave of the king, and returned to Luxemburg. The King of England and his council were extremely displeased with his language, but others who were adverse to the peace highly extolled it.

## III

A PLACE was now fitted for the interview between the two kings. On the next day, which was the 29th of August, 1475, the two kings appeared. The King of France came first, attended by about 800 men-at-arms: on the King of England's side, his whole army was drawn up in order of battle; and though we could not discover their whole force, yet we saw such a vast number both of horse and foot, that the body of troops that were with us seemed very inconsiderable in comparison with them; but indeed the fourth part of our army was not there. It was given out that twelve men of a side were to be with each of the kings at the interview, and that they were already chosen from among their greatest and most trusty courtiers. With us we had four of the King of England's party to view what was done among us, and they had as many of ours, on their side, to have an eye over their actions. As I said before, our king came first to the barrier, attended by twelve persons; among whom were John, Duke of Bourbon, and the Cardinal his brother. It was the king's royal pleasure (according to an old and common custom that he had) that I should be dressed like him on that day.

The King of England advanced along the causeway (which I mentioned before) very nobly attended, with the air and presence of a king: there were in his train his brother the Duke of Clarence, the Earl of Northumberland, his chamberlain the Lord Hastings, his Chancellor, and other peers of the realm; among whom there were not above three or four dressed in cloth of gold like himself. The King of England wore a black velvet cap upon his head, with a large fleur de lys made of precious stones upon it: he was a prince of a noble and majestic presence, but a little inclining to corpulence. I had seen him before when the Earl of Warwick drove him out of his kingdom; then I thought him much handsomer, and to the best of my remembrance, my eyes had never beheld a more handsome person.

When he came within a little distance of the barrier, he pulled off his cap, and bowed himself within half a foot of the ground; and the King of France, who was then leaning against the barrier, received him with abundance of reverence and respect. They embraced through the holes of the grate, and the King of England making him another low bow, the King of France saluted him thus:—"Cousin, you are heartily welcome; there is no person living I was so ambitious of seeing, and God be thanked that this interview is upon so good an occasion." The King of England returned the compliment in very good French.

Then the Chancellor of England (who was a prelate, and Bishop of Lisle) began his speech with a prophecy (with which the English are always provided) that at Picquigny a memorable peace was to be concluded between the English and French. After he had finished his harangue, the instrument was produced which contained the articles the King of France had sent to the King of England. The Chancellor demanded of our king, whether he had dictated the said articles? and whether he agreed to them? The king replied, Yes: and King Edward's letters being produced on our side, he made the same answer. The missal being then brought and opened, both the kings laid one of their hands upon the book, and the other upon the holy true cross, and both of them swore religiously to observe the contents of the truce, which was, that it should stand firm and good for nine years complete; that the allies on both sides should be comprehended; and that the marriage between their children should be consummated, as was stipulated by the said treaty.

After the two kings had sworn to observe the treaty, our king (who had always words at command) told the King of England in a jocular way, he should be glad to see his majesty at Paris; and that if he would come and divert himself with the ladies, he would assign him the Cardinal of Bourbon for his confessor, who he knew would willingly absolve him, if he should commit any sin by way of love and gallantry. The King of England was extremely pleased with his raillery, and made his majesty several good repartees, for he knew the cardinal was a jolly companion.

After some discourse to this purpose. our king. to show



his authority, commanded us who attended him to withdraw, for he had a mind to have a little private discourse with the King of England. We obeyed, and those who were with the King of England, seeing us retire, did the same, without waiting to be commanded. After the two kings had been alone together for some time, our master called me to him, and asked the King of England if he knew me? The King of England replied he did, and named the places where he had seen me, and told the king that formerly I had endeavored to serve him at Calais, when I was in the Duke of Burgundy's service.

The King of France demanded, if the Duke of Burgundy refused to be comprehended in the treaty (as might be expected from his obstinate answer), what the King of England would have him do? The King of England replied, he would offer it him again, and if he refused it then, he would not concern himself any farther, but leave it entirely to themselves. By degrees the king came to mention the Duke of Bretagne (who indeed was the person he aimed at in the question), and made the same demand about him. The King of England desired he would not attempt anything against the Duke of Bretagne, for in his necessity he had never found so true and faithful a friend.

The king pressed him no farther, but recalling his retinue, took his leave of the King of England in the handsomest and most civil terms imaginable, and saluted all his attendants in a most particular manner and both the kings at a time (or very near it) retired from the barrier, and mounting on horseback, the King of France returned to Amiens, and the King of England to his army. The King of England was accommodated by the King of France with whatever he wanted, even to the very torches and candles. The Duke of Gloucester, the King of England's brother, and some other persons of quality, were not present at this interview, as being averse to the treaty; but they recollected themselves afterwards, and the Duke of Gloucester waited on the king our master at Amiens, where he was splendidly entertained, and nobly presented both with plate and fine horses.

As the king returned from this interview, he spoke to me by the way upon two points: one was, that the King of

England had been so easily persuaded to come to Paris. His majesty was not at all pleased with it, and he told me, "He is a very handsome prince, a great admirer of the ladies, and who knows but some of them may appear to him so charming, as may give him a desire of making us a second visit. His predecessors have been too often in Paris and Normandy already; and I do not care for his company so near, though on the other side of the water, I shall gladly esteem him as my friend and brother." Besides, the king was displeased to find him so obstinate in relation to the Duke of Bretagne, on whom he would fain have made war, and to that purpose made another overture to him by the Lord du Bouehage and the Lord of St. Pierre. But when the King of England saw himself pressed, he gave them this short but generous answer, "That if any prince invaded the Duke of Bretagne's dominions, he would cross the seas once more in his defense." Upon which they importuned him no farther.

When the king had arrived at Amiens, and was ready to go to supper, three or four of the English lords, who had attended upon the King of England at the interview, came to sup with his majesty; and the Lord Howard being of the number, he told the king in his ear, that if he desired it, he would find a way to bring his master to him to Amiens, and to Paris too, to be merry with him for some time. Though this offer and proposition were not in the least agreeable to the king, yet his majesty dissembled the matter pretty well, and fell a washing his hands, without giving a direct answer; but he whispered me in the ear, that what he suspected was at last come really to pass. After supper they fell upon the subject again; but the king put it off with the greatest wisdom imaginable, pretending that his expedition against the Duke of Burgundy would require his departure immediately.

Though these affairs were of very great importance, and great prudence was used on both sides to manage them discreetly; yet there were some pleasant occurrences among them, worthy to be transmitted to posterity. Nor ought any man to wonder (considering the great mischiefs which the English have brought upon this kingdom, and the recentness of their date), that the King of France should be at so much

labor and expense to send them home in a friendly manner, that he might make them his friends for the future, or at least divert them from making war against him.

The next day, a great number of English came to Amiens, some of whom reported that the Holy Ghost had made that peace, and prophecies were produced to confirm it; but their greatest argument to support this opinion was that, during the time of their interview, a white pigeon came and sat upon the King of England's tent, and could not be frightened away by any noise they could make in the camp. But some gave another reason, and that was, that a small shower of rain having fallen that day, and soon after the sun shining out very warmly, the poor pigeon, finding that tent higher than the rest, came thither only to dry herself.

This reason was given me by a Gascon gentleman, called Louis de Breteilles, who was in the King of England's service. He was very much displeas'd at this peace; and having been an old acquaintance of mine, he told me privately, that we did but laugh at the King of England. Among the rest of our discourse, I asked him how many battles the King of England had won. He told me nine, and that he had been in every one of them in person. I demanded next how many he had lost? He replied, never but one, and that was the one in which we had outwitted him now; for he was of opinion that the ignominy of his returning so soon, after such vast preparations, would be a greater disgrace and stain to his arms than all the honor he had gained in the nine former victories. I acquainted the king with this smart answer, and the king replied, "He is a shrewd fellow, I warrant him, and we must have a care of his tongue." The next day he sent for him, and had him to dinner at his own table, and made him very advantageous proposals, if he would quit his master's service, and live in France; but finding he was not to be prevail'd on, he presented him with 1000 crowns, and promised that he would do great things for his brothers in France. Upon his going away, I whispered him in the ear, and desired him to employ his good offices to continue and propagate the love and good understanding which had now begun between the two kings.

The king was in the greatest concern imaginable, for fear

he should drop some word or other, that might make the English suspect he had imposed upon them, and laughed at them. The next morning after the interview, his majesty being in his closet, with only three or four of us with him, he began to droll and jest about the wines and presents which he had sent to the English camp; but, turning suddenly round he perceived a merchant of Gaseony, who lived in England, and had come to court to beg leave to export a certain quantity of Bordeaux wines, without paying the duties; the obtaining of which privilege would have been very advantageous to him. The king was much surprised at the sight of him, and wondered how he came thither. The king asked him of what town in Guienne he was; and whether he had married in England? The merchant replied, yes, he had a wife in England, but the estate he had there was but small. Before he went out, the king appointed a person to go with him to Bordeaux, and I had also some discourse with him by his majesty's express command. The king gave him a considerable employment in the town where he was born, granted him the exemption of the duties upon his wines, and gave him 1000 francs to bring over his wife; but he was to send his brother into England for her, and not go thither to fetch her himself; and this penalty the king imposed upon himself for having used his tongue too freely.

## BOOK THE FOURTH

BUT to proceed with my history. The king having established posts<sup>1</sup> in all parts of his kingdom (which before never had been done), it was not long ere he received the news of the Duke of Burgundy's complete overthrow at Naney in 1477; and he was in hourly expectation of the report, for letters of advice had reached him before, importing, that the German army was advancing towards the Duke of Burgundy's, and that a battle was expected between them. Upon which many persons kept their ears open for the news, in order to carry it to the king. For his custom was to reward liberally

<sup>1</sup>The ordinance instituting this postal service is dated at Luxies (now Lucheux) near Doullens, on the 19th day of June, 1464.

any person who brought him the first tidings of any news of importance, and to remember the messenger besides. His majesty also took great delight in talking of it before it arrived, and would say, "I will give so much to any man who first brings me such and such news."

The Lord du Bouchage and I being together, happened to receive the first news of the battle of Morat, and we went with it to the king, who gave each of us 200 marks of silver. The Lord du Lude, who lay without the Plessis, had the first news of the arrival of the courier, with the letters concerning the battle of Nancy; he commanded the courier to deliver him the packet, and as he was a great favorite of the king's, he durst not refuse him. By break of day the next morning, the Lord du Lude knocked at the door next to the king's chamber, and it being opened, he delivered in the packet from the Lord of Craon and other officers. But none of the first letters gave any certainty of the duke's death; they only stated that he was seen to run away, and that it was supposed he had made his escape.

