THE

HUGUENOT CAPTAIN;

OR

THE LIFE OF

THEODORE AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ,

DURING

THE CIVIL WARS OF FRANCE,

IN THE REIGNS OF

CHARLES IX., HENRY III., HENRY IV., AND THE MINORITY OF LEWIS XIII.

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1843.

THE LIFE

OF

THÉODORE AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ,

CONTAINING A

SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF THE MOST REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES

DURING THE

CIVIL WARS OF FRANCE,

IN THE REIGNS OF

CHARLES IX., HENRY III., HENRY IV., AND THE MINORITY OF LEWIS XIII.

Mrs. Sarah Scott.

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INTRODUCTION.

There is a secret satisfaction in relating the actions of a man who has particularly engaged our esteem; we flatter ourselves we shall by this means communicate to others part of the pleasure which the contemplation of them has afforded ourselves; and we fancy we are doing an act of justice, in holding forth to public view a character, which ought not to sink into oblivion, with the despicable race of beings, who in their passage from the cradle to the grave, performed no action worthy of record; whether from a regular course of vicious conduct, or from that insipid insignificance with which the lives of some men is tinctured, in whom though censure can find no grievous offences, candour can discover nothing to commend; who equally void of strong passions to seduce them into evil, or of virtues to stimulate them to worthy actions, are through life, like Mahomet's tomb, suspended between heaven and hell; who being mere negatives, are destitute of either positive virtue or vice; yet by no means innocent, for they incur great guilt by the neglect of a due exertion of the talents, which were committed to their trust for useful purposes. The justice of a fair representation is more especially due to men from whom it has long been withheld. Such has been the lot of the Huguenots. Their actions have been related by Historians, who were under the influence both of party and religious prejudices; men blinded by passion, and warped by interest, as incapable of judging with candour, as averse to acknowledging truths, which might give offence to the powerful. Near the times of the dreadful desolation made by those civil wars, the hatred excited by the contention must have influenced the minds of men, and given asperity to their pens; but many of the French historians wrote after the cruel and impolitic revocation of the edict of Nantz; and little justice could the Huguenots expect, under the reign of their bigoted persecutor.

Yet the merit of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné was so conspicuous, that there is no doubt, but during the time his grand daughter, Madame de Maintenon, shone in the most exalted sphere, many persons would have been employed in collecting the various incidents of his life, and presenting him in full lustre to the world, had not his attachment to the Reformed religion been considered, even by her, as a crime, that overbalanced all his virtues. Integrity, courage, and constancy, would appear to change their nature, and become criminal in the eyes of so bigoted a woman, when exercised in the defence of tenets, which she considered as heretical. She would reflect with horror on those parts of his conduct, which to the unprejudiced eye appear most laudable; and would blush where she had reason to boast. Had not this been the case, the servile pens of mercenary flatterers would not have been employed in endeavouring to dignify, by a supposed royal descent, a man who had so just a title to honour far more intrinsic from his noble actions, and unblemished virtue. But the spirit and constancy, with which he exposed both his life and fortune, in defence of his religion, could not be an agreeable subject of contemplation to a woman, who detested the tenets he professed, and practised both deceit and force to prevail on all whom she could influence, to abjure them, even the descendants of that man who from the regular course of his actions we may reasonably believe, would have readily sacrificed his life, could he thereby have purchased for them a steady perseverance in the religion to which he was so warmly attached.

I am sensible, that when his grand daughter was in the zenith of her power, Agrippa D'Aubigné would have appeared more worthy of public attention, than at present: but a brave and honest man must always be an interesting object; and the contemplation of great virtues, even of a sort the least suited to the fashion of the times, will ever warm the heart. Of such I trust the subject of the following sheets will be found possessed; though it is certain, that when an author makes choice of a character, because it is particularly pleasing to himself, he would be very unreasonable were he to expect, that it should become equally the favourite of his readers. Taste influences our judgments in regard to virtue, as in other things; people differ concerning intellectual as well as corporeal beauty, but they differ only in degrees of approbation; they will give a preference to one particular turn of mind or features, but some charms will be allowed to every object, that can produce any just claim to real beauty, though it be not of the kind most agreeable to the peculiar taste of the spectator, or of the reader.