The king was at first so transported with joy at the news, he scarce knew how to behave himself: however, his majesty was still in some perplexity. On one hand, he was afraid that if the duke should be taken prisoner by the Germans, by means of his money, of which he had great store, he would make some composition with them. On the other, he was doubtful, if the duke had made his escape, though defeated for the third time, whether he should seize upon his towns in Burgundy or not; which he judged not very difficult to do, since most of the brave men of that country had been slain in those three battles.

As to this last point, he came to this resolution (which I believe few were acquainted with but myself,) that if the duke were alive and well, he would command the army which lay ready in Champagne and Barrois to march immediately into Burgundy, and seize upon the whole country whilst it was in that state of terror and consternation; and when he was in possession of it, he would inform the duke, that the seizure he had made was only to preserve it for him, and secure it against the Germans, because it was held under the sovereignty of the crown of France, and therefore he was un-

willing it should fall into their hands; and whatever he had taken should be faithfully restored: and truly, I am of opinion his majesty would have done it, though many people who are ignorant of the motives that guided the king, will not easily believe it. But this resolution was altered as soon as he was certain of the Duke of Burgundy's death.

Upon the king's receiving the above-mentioned first letter (which gave no account of the duke's death), he immediately sent to Tours, to summon all his captains and other great personages to attend him. Upon their arrival, he communicated his letters to them. They all pretended great joy; but to such as more narrowly observed their behavior, it was easy to be discerned that most of them did but feign it; and, notwithstanding all their outward dissimulation, they had been better pleased if the Duke of Burgundy had been successful. The reason of this might be, because the king was greatly feared, and now if he should find himself clear and secure from his enemies, they were afraid they would be reduced, or at least their offices and pensions retrenched; for there were several present who had been engaged against him with his brother the Duke of Guienne, in the confederacy called the Public Good.

After his majesty had discoursed with them for some time, he went to mass, and then ordered dinner to be laid in his chamber, and made them all dine with him; there being with him his chancellor, and some other lords of his council. The king's discourse at dinner-time was about this affair, and I well remember that myself and others took particular notice how those who were present dined; but to speak truth (whether for joy or sorrow, I cannot tell), there was not one of them that half filled his belly; and certainly it could not have been from modesty or bashfulness before the king, for there was not one amongst them but had dined with his majesty many times before.

As soon as the king rose from table, he retired, and distributed to some persons certain lands belonging to the Duke of Burgundy, as though he had been dead. He dispatched the Bastard of Bourbon, Admiral of France, and myself, into those parts, with full power to receive the homage of all such as were willing to submit and become his subjects.

He ordered us to set out immediately, and gave us commission to open all his letters and packets which we might meet by the way, that thereby we might ascertain whether the duke was dead or alive.

We departed with all speed, though it was the coldest weather I ever felt in my life. We had not ridden above half a day's journey, when we met a courier, and commanding him to deliver his letters, we learned by them that the Duke of Burgundy was slain, and that his body had been found among the dead, and recognized by an Italian page that attended him, and by one Monsieur Louppe, a Portuguese, who was his physician, and who assured the Lord of Craon that it was the duke his master, and the Lord of Craon notified the same at once to the king.

## II

UPON receiving this news we rode directly to the suburbs of Abbeville, and were the first that announced the intelligence to the duke's adherents in those parts. We found the inhabitants of the town in treaty with the Lord of Torcy, for whom they had held a great affection for a long time. The soldiers and officers of the Duke of Burgundy negotiated with us, by means of a messenger whom we had sent to them beforehand; and in confidence of success, they dismissed 400 Flemings who were then quartered in the town. The citizens, laying hold of this opportunity, opened the gates immediately to the Lord of Torcy, to the great prejudice and disadvantage of the captains and officers of the garrison,—for there were seven or eight of them to whom, by virtue of the king's authority, we had promised money, and pensions for life; but they never enjoyed the benefit of that promise, because the town was not surrendered by them. Abbeville was one of the towns that Charles VII. delivered up by the treaty of Arras in the year 1435, which towns were to return to the crown of France upon default of issue male; so that their admitting us so easily is not so much to be wondered at.

From thence we marched to Dourlans, and sent a summons to Arras, the chief town in Artois, and formerly part of the patrimony of the Earls of Flanders, which for want of

heirs male always descended to the daughters. The Lord of Ravestein and the Lord des Cordes, who were in the town of Arras, offered to enter into a treaty with us at Mount St. Eloy, and to bring some of the chief citizens with them. It was concluded that I and some others should meet them in the king's behalf; but the admiral refused to go himself, because he presumed they would not consent to grant all our demands.

I had not been long at the place of appointment, when the two above-mentioned Lords of Ravestein and Des Cordes arrived, attended by several persons of quality, and by certain commissioners on the part of the city; one of whom was their pensionary, named Monsieur John de la Vaquerie, whom they appointed to be their spokesman, and who since that time has been made first president of the Parliament of Paris. We demanded in the king's name to have the gates immediately opened, and to be received into the town, for both the town and the whole country belonged to the king by right of confiscation; and if they refused to obey this summons, they would be in danger of being besieged, and compelled to submit by force, since their duke was defeated, and his dominions utterly unprovided with means of defense, upon account of their irrecoverable losses in the three late battles.

The lords returned answer by their speaker Monsieur John de la Vaquerie, that the county of Artois belonged to the Lady of Burgundy, daughter of Duke Charles, and descended to her in a right line from Margaret, Countess of Flanders, Artois, Burgundy, Nevers, and Rethel, who was married to Philip I., Duke of Burgundy, son of King John of France, and younger brother to King Charles V.; wherefore they humbly entreated the king, that he would observe and continue the truce that had existed between him and the late Duke of Burgundy her father. Our conference was but short, for we expected to receive this answer; but the chief design of my going thither was to have a private conference with some persons that were there, to try if I could bring them over to the king's interest. I made overtures to some of them, who soon afterwards did his majesty signal service.

We found the whole country in a state of very great consternation, and not without cause; for in eight days' time



they would scarce have been able to raise eight men-at-arms, and for other soldiers there were not in the whole country above 1500 (reckoning horse and foot together) that had escaped from the battle in which the Duke of Burgundy was slain; and they were quartered about Namur and Hainault. Their former haughty language was much altered now, and they spoke with more submission and humility; not that I would upbraid them with excessive arrogance in times past, but to speak impartially, in my time they thought themselves so powerful, that they spoke neither of nor to the king with the same respect as they have done since; and if people were wise, they would always use such moderate language in their days of prosperity, that in the time of adversity they would not need to change it.

I returned to the admiral, to give him an account of our conference; and there I was informed that the king was coming towards us, and that upon receiving the news of the duke's death, he immediately set out, having dispatched several letters in his own and his officers' names, to send after him what forces could presently be assembled, with which he hoped to reduce the provinces I have just mentioned to his obedience.

- III

THE king was overjoyed to see himself rid of all those whom he hated, and who were his chief enemies; on some of them he had been personally revenged, as on the constable of France, the Duke of Nemours, and several others. His brother, the Duke of Guienne, was dead, and his majesty came to the succession of the duchy. The whole house of Anjou was extinct; both René, King of Sicily, John and Nicholas, Dukes of Calabria, and since them their cousin, the Count du Maine, afterwards made Count of Provence. The Count d'Armagnac had been killed at Lestore, and the king had got the estates and movables of all of them. But the house of Burgundy, being greater and more powerful than the rest, having maintained war with Charles VII., our master's father, for two and thirty years together without any cessation, by the assistance of the English; and having their dominions bordering upon the king's, and their subjects

always inclinable to invade his kingdom; the king had reason to be more than ordinarily pleased at the death of that duke, and he triumphed more in his ruin than in that of all the rest of his enemies, as he thought that nobody, for the future, either of his own subjects, or his neighbors, would be able to oppose him, or disturb the tranquillity of his reign. He was at peace with England, as you have heard, and made it his chief business to continue so: yet, though he was freed in this manner from all his apprehensions, God did not permit him to take such courses in the management of his affairs as were most proper to promote his own interests and designs.

Certainly although God Almighty has shown, and does still show, that His determination is to punish the family of Burgundy severely, not only in the person of the duke, but in their subjects and estates; yet I think the king our master did not take right measures to gain his end. For, if he had acted prudently, instead of pretending to conquer them, he should rather have endeavored to annex all those large territories, to which he had no just title, to the crown of France by some treaty of marriage; or to have gained the hearts and affections of the people, and so have brought them over to his interest, which he might, without any great difficulty, have effected, considering how their late afflictions had impoverished and dejected them. If he had acted after that manner, he would not only have prevented their ruin and destruction, but extended and strengthened his own kingdom, and established them all in a firm and lasting peace. He might by this means have eased his own country of its intolerable grievances, and particularly of the marches and countermarches of his troops, which are commanded continually up and down from one end of the kingdom to the other, sometimes upon very slight occasions.

In the Duke of Burgundy's life-time the king often talked with me about this affair, and told me what he would do if he should outlive the duke, and his discourse at that time was very rational and wise: he told me he would propose a match between his son (our present king) and the Duke of Burgundy's daughter (who has since become Duchess of Austria), and if she would not consent to that, on the ground that the dauphin was too young, he would then endeavor to

marry her to some young prince of his kingdom, by which means he might keep her and her subjects in amity, and obtain, without war, what he intended to lay claim to for himself; and this was his resolution not more than a week before he heard of the Duke of Burgundy's death; but the very day he received that news, his mind began to change, and this wise counsel was laid aside when the admiral and I were dispatched into those provinces: however, the king spoke little of what he intended to do,—only to some few that were about him, he promised sundry of the duke's lordships and possessions.

## IV

As the king was upon the road towards us, he received from all parts the welcome news of the delivering up the castles of Han and Bohain, and that the inhabitants of St. Quentin had secured that town for him themselves, and opened thir gates to their neighbor, the Lord of Mouy. He was certain of Peronne, which was commanded by Master William Bische, and, by the overtures that we and several other persons had made him, he was in great hopes that the Lord des Cordes would strike in with his interest. To Ghent he sent his barber, Master Oliver,<sup>1</sup> born in a small village not far off; and other agents he sent to other places, with great expectations from all of them; and most of them promised him very fair, but performed nothing.

Upon the king's arrival near Peronne, I went to wait on his majesty, and at the same time William Bische and others brought him the surrender of the town of Peronne, with which he was extremely pleased. The king stayed there that day, and I dined with him, according to my usual custom, for it was his humor to have seven or eight always with him at table, and sometimes many more.

<sup>1</sup>This personage will be familiar to all who have read Sir Walter Scott's novel of *Quentin Durward*. Oliver le Mauvais was valet de chambre and chief barber to Louis XI.; in October, 1474, he received letters of nobility from that prince, authorizing him to change his name of Mauvais to that of Le Dain. On the 19th of November, 1477, the king conferred the estates of the deceased Count of Meulant on Oliver le Dain and his heirs; and to this gift he added the Forest of Senart in October, 1482. On the 21st of May, 1484, Oliver was hanged "for various great crimes, offenses, and malefactions."

After dinner he withdrew, and seemed not to be at all pleased with the admiral's little exploit and mine; he told us he had sent his barber, Master Oliver, to Ghent, and he doubted not but he would persuade that town to submit to him; and Robinet Dodenfort to St. Omer, as he had great interest there; and these his majesty extolled as fit persons to manage such affairs, to receive the keys of great towns, and to put garrisons of his troops into them. He also mentioned others whom he had employed in the same negotiation in other places; and with this he upbraided me, by the Lord du Lude and others. It was contrary to my duty to argue or expostulate with him; only I told his majesty I had great reason to fear that Master Oliver, and the others whom he had named, would not be able to persuade the Burgundians to surrender those towns to his obedience so easily as they proposed.

That which occasioned the king to speak to me after this manner was, that he had changed his mind, and the success which had crowned the beginning of his affairs, flattered him with the hopes of a speedy surrender of all the towns in the Duke of Burgundy's territories: and his majesty was advised by some persons (who found his inclinations lean that way) to root out and destroy that family quite, and make a distribution of their territories among his servants. Upon which he began to declare openly for whom he designed them. Namur and Hainault, which border upon the frontiers of his kingdom, he bestowed on his own subjects; Brabant and Holland, being larger and at a greater distance, he intended for certain princes of Germany, who, by that means, would be obliged to espouse his interest, and to assist him in all his enterprises.

He was pleased to impart all his designs to me, because I had formerly recommended another method, and his majesty was desirous that I should be thoroughly informed of all the reasons that induced him to the contrary, and endeavored to convince me that his design was far more advantageous for the interest of his kingdom, which had formerly suffered great troubles on account of the exorbitant power of the house of Burgundy, and the vast extent of their territories. And certainly, in respect to this world, there was great

plausibility in what he said; but, as to matter of conscience, I thought it quite otherwise.

However the king's policy and penetration were such, that neither I nor any of his council, could see so far into his affairs as himself; for, without dispute, he was one of the wisest and most subtle princes of his age; but the hearts of kings being in the hands of God Almighty alone, He disposes them in such important affairs as is most proper for the events which He, in His heavenly wisdom, has determined to bring to pass. For, certainly, had it been His Divine pleasure that our king should have continued in the resolution which he had formed before the Duke of Burgundy's death, the wars which have since occurred, and still continue, would never have happened. But we were not worthy on either side to receive so lasting a peace as was prepared to our hands; and that was the true cause of the great oversight of which our king was guilty, and not any defect in his judgment or understanding; for, as I said before, he was a prince of consummate wisdom and experience. I have dwelt the longer upon this subject, to show how necessary it is, at the beginning of any action of importance, to debate and deliberate seriously upon its consequences, in order that the most proper way of effecting it may be chosen, but especially that the whole affair be recommended to God, and that in our prayers He be solemnly entreated to direct us, for from Him all events proceed, as is evident, both by Scripture and experience.

My design is not to upbraid or reflect the least upon the king, when I say he was mistaken in this business; for, perhaps, others of a greater judgment than myself were, and still are, of his opinion. However, this affair was not debated either with us, or anywhere else. Chroniclers commonly write nothing but what redounds to the praise and honor of those princes whose actions they record, and they omit, and often ignore many occurrences that are absolutely necessary to the illustration of the truth; but, for my part, I am resolved to state nothing but what I can prove to be matter of fact, either upon my own knowledge, or the testimony of such persons whose veracity and honor are unquestionable, without the least regard to the praises of any

man; for it is not to be thought there is any prince so wise, but he must sometimes err, and, if he lives long, often; and so it will be found perpetually, if one may be allowed to speak the truth. The greatest senates, and the greatest governments in the world, have erred, and will err, as is known by daily experience.

The king having sojourned for some time in a village near Peronne, resolved the next morning to make his entry into that town, which (as I said before) had surrendered to him. As all things were ready for his departure, the king took me aside, and dispatched me into Poictou and the frontiers of Bretagne, whispering me in my ear, that if Master Oliver failed in his design, and the Lord des Cordes did not come over to him, he was resolved to destroy with fire and sword all that part of Artois which borders upon the Lys, and is called La Levée, and afterwards retire to Touraine. I recommended some persons who, by my means, had already come over to his party, upon promise of pensions and other advantages from him; he set down their names in writing, and honorably performed the promises I had made them; and so I took my leave of him for that time.

As I was just taking horse, the Lord du Lude happened to be near; he was a person in some things very acceptable to the king, but he was too much addicted to covetousness, and scrupled not to abuse or delude any man, and, being easy and credulous himself, he was often imposed upon. He had been educated with the king in his youth, and knew very well how to humor his majesty, for he was a jocose man; he said to me, in a jesting manner (though the counsel was solid enough), "How now, sir, are you leaving the court, when you should now make your fortune, or never? Do not you see what great things fall daily into the king's hands, which will enable him to advance and recompense his favorites? As for my part, I expect to be Governor of Flanders, and to be made up of nothing but gold." He laughed all the while he was speaking to me, but I had no such inclination, for I was afraid it had come from the king: I replied, "That I should be very glad of any good fortune that befell him, and hoped the king would not forget me;" and so I departed.

Not above half an hour before my departure, a person of

some quality came to me out of Hainault, and brought me news from several to whom I had written to persuade them to enter into the king's service. This gentleman and I are nearly related; but he is still living, and therefore I shall not mention his name, nor the names of any of the rest. He immediately made offers to surrender all the chief towns and fortresses in Hainault; I waited at once on the king, and acquainted him with this overture: his majesty ordered the gentleman to be admitted to his presence, but told me, that neither he nor those he came from, were persons whom he had occasion to make use of. One he did not like upon one account, and another, upon another; all their offers appeared to him inconsiderable, and he was of opinion he should gain greater advantages without their assistance; so I left him, and he ordered the gentleman to confer farther with the Lord du Lude.

The gentleman highly resented it, and left the court immediately, without any farther treaty, for the Lord du Lude and he would never have agreed: for he had undertaken the journey in hopes of advancing himself, and raising his own fortune, and the first question that the Lord du Lude asked him when he came in, was, "What the towns would give him to intercede with the king in their behalf?" Wherefore I am of opinion, that the king's refusing to hearken to the overtures that were made him by these gentlemen, was God's own doing; for I have since known that he would have refused no honor or employment to have gained them over to his side; but perhaps, God would not suffer him to be successful in all places, for the reasons above mentioned; or else He did not think fit to permit him to usurp the country of Hainault (which is a fief of the Empire), both because his title was not just, and by reason of the ancient oaths and alliances between the emperors and the kings of France. And he seemed afterwards to acknowledge as much; for when he had possessed himself of Cambray, Quesnoy, and Bouchain, in Hainault, he delivered up Bouchain, and restored Cambray to a condition of neutrality, as it is an imperial town. It is true, I was not upon the spot, yet I was well informed of all that occurred, and could easily understand it by my acquaintance and education in both countries,

and I have since been assured of all this by those very persons who were chiefly employed in the affair.

## v

MASTER OLIVER (as you have already heard) was dispatched by the king's orders to Ghent, with letters to the Lady of Burgundy, Duke Charles's daughter, and full power to make certain secret overtures to her, if she would put herself under the king's protection. This was not the main design of his errand, for he knew it would be a difficult thing to have a private conference with the young lady alone; and, if he had one, it would be no less difficult to persuade her to do what he wanted. His chief business was to bring about some innovation in the city of Ghent, knowing it had been always inclinable to change, and had been kept in subjection under Dukes Philip and Charles by means of fear, for the citizens had lost many of their privileges in their wars with Duke Philip, by the articles of peace; besides, another of their privileges was taken from them by Duke Charles (and that was about the election of their magistrates), upon occasion of an offense they committed on the first day of his entrance into their town as duke. As I have mentioned this already, I shall say no more about it in this place. These passages added much confidence to Master Oliver the barber, who, following his instructions, tampered with some persons whom he judged most tractable, and offered them not only that all their old privileges should be restored, but that new ones should be added. These overtures were not made in their Town-hall, nor publicly, but in private, as I said before, for he had a mind to try first what he could do with the young princess; but they guessed his design.

After Master Oliver had been some days in Ghent, he was conducted to his audience in the best garb he could possibly procure; and he delivered his credentials. The Lady of Burgundy was in her chair of state, the Duke of Cleves on one hand, the Bishop of Liege on the other, and several other persons of quality attending her. After the lady had read his credentials, she bade him deliver his message; his answer was, that his instructions were to deliver it only in private. They replied, that was a custom never practiced among them,



and certainly could not be introduced now with a young lady that was fit for marriage. He persisted in saying, that by his orders he could communicate his business to nobody else. Upon which they threatened to compel him by force, and put him into a terrible consternation. I fancy when he delivered his letters, he had not provided himself with a speech, for, indeed (as you have heard) that business was only secondary; however it may be, Master Oliver left the assembly without any farther conference. Some of the council had a very contemptible opinion of him, both in respect of the meanness of his profession, and the uncomeliness of his demeanor and language; but more especially the citizens of Ghent (because he was born in a pitiful village near that city), put many affronts upon him, in consequence of which he took to flight suddenly; for he was informed that if he had stayed a little longer, they would have thrown him into the river: and truly I am of opinion that would have been his destiny.