The undeviating rectitude, the perfect consistency, the unspotted virtue of Agrippa D'Aubigné's character render him one of the best examples, that history can exhibit. The camp of Henry IV. and the court of Catherine de Medicis contained many illustrious men. Times of trouble are times of heroism; but in the shock of interest, the contentions of party rage, and all the heat of irritated ambition, it is very rare to find unshaken integrity; in this time it was still more to be admired, as Catherine de Medicis so eminently possessed, and with such general success employed the arts of seduction; to the ambitious she held forth the temptations of power, to the avaricious of wealth, to the luxurious of pleasure. Never had

the great enemy of mankind so able a minister, and so faithful a representative. Every species of dissimulation, every mode of treachery, was adopted by her to allure, to betray, and to ruin: not only on the common frailty of human nature, or on the weakness of peculiar dispositions, did she found her hopes and schemes to corrupt, but even when zeal for right objects was carried beyond just bounds, or a virtue beyond its due proportion, she watched the opportunity for mischief. But D'Aubigné was under a better guard than human prudence; and in spite of all the snares she laid for him, or the temptations the nature of the times, and the solicitations of a prince he loved put in his way, he walked surely and uprightly, by following invariably the undefiled law which giveth light to the simple; the faithful disciple of this law, he lived with honour, and died in peace; and possesses the best renown, an honest fame, while his adversary, the pupil of Machiavel, led a life of turbulence and infelicity, and left a memory detested by all good, and despised by all wise men.

Some may think the conduct of a man, who was not greatly exalted by birth, nor dignified by titles, nor rendered conspicuous by the splendor of riches, below their notice; but in his own words I will endeavour to obviate the objection. In the beginning of his private memoirs, he addresses his children, for whose use he wrote them, nearly to this effect:

"In the works of the ancients, and in the lives of emperors, and other great men of antiquity, we may be taught both by precept and example, how to repel the attacks of an enemy, and to baffle the machinations of rebellious subjects: but you cannot there find any instructions for common life, which to you, my children, is a more necessary branch of knowledge. For in the sphere wherein you are to move, the actions of private men, not of princes, are the proper objects of your imitation; you can seldom have to contend with any but your equals; and in your intercourse with them, you will have more occasion for dexterity and address, than for force. Henry the Great was not pleased to see any of his dependants apply closely to the perusal of the lives of kings and emperors; and having observed Monsieur de Neufvy much attached to the study of Tacitus, apprehensive lest a destructive ambition should be excited in a man of his spirit, he advised him to lay aside the book, and confine himself to the histories of persons of his own rank.

"This advice I address to you; and in compliance with your reasonable request, I here give an historical account of my life, with that paternal freedom and confidence which allows me to lay open every action, which it would have been a shameful impertinence to have inserted in my Universal History. As I can neither blush from conscious vanity in relating my good actions, nor from shame in confessing my faults to you, my children, I shall recount every minute particular as if you were still sitting on my knee, and listening to me, with the amiable simplicity of childish attention. My desire is, that what I have done well may inspire you with emulation, and that you may detest and avoid my faults, for I shall lay them all open before you; as they may prove the most useful part of my narration. To you I leave it to make such reflections upon them, as reason and virtue shall suggest. Actions must be judged of by their motives, not by their consequences. Good or ill fortune are not at our command; they are dispensed by a superior and a wiser power."

D'Aubigné's address to his children I may apply to my readers; the courage of an Alexander, the popularity of a Cæsar, the arts of an Augustus, or to approach nearer to the pursuits of a nation of politicians, the subtleties of a Machiavel offer no subject of imitation to the greatest part of mankind. Such exalted stations as call for the exertion of talents like theirs are above the reach of most men, and ought to be foreign to their wishes. But the man of steady integrity, of inflexible virtue, of noble frankness, of disinterested generosity, and of warm and sincere piety, is an object every man may, and every man ought to imitate. Virtue is within the reach of every station; it cannot, in all, wear a dress equally splendid, but it is alike respectable in its plainest garb, and in its richest attire.

While we admire the heroic virtues of many, who lived in France at that period, we have reason to return thanks to Providence, that we are born in times wherein such virtues are not called forth in our countrymen by dreadful occasion. A civil war is the nursery of heroes. That slaughter and desolation, which sink the greatest part of a nation into despair and wretchedness, elevate the soul of a brave man almost above mortality. He struggles with that fate, which others droop under, and seeks, in the pursuit of glory, for some compensation for the loss of that happiness, of which the ravages of war deprive him, as well as the rest of his countrymen. Animated by a bolder spirit, he attempts to conquer those evils, which softer natures endeavour patiently to endure.

The seeds of those civil wars, wherein D'Aubigné was engaged during the greatest part of his life, were sown before his birth. The rapid progress of the Reformed religion in France, alarmed those of the established church, and excited the civil power to take such measures to suppress it, as rather caused its increase; for the effects of persecution have ever been directly contrary to the views of those who employed it. Disappointment added rage to the bigotry of the persecutors; and fear and resentment heated the zeal of the persecuted; but the enmity between the two parties did not break out into open hostilities, during the life of Henry II. who was accidentally killed in a tournament by the Count de Montgommery, in July 1559; nor in the short reign of his son and successor Francis II. but in the minority of Charles IX. who ascended the throne of France on the fifth of December 1560, the kingdom became involved in all the horrors of a civil war.