Though the management of the affair which was committed to Master Oliver's discretion was far beyond his capacity, yet certainly he was not so much to be blamed as those who employed him in it; for though his success was such as might have been easily presaged, yet he gave proof both of courage and conduct in what he did; for knowing that the town of Tournay lay so nearly, as I said, between those two provinces that it would be easy to make inroads into either, if he could contrive to put a French garrison into it (to which the townsmen were always averse, having all along preserved their neutrality, and connected themselves neither with the one nor the other), he sent privately to Monsieur de Mouy (whose son was bailiff of the town, but not resident there) to come to him at a certain hour with what forces he could draw out of St. Quentin, and whatever other troops he could assemble. Monsieur de Mouy came to the gate at the appointed hour, where he found thirty or forty men, and Master Oliver at the head of them, who boldly commanded the barrier to be opened, and partly for love, and partly for fear, they obeyed him. Monsieur de Mouy marched with his detachment into the town, with which the people were well enough satisfied; but the magistrates were not pleased with it, of whom seven or eight were im-

mediately sent to Paris, and never dared to return during our king's reign.

And thus far the king's affairs were crowned with success, and his enemies over-reached by Master Oliver's management; and perhaps a man of greater rank and penetration could not have managed them with so much success. But I have said enough already of so politic a prince's employing so inconsiderable a person to conduct so important an affair; and certainly God had infatuated his understanding at that time; for, as I said before, had he not looked upon everything as likely to be easily executed, and given too great a loose to his passion and vindictiveness against the Duke of Burgundy's family, there is no question but all, or the greater part, of their dominions had been at this day under his power and government. . . .

#### BOOK THE FIFTH

##### I

THE design of my going into Italy was to adjust a difference between two illustrious families, very eminent in those days. One was the family of the Medicis, the other of the Pacis; which last being supported by the Pope, and Ferrand King of Naples, endeavored to cut off Laurence de Medicis, and all his adherents. They failed in their design upon Laurence de Medicis; but they slew his brother Julian in the great church in Florence; and with him one Franquein Noli, a servant of the house of Medicis, who threw himself before Julian in hopes to have saved him. Laurence was severely wounded, but made his retreat into the vestry of the church, whose doors were of copper, and had been given to the church by his father. A servant, whom he had delivered out of prison only two days before, did him good service, and received several wounds which were aimed at Laurence. This assassination was committed at the time of high mass; and the moment appointed for its execution was when the officiating priest should begin the Sanctus. But it fell out otherwise than was designed; for, supposing all sure, some of the conspirators ran to the palace to kill the senators who were there (which senate, consisting of about nine persons,

has the whole administration of the affairs of that city, and is changed every three months); but they were ill supported, and having run upstairs into the palace, somebody shut one of the doors behind them; so that when they were got up, there were not above four or five of them, and those in such a terrible consternation, that they knew not what to say or do.

The senators and their servants that attended them, perceiving the astonishment of the conspirators, looked out of the windows, saw all the town in confusion, and heard Signor James de Pacis and his accomplices crying out in the palace-yard, "*Liberta! Liberta! Popolo! Popolo!*" thinking by this means to have stirred up the people to take their part; but they were mightily mistaken, for the mob kept themselves very quiet; upon which James de Pacis and his adherents, despairing of success, betook themselves to flight. The governors and magistrates of the city, who were then in the palace, finding how matters went, immediately seized upon the five or six who had got up into the room, with a design to murder them and so get command over the city, and caused them to be hanged at the bars of the palace windows; and among them was the Archbishop of Pisa. The senators finding the people unanimously declare for the House of Medicis, sent immediately to all the passes upon the road, to stop and apprehend all persons that were found flying, and to bring them before the senate. James de Pacis was presently apprehended, and with him an officer of the Pope's, who had the command of a brigade of men-at-arms under the Count Hieronymo, who was concerned in the plot. Pacis and his accomplices were hanged from the windows, but the Pope's officer had the favor of being beheaded. Several more were discovered in the town (and amongst them Francisco de Pacis), and all were hanged immediately; so that in the whole I think there were about fourteen or fifteen persons of quality hanged, besides servants who were killed in the town.

Not long after this occurrence I arrived at Florence, in quality of an agent for the king, having made no stay since I left Burgundy, unless it were two or three days with the Duchess of Savoy, our king's sister, who received me very graciously. From thence I proceeded to Milan, where I

continued two or three days likewise, to solicit supplies for the Florentines, with whom at that time the Milanese were in alliance. The Milanese granted them very freely, because it was their duty, as well as the king's request, and sent them immediately a reënforcement of three hundred men-at-arms, and afterwards a greater number. In short, the Pope, immediately upon hearing of this tumult in Florence, excommunicated the Florentines, and caused his own army, in conjunction with that of the King of Naples, to march against them. The Neapolitan army was numerous, made a fine appearance, and had abundance of brave soldiers in it. They first besieged Castellina, not far from Sienna, and took it, with several other places; so that it was a great chance that the Florentines were not utterly ruined, for they had enjoyed a long peace, and were not conscious of their danger.

Laurence de Medicis, who was the chief man of that city, was but young, and managed by persons of his own years; yet his judgment was of great authority among them. They had but few officers, and their army was but small. The armies of the Pope and King of Naples were commanded in chief by the Duke of Urbin, a wise man and a brave commander; with him there were likewise the Lord Robert d'Arimini (who has since become a great man), the Lord Constantine de Pesaro, and several other officers, with two of the king's sons (that is, the Duke of Calabria, and Don Frederick, both of them still living), and many other persons of quality.

They took all places which they besieged, but not with the same expedition as we do in France, for they were not so well skilled in the art of taking or defending a town; but for encamping and supplying their army with provisions, and providing all things necessary for a campaign, they understood that better than we do. The king's favorable inclination toward them was in some measure serviceable to them; but not so much as I could have wished, for I had no army with which to reënforce them beyond my own retinue. I stayed in Florence and its territories a whole year, and was nobly treated at their expense all the while, and with more civility at last than at first; but being recalled by the king, I returned home. At Milan I received homage of John Galeas, Duke of Milan, for the duchy of Genoa; which

homage was performed to me for my master by the duke's mother, in her son's name.

After which I returned to my master, who received me very graciously, and admitted me more freely to his affairs than ever before, permitting me to lie with him, though I was unworthy of that favor, and many persons were more deserving of such a familiarity than myself. But he was so discreet and sagacious a prince, that no minister of his could possibly miscarry in any negotiation in which he was employed, provided he acted directly according to his master's instructions, and added nothing of his own.

## II

UPON my return from Italy I found the king our master somewhat aged, and inclined to be sickly; yet not so much as to neglect his affairs, which he managed himself, with great prudence. He was still engaged in his wars in Picardy, upon which his heart was mightily set, and the enemy would have been no less fond of that country, if they could have got it into their possession. The Duke of Austria (at present King of the Romans) having that year the Flemings at his command, invested Therouenne; upon which the Lord des Cordes, the king's lieutenant in Picardy, assembled all the forces that were in that province, and in the frontier towns, together with eight thousand Frank archers, and marched to relieve it. Upon news of his approach, the Duke of Austria raised the siege, and, advancing to meet him, they came to an engagement at a place called Guinegaste. The duke had twenty thousand men or more out of the country of Flanders, besides some few Germans and about three hundred English, under the command of Sir Thomas Abrigan, an English knight, who had been in the service of Charles Duke of Burgundy.

The king's cavalry, who were much more numerous than the duke's, broke them immediately, and drove them and their commander, the lord Philip of Ravestain, as far as Aire. The duke took part in the battle with his infantry. In the king's army there were about eleven hundred men-at-arms of his standing forces. They did not all follow the chase, but the Lord des Cordes, who commanded in chief,

pursued, and Monsieur de Torey with him; but though they behaved themselves very bravely, yet it is not the duty of any commanding officer to follow the pursuit. Some of the vanguard and rear-guard retreated, under pretense of defending their own towns; others fled downright.

The duke's infantry kept their ground, though they were vigorously attacked; but they had with them on foot fully two hundred gentlemen, all good officers and brave men, to lead them; and among these were the Count de Romont, a son of the house of Savoy, the Count of Nassau, and several others, who are still living. The bravery and conduct of these gentlemen kept the whole body together, which was very marvelous, after they had witnessed the defeat of their cavalry. The king's Frank archers fell to plundering the duke's wagons, and all that attended them, such as sutlers and others; which being observed, some of the duke's forces attacked them, and cut off a great number of them.

On the duke's side the slaughter was greater, and more prisoners were taken than on the king's side, but he remained master of the field of battle; and I am of opinion, that if he had marched back immediately to Therouenne, he would not have met with the least opposition either there or at Arras: yet he durst not venture to make the attempt, which proved highly to his disadvantage; but in such cases no one knows always what measures are best to be taken; and indeed the duke had some reason to fear. I speak of this battle only by hearsay, for I was not present at it; but to continue my discourse, I found it necessary to mention it.

I was with the king when he received the news of this defeat; he was extremely concerned at it, for he had not been used to lose, but had been so successful in all his enterprises, that it seemed as if everything turned out according to his pleasure. Indeed, to speak truth, his judgment and penetration in state affairs contributed very much to his success: for he would never risk anything, and always endeavored to avoid a battle; nor was this fought by any positive orders from him. His armies were always so numerous, that few princes were able to cope with him, and he had a larger train of artillery than any of his predecessors.

His method was to assemble his troops on a sudden, and

attack those places that were ill provided and slenderly fortified; and when he had taken them, he immediately put into them such a strong garrison, with so much artillery, that it was almost impossible to retake them; and if there were any officer in the town able and willing to betray it for money, he was sure to have the king for a customer, and needed not to be afraid to demand an extravagant sum; for, however exorbitant, his majesty would certainly have paid it rather than venture a battle, or undertake a siege.

He was mightily alarmed at the first news of this battle, supposing he had lost all, and that they durst not tell him the whole truth; for he was aware that, had it been an absolute defeat, all that he had got from the house of Burgundy in those marches and elsewhere, would certainly have been lost, or at least placed in very great danger. However, as soon as he was informed of the whole truth, he was better satisfied, but gave orders that, for the future, no battle should be fought without his knowledge and consent; and so he was reconciled to the Lord des Cordes. From this very hour the king resolved to make a treaty of peace with the Duke of Austria, but to manage the whole negotiation purely to his own advantage; and so to curb the duke by means of his own subjects (who, he knew, were desirous to clip the wings of his authority), that it should never again be in his power to disturb or injure him.