THE LIFE

OF

THEODORE AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ.

Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné was born the 8th of February, in the year 1550, old style.* Some have laboured to prove him the son of Jane, Queen of Navarre, in a private marriage, after the death of her husband, Anthony of Bourbon:† but this supposition was probably first conceived in the time of Madame de Maintenon, by the inventive brain of some flattering courtier, who sought to recommend himself to favour, by attributing to her an extraction which raised her nearer to a level with Louis the Fourteenth: wherein he might have succeeded better had her family been more obscure; but it was too well known to numbers, that Theodore was son to John D'Aubigné, lord of Brie, in Saintonge, and Catharine de l'Estang, who died in bringing him into the world, and that he was born twelve years before the death of Anthony of Bourbon.

John D'Aubigné, who was a zealous Huguenot, and occupied a considerable post in that party, being no less careful to procure for his son literary instruction, than to have the principles of true religion and virtue instilled into his infant mind, caused him to be taught the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew letters at the same time; wherein he made so quick a progress, that at six years old he could read all those languages, though his application to them had not made him neglect his native tongue. At the age of seven years and a half, he translated Plato's Crito; stimulated to an undertaking, at his age so arduous, by his father's promise of printing it, with his picture annexed:‡ an early proof of the spirit of emulation so visible in his riper years, which seldom operated in him except as an incentive to the pursuit of glory.

Few men arrive at maturity without their natural dispositions having suffered so considerable an alteration from external circumstances, from the peculiarity of their education, from the influence of their early connexions, from the interested views of their riper years, from the force of reason or the power of reflection, that, after they are entered into active life, it is difficult to discover the natural bent of their tempers. When they appear on the great theatre of the world, like actors on lesser stages, they frequently assume feigned characters: having chosen their part, their sole study is to keep up to it, though at the expense of their natural feelings, which they sacrifice to some (possibly ideal) good, which they have proposed to themselves as the ultimate end of all their actions. D'Aubigné was one of the few who retained through life the bent that nature had given him; he continued invariably the same in prosperous and adverse fortune; in courts or camps; when high in favour with his prince, and when banished from his presence. That the same temper which actuated him through life was born with him, is so evident from some characteristic strokes in his childhood, recorded by himself, that I hope I may be allowed to relate them; for, though the puerilities of infancy to some appear too trifling, yet if we consider that in early youth we see the natural character, uncontaminated by intercourse with the world, and undisguised by affectation, they become important, as they bring us well acquainted with the man; they introduce us directly into his heart, into which, at a more mature age, we cannot penetrate without passing through an intricate, almost an impervious labyrinth.

When Agrippa D'Aubigné had attained his ninth year, his father carried him to Paris. Agrippa relates an incident in this journey, which shows the warmth of his father's zeal. They arrived at Amboise soon after the conspiracy of the discontented Catholics and Huguenots against the Guises, had been discovered, defeated, and very

* Histoire Secrete D'Aubigné, p. 3.
† Bayle, under the head of Navarre.
‡ Histoire Secrete D'Aubigné, p. 4.

severely punished. Many of the conspirators' heads were still fixed on the gallows, and so little changed that the elder D'Aubigné could distinguish the faces of his friends. So afflicting and so horrible a spectacle, threw him off his guard; and although he was in the midst of a crowd of seven or eight hundred persons, struck with horror and resentment, he cried out, "Oh! the traitors! they have murdered France!" And laying his hand on his son's head, said, "My son, I charge thee, at the hazard of thine own head, as I will at the hazard of mine, revenge these honourable chiefs; and if thou failest to attempt it, my curse shall fall upon thee."* The crowd that were beholding the horrid spectacle with the malignant pleasure of cruel bigots, were so offended at the boldness of D'Aubigné, that it was with difficulty he and his escort escaped the effects of their resentment.

Thus was Agrippa D'Aubigné, like another Hannibal, dedicated by paternal authority to the support of that cause to which his father sacrificed his life. By an edict, published in January, 1562, liberty of conscience, and the free exercise of their religion, while they continued unarmed, was granted to the Huguenots. This seeming security encouraged the elder D'Aubigné to carry his son again to Paris, and place him under the care of Matthew Beroalde, a man of great learning and of the reformed religion. But so little were the conditions of this edict regarded, that in many places, among which Vassy was rendered most remarkable by the Duke of Guise's presence, and because the massacre was begun by his attendants, the Huguenots, while assembled at their devotions, were set upon by the Catholics, and being unarmed, were easily murdered.† The reformed, perceiving that their destruction would thus be gradually effected under the colour of an insidious peace, judged that open war was less fatal. The Prince of Condé, and all the chief persons of the party, were inclined to take arms, except the Admiral de Coligny, who could not be brought into their measures, and was of so great importance and high credit amongst them, that his opposition threw a damp on their spirits, and prevented their coming to any resolution; nor had they any hope remaining of bringing him over to their opinion, when his wife's persuasions effected it: her magnanimity conquered his irresolution; he complied with the solicitations of his party; they took up arms, and the first action they performed was the taking of Orleans.‡ This open act of hostility exasperated their enemies, who thereupon increased their persecutions; and so great was the cruelty exercised in Paris, that the Huguenots could expect no safety but in flight. Among those reduced to this extremity was Matthew Beroalde; he took with him his family and his pupil, who appeared so much affected at leaving a little study of books, which had been elegantly fitted up and furnished in the manner most agreeable to him, as a consolation for being removed so far from his family, that Beroalde, taking him by the hand, said, "My little friend, are you insensible to the peculiar happiness of having it in your power at so early an age to lose something for him, who has given every thing to you?"*

This little party, consisting of four men, three women and two children, got safe as far as Courances, a village near Milly, in the province of Gastinois, two leagues from Fontainbleau, but were there seized by the Chevalier D'Achon, who commanded a troop of one hundred horse in that place, and were by him given up to the inquisitor. D'Aubigné entered the prison unmoved; but when they took from him his little sword, his fortitude failed, and he shed tears. The inquisitor examined him apart from the rest, and was much offended by the freedom and spirit of his answers. His youth, his person, and the elegance of his dress, which was white satin, attracted the notice of some of the officers, and pleased with his behaviour, they carried him to the Chevalier D'Achon, who was then entertaining a large company of gentlemen and ladies. D'Aubigné being there informed that he and the friends that accompanied him were condemned to be burnt, perhaps only with an intention to intimidate him, and that when the hour of execution came, it would be too late to retract his heresy, was pressed to immediate abjuration; but, with spirit and fortitude above his years, he replied, that "he felt more horror at the thoughts of the mass, than at the approaches of death."

If the accounts left us of the persecutions of those times did not show that bigotry can extinguish every sensation of humanity, it would be difficult to believe that the condemnation of any persons to a cruel death, could be an agreeable subject of conversation in a ball-room; and more difficult still to believe that the company should require a youth under that sentence, or who supposed himself so, to dance for their amusement; but so it was; the Chevalier D'Achon commanded him to dance a galliarde, the very name of which shows it to have been of a sort that few persons in such circumstances would have been able to perform; but D'Aubigné obeyed, and acquitted himself with so much grace and spirit, as gained him the applause and favour of the whole

* Histoire Secrete D'Aubigné, p. 4.

† Hist. de Charles IX. par Varillas, tom. I., liv. ii. p. 216. De Thou, tom. iii. p. 128. Vie de Gaspard de Coligny, liv. iv. p. 243.

‡ Pere Dan. tom. iv. p. 735. De Thou, tom. iii. p. 136.

* Hist. Secrete du Sieur D'Aubigné, p. 5.

assembly; yet he was carried back to prison by the inquisitor, who, not content with so harsh an exercise of his power, loaded him with abuse.

When Beroalde learnt from his pupil that they were already condemned, he began to sound the resolution of his companions, who were with great facility reconciled to the death that awaited them. In the evening, the persons that brought them food showed them the hangman of Milly, preparing every requisite for their execution the next day.*

But a power superior to their inhuman persecutors had ordered it otherwise. As soon as their prison door was shut, they joined in prayer, their whole business being now (as they believed) to prepare themselves for their approaching death; but, after having spent about two hours in inspiring each other and themselves with fortitude, the officer who was appointed to guard them entered the room, and after caressing the little D'Aubigné, addressed himself to Beroalde, saying, "I am determined, at the hazard of my life, to save you all, for the sake of this child; keep yourselves ready to follow me at a minute's notice; but, in the mean time, give me fifty or sixty crowns to bribe two men, without whose connivance I cannot effect it." Sixty crowns, which they had concealed about them, were immediately given him; for though people who had long been exposed to a series of villanies from those who held that faith was not to be kept with heretics, might doubt the officer's sincerity, yet they had no inducement to be careful of money which could not be of any use in their situation.