He was likewise very desirous to make some new regulations in the affairs of his own kingdom, particularly in regard to delays in processes of law, in order thereby to control the court of parliament; not to diminish their number or authority; but there were many things which occasioned his hatred against them. He was also desirous to establish in his kingdom one general custom as to weights and measures; and that all the laws should be written in French, in one book, so as to prevent the frauds and prevarications of the lawyers, which are greater in France than in any other nation in Europe, as the nobility have often experienced to their cost. And, doubtless, had God graciously permitted him to live five or six years longer, without being too much affected by disease, he would have done much good to his kingdom; and it was but reasonable he should do so, for he had oppressed and

tyrannized over his subjects more than all his predecessors. But no man's authority or remonstrance could persuade him; it must have come of his own accord, as certainly it would, if God had not afflicted him with sickness: wherefore it is best to do good while we have time and God gives us health.

## III

IN the year 1479, in the month of March, a truce was concluded between the two princes; and the king was very solicitous for a peace, especially in the quarter I have mentioned, provided that it proved very advantageous for his affairs. He began now to decline in age, and to be subject to infirmity; and as he was sitting at dinner one day at Forges, near Chinon, he was seized on a sudden with a fit that took away his speech. Those who were about him took him from the table, placed him near the fire, and shut up the windows; and though he endeavored to get to them for the benefit of the air, yet some of them, imagining it for the best, kept him away. It was in March, 1480, when this fit seized upon him after this manner, which deprived him of his speech, understanding, and memory.

As soon as you arrived, my Lord of Vienne, who were then his physician, you ordered him a clyster, and caused the windows to be opened to give him fresh air, and he came to himself immediately, recovered his speech and his senses in some measure, and mounting on horseback, he returned to Forges, for he was taken with this fit in a small village about a quarter of a league off, whither he had gone to hear mass. He was diligently attended, and made signs for everything he wanted; among other things, he desired the official of Tours to come and take his confession, and made signs that I should be sent for, for I was gone to Argenton, which is about ten leagues off.

Upon my return I found him at table, and with him Master Adam Fumée (physician to the late King Charles, and at present Master of the Requests), and Master Claude, another physician. He made signs that I should lie in his chamber; he understood little that was said to him, and could form no words; but he felt no manner of pain. I waited on him fifteen days at table, and attended on his



person like a valet-de-chambre, which I took for a great honor, and it gave me great reputation. At the end of two or three days he began to recover his speech and his senses; and he fancied no one understood him so clearly as myself, and therefore would have me always to attend him. He confessed himself to the official in my presence, for otherwise they could not have understood each other. There was no great matter in his confession, for he had confessed a few days before; because whenever the kings of France touch for the king's evil, they confess themselves beforehand, and he never missed touching once every week, and if other princes do not the same, I think they are highly to blame, for there are always great numbers of sick people to be touched.

As soon as he was a little recovered, he began to inquire who they were who held him by force from going to the window; and being told their names, he banished them from court, took away their employments from some of them, and never would see them again. From some, as the Lord de Segre, and Gilbert de Grassay, Lord of Champeroux, he took away nothing, but banished them from his presence.

Many wondered at this caprice, condemned his conduct, and affirmed they had done what, in their opinion, they thought for the best; and they spoke the truth; but the imaginations of princes are different, and all those who undertake to account for them are not able to understand them. He was afraid of nothing so much as of the loss of his regal authority, which was then very great indeed; and he would not suffer his commands to be disobeyed in the most trivial point. On the other hand, he remembered that his father, King Charles, in the illness of which he died, believed that his courtiers intended to poison him, at the request of his son; and this made so deep an impression upon him, that he refused to eat, and by the advice of his physicians, and of his chief favorites, it was concluded he should be forced to eat; and so, after great deliberation, they forced soup down his throat, upon which violence he died. King Louis, who had always condemned that proceeding, took it very angrily that they should use any violence with him; and yet he pretended to be more angry than he was, for the great matter that

moved him was an apprehension that they would attempt to govern him in everything else, and pretend he was unfit for the administration of public affairs, by reason of the imbecility and unsoundness of his senses.

After he had thus severely handled the persons above-mentioned, he made inquiry into what had been done in council, and what orders had been made during the ten or twelve days he had been sick; of which matters the Bishop of Alby, his brother the Governor of Burgundy, the Marshal de Gié, and the Lord du Lude, had the principal charge, as they were with him when he fell ill, and all lodged under his room, in two little chambers. He also insisted on seeing all letters and dispatches which had arrived, and those also which arrived every hour; they showed him the most important, and I read them to him.

He would pretend to understand them, take them into his own hand, and make as if he were reading them to himself, when in truth he did not understand one syllable of them. Yet he would offer now and then a word, and make signs what answers should be given; but little business was dispatched during his illness, till we could see what would be the event; for he was a master with whom it was necessary to deal straightforwardly. This indisposition continued about a fortnight; at the end of which he recovered his speech and senses pretty well; but he remained very weak, and in great fear of a relapse, for naturally he was not inclined to put confidence in his physicians.

As soon as he was a little recovered, he released Cardinal Baluc, whom he had kept a prisoner for fourteen years, though the Pope and other princes had many times interceded for his liberation; of which crime he was absolved afterwards by an express bull from his Holiness, which the king had earnestly requested. When he was first seized with his illness, those who were about him took him for dead, and orders were issued for remitting an excessive and cruel tax, which, at the instigation of the Lord des Cordes (his lieutenant in Picardy, he had lately aid upon his subjects, for raising ten thousand foot as a standing force, and two thousand five hundred pioneers, who were to be called the "Gens du Champ;") to which force he added one thousand

five hundred men at arms, of his old standing forces, who were to fight on foot upon occasion, among the rest; besides which he caused a vast number of tents and pavilions to be made, and wagons to inclose all, in imitation of the army of the Duke of Burgundy; and this camp cost him fifteen hundred thousand francs a year. When it was ready he went to review it, in a large plain near Pont de l'Arche in Normandy. In this camp there were six thousand Swiss, and this number he never saw but this once.

From thence he returned to Tours, where he was taken with a new fit, and lost his speech again, and for two hours everybody thought him dead; he lay upon a straw bed in a gallery, with several people about him: the Lord du Bouchage and I devoutly recommended him to St. Claude, and all that were present concurred with our prayers; and immediately he recovered his speech, and walked up and down the house, but he was very weak and feeble; and this second fit took him in 1481. He still went into the country as formerly, and particularly with me to Argenton, where he continued a month, and was very ill; from thence he went to Thouars, where he was also very sick; and he then undertook a journey to St. Claude, to whom we had recommended him, as you have already heard.

At his departure from Thouars he sent me into Savoy, to oppose the Lords de la Chambre, Miolans, and Bresse (though he was privately their friend), for having seized upon the person of the Lord de Luy in Dauphiny, whom he had recommended to be governor to his nephew, Duke Philibert. He sent a considerable body of troops after me, whom I led to Macon against Monsieur de Bresse; however, he and I were agreed underhand. Having captured the Lord de la Chambre in bed with the Duke of Savoy at Turin, in Piedmont, he gave me notice of it, and I caused our soldiers to retire; for he brought the Duke of Savoy to Grenoble, where the Marshal of Burgundy, the Marquis de Rothelin, and myself, went to receive and compliment his highness. The king sent for me to meet him at Beaujeu, in Beaujolois. I was amazed to find him so thin and weak, and wondered how he had strength enough to bear the fatigue of traveling as he did; but his great spirit carried him through all difficulties.

At Beaujeu he received advice that the Duchess of Austria was dead of a fall from her horse. She had been set upon a hot-headed young nag, that threw her down against a piece of timber, which was the occasion of her death. Others said she died of a fever, not of her fall; but be it as it may, she died not many days after, to the great detriment of her friends and subjects; for after her death they never had peace or prosperity. The people of Ghent and other towns had a greater love and respect for her than her husband, as she was their natural sovereign. This misfortune happened in the year 1482.

The king told me the news with a great deal of joy and satisfaction; being extremely pleased that the two children were under the tutelage of the Gantois, who (he knew) were inclined to any mischief that might weaken the power of the house of Burgundy; and now he thought this was the time to attempt something, because the Duke of Austria was young, with his father still living, involved in war on every side, a stranger, and his forces very weak, because of the covetous temper of his father the emperor.

From that time the king began to deal with the Gantois by means of his agent the Lord des Cordes, about the marriage of his son the dauphin with the Lady Margaret, the duke's daughter, who is at present our queen. The Lord des Cordes applied himself in this affair to one William Ryn, pensionary of the town (a cunning, subtle man), and to Coppenol, the town-clerk, who was a hosier, and a person of great reputation among the people, who, in times of trouble, are soonest wrought upon by such folk.

The king returned to Tours, and kept himself so close, that very few were admitted to see him; for he was grown marvelously jealous of all his courtiers, and afraid they would either depose him, or deprive him of some part of his authority. He removed from about him all his old servants, especially if they had any extraordinary familiarity with him; but he took nothing from them, and only commanded them to retire to their posts or country seats: but this lasted not long, for he died soon after.

He did many odd things, which made some believe his senses were impaired; but they knew not his character. As

to his suspicion, all princes are prone to it; especially those who are wise, and who have many enemies, and have offended many people, as our master had done. Besides, he knew he was not beloved by the nobility of the kingdom, nor by many of the commons; for he had taxed them more than any of his predecessors, though he now had some thoughts of easing their burdens, as I said before; but he should have begun sooner. King Charles VII. was the first prince who (by the assistance of several wise and good knights, who had served him in the expulsion of the English out of Normandy and Guienne) gained that point of laying taxes upon the country at his pleasure, without the consent of the three Estates of the kingdom; but then his occasions were great, as it was indispensable to secure his new conquests, and to disperse the free companies who were pillaging the kingdom. Upon which the great lords of France consented to what the king proposed, upon promise of certain pensions in lieu of the taxes which were to be levied upon them.

Had this king lived long, and kept with him those who were then of his council, without dispute he would by this time have enlarged his dominions very considerably; but, considering what has already occurred, and what is likely to follow upon it, he has laid a great load both upon his own soul, and the souls of his successors, and has given his kingdom a cruel wound, which will bleed a long time; namely, by establishing a terrible band of paid soldiers, in imitation of the princes of Italy.

At the time that the Count of Dunois and the said Duke of Bourbon returned from conducting the ambassadors, who had been at Amboise to attend the marriage of the Dauphin and the young queen, the King being in the gallery at Plessis, and seeing them enter with a great train into the castle, called for a captain of the guards, and commanded him to go and search the servants of those lords, to see whether they had any arms under their robes; and ordered him to do it in discourse, so as no notice might be taken. Behold, then, if he had caused many to live under him in continual fear and apprehension, whether it was not returned to him again; for of whom could he be secure when he was afraid of his sou-in-law, his daughter, and his own son? I speak this not

only of him, but of all other princes who desire to be feared, that vengeance never falls on them till they grow old, and then, as a just penance, they are afraid of everybody themselves; and what grief must it have been to this poor King to be tormented with such terrors and passions?

He was still attended by his physician, Master James Coctier, to whom in five months' time he had given fifty-four thousand crowns in ready money, besides the bishopric of Amiens for his nephew, and other great offices and estates for himself and his friends; yet this doctor used him very roughly indeed; one would not have given such outrageous language to one's servants, as he gave the King, who stood in such awe of him, that he durst not forbid him his presence. It is true he complained of his impudence afterwards, but he durst not change him as he had done all the rest of his servants; because he had told him after a most audacious manner one day, "I know well that some time or other you will dismiss me from court, as you have done the rest; but be sure (and he confirmed it with a great oath) you shall not live eight days after it;" with which expression the king was so terrified, that ever after he did nothing but flatter and bribe him, which must need have been a great mortification to a prince who had been humbly obeyed all his life by so many good and brave men.

The King had ordered several cruel prisons to be made; some were cages of iron, and some of wood, but all were covered with iron plates both within and without, with terrible locks, about eight feet wide and seven high; the first contriver of them was the Bishop of Verdun, who was immediately put in the first of them that was made, where he continued fourteen years. Many bitter curses he has had since for his invention, and some from me as I lay in one of them eight months together in the minority of our present King. He also ordered heavy and terrible fetters to be made in Germany, and particularly a certain ring for the feet, which was extremely hard to be opened, and fitted like an iron collar, with a thick weighty chain, and a great globe of iron at the end of it, most unreasonably heavy, which engines were called the King's Nets. However, I have seen many eminent and deserving persons in these prisons, with

these nets about their legs, who afterwards came forth with great joy and honor, and received great rewards from the King.

This by way of digression. But to return to my principal design. As in his time this barbarous variety of prisons was invented, so before he died he himself was in greater torment, and more terrible apprehension than those whom he had imprisoned; which I look upon as a great mercy towards him, and as part of his purgatory; and I have mentioned it here to show that there is no person, of what station or dignity soever, but suffers some time or other, either publicly or privately, especially if he has caused other people to suffer. The king, towards the latter end of his days, caused his castle of Plessis-les-Tours to be encompassed with great bars of iron in the form of thick grating, and at the four corners of the house four sparrow-nests of iron, strong, massy, and thick, were built. The grates were without the wall on the other side of the ditch, and sank to the bottom. Several spikes of iron were fastened into the wall, set as thick by one another as was possible, and each furnished with three or four points. He likewise placed ten bow-men in the ditches, to shoot at any man that durst approach the castle before the opening of the gates; and he ordered they should lie in the ditches, but retire to the sparrow-nests upon occasion. He was sensible enough that this fortification was too weak to keep out an army, or any great body of men, but he had no fear of such an attack; his great apprehension was, that some of the nobility of his kingdom, having intelligence within, might attempt to make themselves masters of the castle by night, and having possessed themselves partly of it by favor, and partly by force, might deprive him of the regal authority, and take upon themselves the administration of public affairs; upon pretense he was incapable of business and no longer fit to govern.

Is it possible then to keep a prince (with any regard to his quality) in a closer prison than he kept himself? The cages which were made for other people were about eight feet square; and he (though so great a monarch) had but a small court of the castle to walk in, and seldom made use of that, but generally kept himself in the gallery, out of which he

went into the chambers on his way to mass, but never passed through the court. Who can deny that he was a sufferer as well as his neighbors, considering how he was locked up and guarded, afraid of his own children and relations, and changing every day those very servants whom he had brought up and advanced; and though they owed all their preferment to him, yet he durst not trust any of them, but shut himself up in those strange chains and enclosures. If the place where he confined himself was larger than a common prison, he also was much greater than common prisoners.

It may be urged that other princes have been more given to suspicion than he, but it was not in our time; and, perhaps, their wisdom was not so eminent, nor were their subjects so good. They might too, probably, have been tyrants, and bloody-minded; but our king never did any person a mischief who had not offended him first, though I do not say all who offended him deserved death. I have not recorded these things merely to represent our master as a suspicious and mistrustful prince; but to show, that by the patience which he expressed in his sufferings (like those which he inflicted on other people), they may be looked upon, in my judgment, as a punishment which our Lord inflicted upon him in this world, in order to deal more mercifully with him in the next, as well in regard to those things before-mentioned, as to the distempers of his body, which were great and painful, and much dreaded by him before they came upon him; and, likewise, that those princes who may be his successors, may learn by his example to be more tender and indulgent to their subjects, and less severe in their punishments than our master had been: although I will not censure him, or say I ever saw a better prince; for though he oppressed his subjects himself, he would never see them injured by anybody else.

After so many fears, sorrows, and suspicions, God, by a kind of miracle, restored him both in body and mind, as is His divine method in such kind of wonders; for He took him out of this miserable world in perfect health of mind, and understanding, and memory; after having received the sacraments himself, discoursing without the least twinge or expression of pain, and repeating his paternosters to the



very last moment of his life. He gave directions for his own burial, appointed who should attend his corpse to the grave, and declared that he desired to die on a Saturday of all days in the week; and that he hoped Our Lady would procure him that favor, for in her he had always placed great trust, and served her very devoutly. And so it happened; for he died on Saturday, the 30th of August, 1483, at about eight in the evening, in the Castle of Plessis, where his illness seized him on the Monday before. May Our Lord receive his soul, and admit it unto His kingdom of Paradise!

## IV

SMALL hopes and comfort ought poor and inferior people to have in this world, considering what so great a king suffered and underwent, and how he was at last forced to leave all, and could not, with all his care and diligence, protract his life one single hour. I knew him, and was entertained in his service in the flower of his age, and at the height of his prosperity, yet I never saw him free from labor and care. Of all diversions he loved hunting and hawking in their seasons; but his chief delight was in dogs. As for ladies, he never meddled with any in my time; for about the time of my coming to his court he lost a son, at whose death he was extremely afflicted, and he made a vow to God in my presence never to have intercourse with any other woman but the queen; and though this was no more than what he was bound to do by the canons of the church, yet it was much that his self-command should be so great, that he should be able to persevere in his resolution so firmly, considering that the queen (though an excellent princess in other respects) was not a person in whom a man could take any great delight.

In hunting, his eagerness and pain were equal to his pleasure, for his chase was the stag, which he always ran down. He rose very early in the morning, rode sometimes a great distance, and would not leave his sport, let the weather be never so bad; and when he came home at night he was often very weary, and generally in a violent passion with some of his courtiers or huntsmen; for hunting is a sport not always to be managed according to the master's direction; yet, in

the opinion of most people, he understood it as well as any prince of his time. He was continually at these sports, lodging in the country villages to which his recreations led him, till he was interrupted by business; for during the most part of the summer there was constantly war between him and Charles Duke of Burgundy, and in the winter they made truces.

I believe from his infancy and innocence to his death, his whole life was nothing but one continued scene of troubles and fatigues; and I am of opinion, that if all the days of his life were computed in which his joys and pleasures outweighed his pain and trouble, they would be found so few, that there would be twenty mournful ones to one pleasant. He lived about sixty-one years, yet he always fancied he should never outlive sixty, giving this for a reason, that for a long time no king of France had lived beyond that age. Some say, since the time of Charlemagne; but the king our master was far advanced in his sixty-first year.

#### BOOK THE SIXTH

##### I

To continue these Memoirs, which were begun by me, Philip de Comines, concerning the exploits and reign of our late king, Louis XI. (whom God absolve!), I will now give you an account how it came to pass that his son, Charles VIII., undertook his expedition into Italy, in which I was engaged. The king set out from Vienne, in Dauphiny, on the 23rd of August, 1494, and returned into his kingdom in October of the year 1495. Before he undertook this enterprise, it was warmly debated whether he should go or not, for by all persons of experience and wisdom it was looked upon as a very dangerous undertaking; nor indeed was anybody in favor of it but himself, and one Stephen de Vers, a native of Languedoc, a man of mean extraction, and who had never seen or had the least knowledge of military affairs. It was also promoted at first by one Brissonet, who was one of the generals of the finances, but his heart soon failed him.

However, this expedition turned much to his advantage afterwards, for he obtained great preferment in the church,

was made a cardinal, and was endowed with several benefices. De Vers had acquired a plentiful estate before, and was seneschal of Beaucaire, and president of the accounts of Paris, for he had served the King in his youth faithfully, in quality of gentleman of the bed-chamber; and, by his persuasion, Monsieur Brissonet was brought over to his party, so that they two were the chief promoters of this expedition, for which few persons praised them, and many censured them; because not only were all things necessary for so great an enterprise wanting, but the king was young, foolish, and obstinate, without either money, officers, or wise councilors. So that before he began his march he was forced to borrow a hundred thousand francs from the bank of Soly at Genoa, at an extravagant interest, and from mart to mart, besides what he collected in other places, as you shall hear hereafter.

They had neither tents nor pavilions, though it was winter when the army entered into Lombardy: one thing, indeed, was very handsome, and that was a brigade of young gentlemen, who were lively and brisk, but under little command or discipline. So that we may conclude this whole expedition, both going and coming, was conducted purely by God; for, as I said before, the wisdom of the contrivers of this scheme contributed but little. However, they may boast of this, that they were the occasion of highly advancing the honor and glory of their king.

## II

It is now high time for me to say something of the Venetians, and of the occasion of my being sent thither in an embassy while the king was employed in his affairs at Naples. I was sent from Asti to return them thanks for the civil and obliging answers they had given to two former ambassadors from his majesty, and to endeavor, if possible, to continue them in his friendship, and to cultivate a good understanding with them; for he saw their power, wisdom, and conduct were more like to disturb him than any other state in Italy. The Duke of Milan hastened my dispatch, and wrote to his resident there (where he constantly had one) to assist me, and give me instructions to whom I should apply myself. His ambassador had an allowance from the Signory of a hundred ducats a month, his lodg-

ings well furnished, and three gondolas to carry him about the town without expense; and the Venetian ambassador has the same at Milan, excepting the boats; for there they go on horseback, and at Venice in boats.