At midnight, the officer returned, accompanied by two men, and said to Beroalde, "You told me the father of this boy is commander in Orleans; promise to get me received into his company." Beroalde readily assured him that it should be so, beside a considerable reward for the good service he would render them. The officer then giving his hand to D'Aubigné, made them all take hold of each other, and thus led them on in silence until they had passed the sentinel who guarded the place, and conducted them through private ways into the high road to Montargis.†

At Montargis, they were received with the greatest humanity by the dowager duchess of Ferara, daughter to Louis XII.; and she was so pleased with D'Aubigné, that she made him sit by her for three hours, to hear him expatiate on the contempt of death, an unusual topic at his age; but in such times, when the most cruel executions were continually before their eyes, even children became familiarized with the subject; and no doubt but the first lessons they received were such as would best enable them to support the severe trials to which they might be called, as no age exempted the Huguenots from the barbarity of their persecutors; and to this early instruction we may attribute the many instances at that time of infant martyrdom.

The Duchess of Ferara having entertained her guests for three days, in the manner most proper to refresh them after so much fatigue and anxiety, caused them to be safely conducted to Gien, where they had been a month, when the king's forces approaching to lay siege to the place, they fled from it, not without hazard, to Orleans. In that town, a still greater danger awaited them; Agrippa D'Aubigné was the first person seized with the plague, which afterwards carried off thirty thousand persons. During his sickness, he saw his surgeon and four of his attendants die of it in his chamber; but he at length recovered; and by the time his father returned from Guyenne, where he had been obliged to go during his son's sickness, to hasten a reinforcement of the garrison, he was entirely free from all the effects of that contagion, but had fallen into one that was still worse; for the licentious conduct of the officers had infected him with such vices as his age would admit of; and the father found that although his body was restored to health, his principles were much corrupted. As he well knew his son's disposition, he trusted to the youth's pride for working a reformation; and declaring that his vices having degraded him beneath his birth, he was no longer qualified for any thing but manual employments, he caused him to be dressed in the manner of a common artificer, and gave orders that he should be conducted into all the shops in the town, that he might choose the trade he would best like to follow.

This disgrace had so violent an effect on the high spirited Agrippa, that it threw him into a fever, accompanied with a delirium, which reduced him to the verge of the grave. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he cast himself at his father's feet, and solicited his pardon in a harangue so pathetic, that it drew tears from all present, and restored him to his father's favour, who then suffered him to live at an expense far above his future prospects.*

On the 19th of December was fought the battle of Dreux,† wherein the commanders on both sides, the Constable de Montmorenci, and the Prince of Condé, were taken prisoners, but in other respects the event was not so equal, the victory remaining with the Catholics. The constable, with other prisoners, among whom was the Che-

* Hist. Secrete du Sieur D'Aubigné, p. 6.
† Ibid. p. 7.

* Hist. Secrete du Sieur D'Aubigné p. 9.
† Davila, lib. iii. p. 128. Ib. Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 773. De Thou, tom. iii. p. 369.

valier D'Achon, were sent to Orleans, to be under the care of the elder D'Aubigné, who carried his son to visit the man whose prisoner he had been at Courances. The youth mildly reproached him with the inhuman treatment he had received when in his power, but being excited by some that were present to retort part of the abuse he had received from D'Achon, he generously replied that "he could not insult the unfortunate."*

In the beginning of the following year, the Duke of Guise laid siege to Orleans, and prosecuted it so successfully, that the town may be said to have owed its deliverance to the detestable hand of an assassin;† an action which cast more dishonour on the Huguenots than any event during the whole course of the civil wars; for Poltrot, on being taken, deposed that he was hired for that purpose by the admiral and other chiefs of the party; and although before his execution, he denied his own deposition, and first cleared all but the admiral, and afterwards the admiral also, on being allowed to speak privately to the president, de Thou; and notwithstanding the persons accused denied the fact; yet the event was so much to their advantage that it was impossible to persuade the world that they were entirely innocent of it. Even Agrippa D'Aubigné, in his Universal History, allows that Poltrot had declared publicly, in the Huguenot army, his intention of killing the Duke of Guise, but adds, that little regard was paid to what he said, for he was considered as a madman.‡

The loss of so great a commander determined the queen mother to agree to a pacification; and the Huguenots, who were ever ready to lay down their arms on being flattered with hopes of the free exercise of their religion, only required to have the edict of January, 1562, renewed and better observed. The elder D'Aubigné was one of the persons employed in this negotiation, though not well cured of a wound he had received during the siege. After the treaty was concluded, he left Orleans; but, before he set out, took a more tender farewell of his son than was usual with him; and charging him to remember what he had said to him as they passed through Amboise, to preserve his zeal in the cause of religion, his love for science and for truth, he left him. An abscess gathering in his wound, he died at Amboise, without expressing any other regret at leaving the world, than that his son was not of sufficient age to succeed him in a very considerable and honourable post, which had been given him for his long and useful services to the party; but he commanded that the Prince of Condé should be desired, in his name, to appoint him no successor who was not resolved to die for the good of the cause.*

D'Aubigné's grief for the death of his father was very great, and the conduct of his guardian gave him much additional vexation. His father died so deeply in debt that it was judged proper for his son to give up all claim to his paternal estates, and to depend only on what he inherited from his mother. He was continued another year under the tuition of Beroalde; and then, being thirteen years old, was sent to Geneva, and placed in the schools there, though he was master of the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin tongues, and had gone through a course of mathematics. This mortification excited in him, for a time, an aversion to study and academic restraints, and he became so wild and unruly, as exposed him frequently to punishments that his spirit could by no means endure; for though Beza, who was then at Geneva, was well inclined to pardon his boyish tricks, wherein more wit and drollery, than malice or any evil motive appeared, yet the inferior pedagogues were implacable; possibly the more so, for perceiving that his irregularities entertained the less severe, and rendered him the more pleasing.† After having passed two years at Geneva with much vexation, and no advantage, he went to Lyons, unknown to his relations, and there returned to the study of mathematics.

This step, taken without the knowledge of his guardian, was attended by a circumstance more mortifying than the want of his approbation, even the want of money; and he soon found himself reduced into the most necessitous situation. The woman with whom he lodged, suspecting his poverty, threatened to turn him out of her house if he did not pay her what was due. This indignity, together with his extreme indigence, affected him so much that he left the house early in the morning, and wandered about the whole day without food. As the evening drew on, and his distress was increased by the want of a place wherein to shelter himself against the inclemencies of the night, firmly resolved not to return to his lodging, he passed the bridge built over the Soane, and weary in body and perplexed in mind, leant against the parapet wall of the bridge, and bending his head over it, gave vent to his afflicted spirits by tears, which dropped into the river. Despair suggested that the stream offered him a period to all his distresses, and such a one as, seeing no hope of any other, he thought greatly eligible. But however justifiable, in his disordered state of mind, he believed that action, yet the religious principles in which

* Hist. Secrete D'Aub. p. 10. Mem. de l'Admiral de Chatillon, p. 48.

† De Thou, tom. iii. p. 394. Davila, lib. 3. p. 131. Mem. de Chatillon, p. 51.

‡ Hist. Univ. tom. i. lib. 3. chap. 17, p. 176.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 11.

† Ib. p. 12.

he had been educated, inclined him to think that he ought to address that Power, in whose hands are the issues of life and death, before he proceeded to execute so desperate a resolution. With this view, he commenced his prayer; but happening to conclude it with the words *life eternal*, they gave rise to some tremendous ideas, in comparison with which, the evils of this short life appeared so trifling, that his purpose vanished, and changing the nature of his address, he petitioned for support and assistance in his distress, rather than continue in his design of seeking a quietus from his own hand. While he was thus employed, a gentleman, nearly related to him, passing over the bridge in his road to Germany, knew him, and gave him the joyful intelligence of having brought him a supply of money, which extricated him out of his present difficulties.*

In a short time after, the Huguenots having again taken arms,† on finding that the terms granted by the last pacification were not fulfilled, D'Aubigné returned to his guardian, fully determined to enter among the Huguenot troops; but his guardian, disapproving the measure, put him under close confinement.‡

On the 10th of November was fought the battle of St. Dennis,§ wherein the Constable of Montmorenci being mortally wounded, the advantage of the day was on the side of the Huguenots, which induced the queen to practice her usual arts of negociation, whereby she always found it easy to deceive the Huguenots to their destruction: and early in the following year they were prevailed with to lay down their arms, on the republication of the edict of pacification, given in the year 1562.

But this peace was of short continuance. The Catholics accused the Huguenots of encroaching beyond the liberties allowed them, and the Huguenots complained that the articles of peace were every where infringed, alliances entered into with neighbouring powers who engaged to join in their destruction, the stipulated exercise of their religion impeded, their people every where oppressed, and in some places cruelly treated, even to so great a degree that they computed of persons slain during this interval of nominal peace, to the amount of ten thousand. It is not to be doubted but the enthusiasm of some of the reformed would lead them into actions that might justly offend; but the whole body had shown a constant desire of peace, if it might be enjoyed on tolerable terms; while the unremitted endeavours of the Catholics to destroy them, either by open war, by treachery, or under the sanction of ill observed pacifications, gives sufficient grounds to believe that the Huguenots had most cause for complaint. In every point, the Catholics acted consistently with their great plan, ever keeping it in view; and their own historians acknowledge such infringements of the articles of pacification as sufficiently justify the Huguenots, while they accuse them of sedition and turbulence.* Yet, notwithstanding all these provocations, they forebore taking arms till they were stimulated to it by the discovery of a scheme, formed by the queen, for seizing on the persons of the admiral and the Prince of Condé, at Noyers, who, having received some intimation of her design, escaped to Rochelle.†