In my journey thither I passed by several of their cities, Brescia, Verona, Vicenza, Padua, and other places. I was treated very civilly wherever I came, in honor to the monarch who sent me, and the people came out to meet me in great bodies, with their Podesta or captain; both of them never came out together, but the captain met me at the gate. When I had entered the town I was conducted to my lodgings; the master of the house was commanded that I should want nothing, and my whole charges were borne, and mighty good words given me into the bargain; yet, if you compute what must necessarily be given to the drums, trumpets, and officers in those ceremonies, an ambassador will be found to save but little; however, my reception was most honorable.

The day that I made my entry into Venice they sent to meet me as far as Fusina, which is five miles from Venice; there you leave the boats which bring you down the river from Padua, and get into little boats covered with tapestry and very neat, with fair carpets within, and velvet cushions to sit upon. To this place you come from Venice by sea, as it is the next place to Venice upon *terra firma*; but the sea (unless agitated by some storm) is very calm, which is the reason of the great abundance of all sorts of fish. I was extremely surprised at the situation of this city, to see so many churches, monasteries, and houses, and all in the water; and the people have no other passage up and down the streets but in boats, of which, I believe, they have near thirty thousand, but they are very small. About the city, within less than the compass of half a French league, there are seventy religious houses both of men and women, all situated in little islands, very beautiful and magnificent both in building and furniture, with fair gardens belonging to them; without reckoning those in the city, where there are the four orders of mendicants, and seventy-two parishes, besides several fraternities; and, indeed, it is most strange to behold so many stately churches in the sea.

I was met and complimented at Fusina by five and twenty gentlemen, richly dressed in silks and scarlets; they welcomed me with abundance of civility, and conducted me to St. Andrew's church, which was near the town, where as many other gentlemen met and complimented me. These were accompanied by the ambassadors of Milan and Ferrara; and after they had made another speech to me I was conducted into other larger boats, which they called Plats, two of which were covered with crimson satin, and spread with tapestry at the bottom, big enough to hold forty persons; and placing me between the two ambassadors (the middle being the most honorable place in Italy), I was conducted through the principal street, which they call the Grand Canal, and it is so wide that galleys frequently cross one another; indeed I have seen vessels of four hundred tons or more ride at anchor just by the houses.

It is the fairest and best-built street, I think, in the world, and goes quite through the city; the houses are very large and lofty, and built of stone; the old ones are all painted; those of about a hundred years standing are faced with white marble from Istria (which is about a hundred miles from Venice), and inlaid with porphyry and serpentine. Within they have, most of them, two chambers at least adorned with gilt ceilings, rich marble chimney-pieces, bedsteads of gold color, their portals of the same, and most gloriously furnished. In short, it is the most triumphant city that I have ever seen, the most respectful to all ambassadors and strangers, governed with the greatest wisdom, and serving God with the most solemnity; so that, though in other things they might be faulty, I believe God blesses them for the reverence they show in the service of the church.

In the company of these fifty gentlemen I was conveyed to St. George's (which is an abbey of reformed black friars), where I had an apartment prepared for me. The next morning they came to wait on me again, and conducted me to the Signory, where I delivered my credentials to the Doge, who presides in all their councils, and is honored as a king. All letters are addressed to him, but of himself he cannot do much; yet this one had greater authority than any of his predecessors, for he had been Doge for above twelve years;

and I found him a prudent man, of great experience in the affairs of Italy, and civil and courteous in his person.

The first day of my arrival was spent in receiving their compliments, and viewing three or four chambers in the duke's palace; in which the ceilings, beds, and portals were all richly gilt; the apartments are very fine, but the court is not large. The palace is splendid and rich in all it contains, being built of finely carved marble, and the whole front and faeings are of stone, gilt an inch thick; and there are in this palace four handsome saloons, richly gilt, and very spacious. The Doge from his own chamber can hear mass at the high altar in the chapel of St. Mark, which, for a chapel, is the most magnificent piece of building in the universe, being built of mosaic work in every part, of which they pretend to be the inventors; and, indeed, it is a great trade amongst them, as I have seen.

In short, I resided there eight months at their expense, and all the other ambassadors who were there had the same treatment; in which time I can assure you I found them so wise, and so intent upon enlarging their territories, that, if it be not prevented in time, all the neighboring States may lament it too late. For since our king's expedition into Italy they have been much more dexterous and skillful in attacking and defending themselves than formerly; for they are still at war with him, and yet they have extended their dominions, and lent money upon the security of seven or eight cities in Apulia, which I am not sure will ever be restored. Besides, at the king's first coming into Italy they did not imagine towns could have been taken so easily (contrary to their custom), nor in so short a time; but since they have been better instructed in the art of war, they have fortified their towns very strongly, and other commonwealths have done the same.

It is not to be expected that they should attain to the perfection and grandeur of the old Romans, for their bodies are not so able to bear the fatigues of war, neither are they of such a martial genius; for they never make war upon the continent in their own persons, as the Romans did; but they send their *Proveditori* and other officers, with their general, to furnish his army with provisions, and assist him in his councils of war. But their naval expeditions are wholly man-

aged by their own people; their fleet, both galleys and ships, being manned with their own subjects, and commanded by their own nobility. Another great advantage they have by not going in person to the wars upon *terra firma*, and that is, there is no man among them of that boldness or interest as to dare to make any attempt to seize the government, as they did in Rome; which is great wisdom, and prevents many civil contentions, against which they have provided in several ways, and all very wisely. So that, for these and many other reasons which I observed amongst them, I do once more affirm that they are in a fair way to be a very powerful people hereafter. . . .

## BOOK THE SEVENTH

## I

I HAVE now done with the affairs of Italy and Spain, and shall return to speak of our own misfortunes and losses in France (at which some people might possibly rejoice, especially if they gained anything by them), and give you an account of the death of Charles VIII., our king, who died suddenly at his castle of Amboise, where he had begun the most august and magnificent building that any prince had undertaken for one hundred years before, both in the town and the castle; and this appears by the towers, to the top of which one may ride on horseback.

The king had also resolved within himself to live a more strict and religious life than he had formerly done, to regulate the laws, to reform the Church, and so to rectify his finances that he would not raise above one million two hundred thousand francs upon his subjects by way of annual tax, which was the sum given him by the three Estates at their convention at Tours, upon his accession to the throne. He intended the said sum should be employed in the defense of the kingdom, and for himself he would live upon his crown lands, as his predecessors had done before him; which he might easily have done if it had been well managed, for his private revenue (comprehending his duties and customs) came to above a million a year. Had he done as he resolved, it would have been a great ease to the people, who pay now above two millions and a half.

He was very earnest likewise to have reformed the abuses in the order of St. Benedict and others. He got good preachers about him, and was a constant hearer of them. He would fain have ordered it so that a bishop should have enjoyed but one bishopric, a cardinal two, and that all should have been obliged to be resident upon their benefices; but he would have found it a difficult task to have persuaded the clergy to it. He gave alms liberally to the poor not many days before his death, as I was since informed by his confessor the Bishop of Angers, who is a very eminent prelate. He had erected also a place for public audience, where he heard and dispatched causes, especially for the benefit of the poor; in which place I saw him for two hours together, not above a week before he died; after which time I never saw him again. Matters of great moment were not dispatched at these audiences, but he had set up that court to keep people in awe, and especially his officers, some of whom he suspended for bribery and corruption.

The king being in such great glory in relation to this world, and in such a good mind as to God, on the 7th of April, 1498, being the eve of Palm Sunday, took his queen (Anne of Bretagne) by the hand, and led her out of her chamber to a place where she had never been before, to see them play at tennis in the castle-ditch. They entered together into a gallery called the Haquelebac Gallery, upon the account of its having been formerly guarded by one Haquelebac. It was the nastiest place about the castle, broken down at the entrance, and everybody committed a nuisance in it that would. The king was not a tall man, yet he knocked his head as he went in. He spent some time in looking upon the players, and talked freely with everybody. I was not there myself (for I had gone to my country-house about a week before) but his confessor the Bishop of Angers, and the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, who were then about him, told me what I write. The last expression he used whilst he was in health was, that he hoped never to commit a mortal sin again, nor a venial sin if he could help it; and with those words in his mouth he fell down backwards, and lost his speech.

It was about two in the afternoon when he fell, and he lay motionless till eleven o'clock at night. Thrice he recovered



his speech, but he quickly lost it again, as his confessor told me, who had confessed him twice that week, once of course, and a second time upon occasion of his touching for the king's evil. Every one went into the gallery that pleased, where the king was laid upon a coarse bed; and he never left it till he died, which was nine hours after. The confessor told me that every time he recovered his speech he called out upon God, the glorious Virgin Mary, St. Claude, and St. Blaise, to assist him.

And thus died that great and powerful monarch in a sordid and filthy place, though he had so many magnificent palaces of his own, and was building another more stately than any of them, yet he died in this poor chamber. How plain, then, and natural is it, from these two examples, for us to acknowledge the power and omnipotence of God, and that our life is but a span and a trifle, though we are so greedy and ambitious after the riches of this world; and that princes no more than peasants are able to resist the Almighty.

## II

IN my relation of the affairs of Italy, I have mentioned a Jacobite friar who lived at Florence for the space of fifteen years, in great reputation for the sanctity of his life, and whom I saw and conversed with in the year 1495. His name was Jerome, and he had foretold several things which afterwards came to pass. He had always affirmed that the king would make a voyage into Italy, declaring it publicly in his sermons, and asserting he had both that and other things by revelation from God, by whom he pronounced our king to have been chosen to reform the Church by the sword, and chastise the insolence of tyrants. But his pretending to revelation created him many enemies, made him incur the displeasure of the Pope, and gained him ill-will from several in Florence. His life and discourses (as far as could be discovered) were the severest and most holy in the world, for he was declaiming perpetually against sin, and making many proselytes in that city.

In the same year 1498, and within four or five days after the death of King Charles VIII., died Friar Jerome also; which I mention the rather, because he had always publicly

asserted that the king should return again into Italy, to accomplish the commission which God had given him for the reforming of the Church by the sword, and the expulsion of tyrants out of Italy; and that in case the king refused or neglected it, God would punish him severely; all which former sermons and those which he preached at this time, he caused to be printed, and they are to be purchased at this day. His threats to the king of God's severe anger if he returned not into Italy, he wrote several times to his majesty a little before his death; and he told me as much at my return from Italy, assuring me that sentence was pronounced in heaven against the king, provided he refused to observe what God had commanded, and did not keep his soldiers from plundering.