As the late treaty had produced no real pacification, D'Aubigné's guardian, perceiving the probability of an immediate renewal of the war, had not released his ward from his confinement; but the violence used to restrain him from following his inclination was not likely to abate the ardour of a youth of his spirit; and he bore his imprisonment with such impatience as left no room to doubt but that if possible he would make his escape. To render this the more difficult, every night, as soon as he was in bed, his clothes were carried into his guardian's chamber: but vain were all attempts to control one so bold and resolute. Some of his young friends, who had been permitted to see him, having engaged to enter among the new troops raised for the third religious war, on taking their leave of him, promised to discharge a musket under the windows of his apartment, to notify their departure. It was in the night; but the signal was not lost on the prisoner, who let himself down from the window by tying his sheets together, climbed over two walls, under one of which was a well that he narrowly escaped, and barefooted, with no other clothing than his shirt, he ran after his companions, his feet bleeding with the wounds which they received from the sharpness of the stones.

Captain St. Lo, the chief of the troop, after vainly endeavouring, by reproofs and menaces, to make him return home, humanely took him up behind him. In their road to Jonsac, they met a small body of the enemy, which they easily defeated, and D'Aubigné thereby got a musket, but he would not take any clothes, though his companions and necessity urged him to it; and arrived at Jonsac in the same light dress in which he escaped. When he got there, some officers advanced money to clothe and arm him; and to the note he gave them as security for what they had

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 13.
† De Thou, tom. iv. p.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 14.
§ Vie de la Noue, p. 17. Vie de Coligny, liv. v. p. 331. Davila, lib. iv. p. 174. Mem. du Duc de Bouillon, p. 27.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aubig. tom. i. p. 262. Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 537.
† Ibid. p. 882.

let him, he added, "And I hereby engage not to accuse the war of having deprived me of any thing, as it cannot leave me in a more pitiable condition than that in which I entered it."

From Jonsac, this little army marched to Saintes, the place of general rendezvous, where Mons. de Mirebeau commanded, who at the desire of D'Aubigné's relations, tried every means to prevail on him to return home, but without effect; and some of the officers, in conjunction with a cousin of his, attempted to seize him by force; but he made such good use of his sword, that his cousin desisted, and he put himself under the protection of Captain Asnieres, who was at variance with Mons. de Mirebeau.

All D'Aubigné's resolution and spirit were necessary to enable him to support the difficulties in which he had involved himself. The winter was extremely severe, yet the troops kept the field. Destitute of any of the conveniences which alleviate the hardships, or administer refreshment to the wearied soldier, he was worn down with fatigue and perishing with cold; but his chief care was to conceal his distresses from the relations he had in the army, contented to suffer if he could but avoid giving them opportunities of reproaching him with obstinacy, and exulting in his sufferings. At the siege of Angoulême, he had his share of action in an assault made on the town; and at the taking of Pons, he was one of the first who entered the breach, and revenged an aunt of his on a captain who had attempted to violate her. He fought likewise at the skirmish of Jaseneuil and at the battle of Jarnac,* where the Catholics obliged the Prince of Condé to engage, before the admiral, with the greatest part of the Huguenot army, could join him. While the prince was putting on his helmet, just as the battle begun, an unruly horse, on which the Duke de la Rochefoucaut unfortunately happened to be mounted, ran against him in such a manner as broke his leg; but that magnanimous prince took no other notice of it than to bid those who were near observe the accident that had befallen him; and encouraging them to support the reputation of their valor, he desired them to remember the condition wherein Lewis of Bourbon began that day, to fight for God and his country, and immediately, at the head of a small corps, attacked a far superior body of Germans, which opposed that part of the army. His little troop was soon surrounded by the enemy; most of his men were killed by his side, his horse was shot and himself taken prisoner; but this misfortune exasperated, not discouraged, the small remainder of his troops, and the battle became the most obstinate of any that had been fought since the beginning of the civil wars. One old man was accompanied by twenty-five of his nephews, fifteen of whom were slain with him, the other ten taken prisoners. The Prince of Condé was still in the field of battle, though a prisoner, when Montesquieu, captain of the guard to the Duke of Anjou, who bore the title of general of the army, came directly from the duke, and shot the Prince of Condé through the head. Many concurrent circumstances made it generally believed that he committed this cruel action in obedience to the duke's immediate orders.*

As the greatest part of the Huguenot army did not reach the field till the battle was over, the admiral was still at the head of a considerable force; and his first care was to strengthen the garrisons in the towns the Huguenots possessed.