About the time of the king's death there were great divisions among the Florentines. Some expected the king's return, and very earnestly desired it, upon confidence in Friar Jerome's assurance; and in that confidence they exhausted and ruined themselves in their expenses to promote the recovery of Pisa and the rest of the towns which they had delivered to the king; but Pisa remained in possession of the Venetians. Some of the citizens were for siding with the league and deserting our king; and these alleged that all was but folly and delusion, and that Friar Jerome was a heretic and a hypocrite, and that he ought to be put into a sack and thrown into the river; but he had friends in the town who protected him against that fate. The Pope and the Duke of Milan wrote often against him, assuring the Florentines that Pisa and the rest of their towns should be restored, if they would abandon our king and punish Friar Jerome. It accidentally happened, that at the time of the king's death the Signory consisted chiefly of Friar Jerome's enemies (for the Signory in that city is changed every two months), who suborned a Cordelier to quarrel with him, and to proclaim him a heretic and an abuser of the people, in pretending to revelation, and to declare publicly that he had no such gift; and, to prove what he said, he challenged him to the ordeal of fire before the Signory. Friar Jerome had more wit than to accept this challenge; but one of his brethren offered to do it for him, and another of the Cordeliers volunteered to do as much on the other side; so that a day was appointed when they were

to come to their trial, and both of them presented themselves to enter the fire accompanied by all the friars of their orders. The Jacobite brought the Host in his hand, which the Signory and Cordeliers insisted he should lay by; but the Jacobite, being obstinate to the contrary, and resolved not to part with it, they returned all to their convents. Whereupon the people, encouraged by Friar Jerome's enemies, and authorized by the Signory, went to his convent and fetched him and two more of his brethren out, and tortured them most cruelly, killing the chief man in the city (called Francisco Vallori), only for being his friend. The Pope sent them power and commission to make out process against him, and at last he and his two brethren were burnt. The charge against him consisted only of two articles; that he created disorder in the city, and that he was an impostor; and that what he pretended to know by revelation he was told by his friends in the council. For my own part I will neither condemn nor excuse him, nor will I say they did ill or well in putting him to death; but I am sure he foretold several things which afterwards came to pass, and which all his friends in Florence could never have suggested. And as to our master and the evils with which he threatened him, they happened exactly as you have heard, first the death of the Dauphin, and then his own death; predictions of which I have seen in letters under his own hand to the king.

## III

THE distemper of which the king died was an apoplexy, or a catarrh, which the physicians hoped would have fallen down into one of his arms, and, though it might have taken away the use of that member, they were in no fear of his death. His majesty had four physicians about him, but his greatest confidence was in him that had the least knowledge and experience in physic; and by his directions he was so entirely governed, that the other three durst not give their judgments, though they saw the indications of death; and would gladly have ordered him a purge three or four days before. All people addressed themselves to the Duke of Orleans immediately, as next heir to the crown; but the gentlemen of King Charles's bed-chamber buried him in great pomp and solem-

nity. As soon as he was dead, service was begun for his soul, which continued day and night; for when the Canons had done the Cordeliers began; and when they had ended, the Bons-hommes or Minims took it up, for they were an order of his own foundation. He lay eight days at Amboise, part of the time in a chamber very richly hung, and part in the church. In short, he lay in great state, and the whole solemnity was more costly than the funeral of any of his predecessors had been. The gentlemen of his bed-chamber, all that had waited on his person, and all the officers of his court, never stirred from his corpse, but watched it constantly; and the service continued till his body was interred, which was about a month after; and, as I have been told by some of the officers of his exchequer, this ceremony cost forty-five thousand francs.

I came to Amboise two days after his death, went to pay my devotions upon his bier, and stayed there five or six hours. To speak impartially, I never saw so solemn a mourning for any prince, nor one that continued so long; and no wonder; for he had been more bountiful to his favorites, to the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, and to ten or twelve gentlemen of his privy-chamber, had treated them better, and given them greater estates than any king had ever done before; and indeed he gave them too much. Besides, he was the most affable and sweetest natured prince in the world. I verily believe he never said a word to any man that could in reason displease him; so that he could never have died in a better hour to make himself memorable in history, and lamented by all who had served him. I do really think I was the only person in the whole world to whom he was unkind; but, being sensible that he was in his youth, and my treatment not at all his own doing, I could not resent it.

Having lain one night at Amboise, I went and paid my respects to the new king, with whom I had been formerly as intimate as any other person about the court, and much of my troubles and losses were incurred for his sake; but now all our former acquaintance and the service I had done him were forgotten. However, he entered upon his government with great wisdom. He altered not any pensions for that year, though they were still to last for six months. He re-

trenched nothing of his salaries, but declared that every officer in his kingdom should continue in the post in which he found him; which was very honorable and discreet. As soon as all things were made ready, he proceeded to his coronation, and I was there among the rest.

The peers of France (according to ancient custom) were represented by these following: The Duke of Alençon represented the Duke of Burgundy; the Duke of Bourbon the Duke of Normandy; and the Duke of Lorraine the Duke of Guienne. The first of the Counts was Monsieur de Ravestain, who represented the Count of Flanders. The second was Engilbert of Cleves, who represented the Count of Champagne, and the third was Monsieur de Foix, who represented the Count of Toulouse. The said coronation was at Rheims on the 27th of May, 1498, and Louis XII. was the fourth king who came collaterally to the crown. The two first were Charles Martel, or Pepin his son, and Hugh Capet, both of them mayors of the palace, or governors of their kings, who afterwards turned usurpers, deposed their masters, and took the government upon themselves. The third king was Philip of Valois, and the fourth King Louis, who now reigns. But the two last came by a just and indisputable title to the crown. Hugh Capet's line lasted three hundred and thirty-nine years, and expired at the accession of Philip de Valois; and the line of the said Philip de Valois became extinguished in Charles VIII., who (as is said before) died in the year 1498, and was the last of that family, which had continued to possess the kingdom one hundred and sixty-nine years, during which time seven kings had succeeded of that line, that is to say, Philip de Valois, King John, King Charles V., King Charles VI., King Charles VII., King Louis XI., and King Charles VIII., who was the last of the right line of Philip de Valois.

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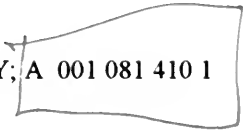
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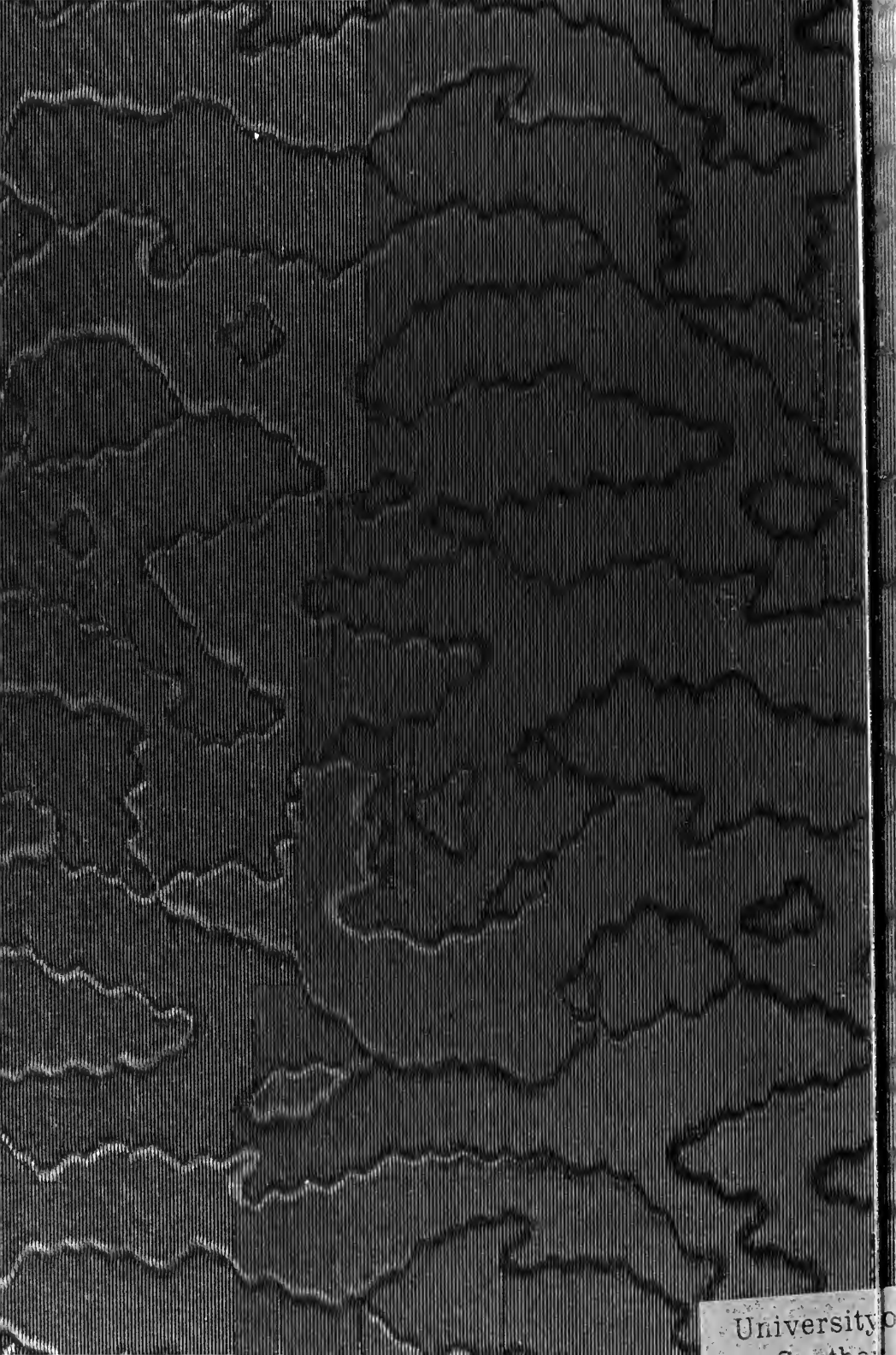


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