The queen of Navarre met him at Tournai Charente, bringing with her the Prince of Bearn, her son, and the Prince of Condé, son to the prince murdered at Jarnac, the one sixteen and the other seventeen years of age, whom she committed to his care; and recommended them to the soldiers, in an harangue so sensible and spirited, that it raised the courage of the party more than the consideration of their military strength. So much magnanimity and prudence appeared in her whole conduct, during the remainder of her too short life, as proved of great service to the cause. The Prince of Bearn was declared their chief; and the army took an oath never to abandon him till a safe and honourable peace was granted to their party.†

D'Aubigné was at the great skirmish of Rocheabeille,‡ wherein the Huguenots had the advantage, but was engaged in Saintonge at the time the battle of Montcontour was fought, in which the admiral received a total defeat.§

D'Aubigné was not in a post of less danger: the Huguenot troops were continually engaged in small parties, surprising and storming towns in the province of Saintonge. D'Aubigné, in conjunction with two of his friends, having raised eighty horse, and chosen for their commander the Baron de Savignac, a man of great courage, and forward to undertake the most perilous enterprises, though deprived of the use of his legs by the palsy, after defeating two companies of the enemy's horse, made an attack, in the night, on a village called Le Soldat, where they were so vigorously repulsed, that only four of their number, besides the baron, escaped. D'Aubigné being one of them, was obliged, in seeking his

* Hist. Sec. D'Aubig. p. 16.

* Pere Ean. tom. v. p. 902. Varillas, liv. 7. p. 261. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. i. liv. 5. p. 280.

† Mem. de Chatillon, p. 103. Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 906. Dav. lib. 4. p. 209.

‡ Ibid. p. 216.

§ Mem. de la reine Mar. p. 21. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. i. liv. 5. p. 307.

safety, to pass the river Drogne, which he would have found a difficult attempt, had he not been pursued by a peasant whose intent was to kill him; but wisely drawing good out of evil, he obliged the man to show him a ford and conduct him to the town of Coutras. Yet here he did not find himself in a much better situation; he had still another river to cross; and while he was seeking where he might best pass it, he perceived four musketeers coming towards him. The superior danger which threatened him, putting an end to his search, he plunged into the river, swam across it, amidst the fire of their muskets, and landed safely; notwithstanding another party on the contrary shore attempted to obstruct him.*

The ardour with which he entered into every hazardous enterprise, began to distinguish him from the multitude; and the following year he was trusted with the command of twenty musketeers, of the forlorn hope, whom he kept in full employment. Archiac being besieged, he forced his way into the place at the head of his little troop, whom he had laden with gunpowder, as a timely supply to the besieged. A soldier of the Catholic party having defied him to single combat, he accepted the challenge, and remained conqueror; a victory which obtained him the offer of a pair of colours from many of the principal officers; but he refused them all, having determined to accept none but in the colonel's company, which was soon after given him. At the siege of Coignac, with another young officer who had a like charge in the forlorn hope, he fought his way into the town, although the besieged made a valiant defence, yet he not only gained ground, but fortified himslf so well therein, that the garrison was reduced to capitulate; and the captain, as an acknowledgment of the great service he had done the besiegers, gave him permission to regulate the terms of the capitulation. Every thing being prepared to begin the siege of Pons the following day, D'Aubigné, who had just got the colours he wished, obtained permission, with some difficulty, of Asnieres, the commander, to undertake some enterprise that night, in order, as he expressed it, to gain hose for his men, and was so successful as to get possession of the suburbs of Pons, more by stratagem than by force; when, notifying his success to the commander, he desired him to repair thither with all covenient haste, that he might deliver the town into his hands; which, on Asniere's arrival, he immediately perform ed.†

Asnieres, at the head of his regiment, in which D'Aubigné was ensign, was soon after obliged to pass by Rohan, where he expected to be set upon by the Baron de la Garde. D'Aubigné, ever eager for action, obtained the command of thirty musketeers, and with this small corps engaging the baron in continual skirmishes, and harassing him whose aim was to harass the Huguenots, he gave the regiment time to perform their march in safety.* But this was his last military exploit for some time; he was immediately after seized with a fever, which confined him to his bed; and believing himself past recovery, he repented very seriously of the excesses he had committed in company with his forlorn hope, and very frankly acknowledged to the officers who visited him, his enormous guilt in having sought to command before he was of an age to have sufficient authority over his men to restrain them from plundering, or to entitle him to punish their cruelty. He tells us that the important truths this sickness suggested to his mind, worked a considerable change in his morals and conduct.†

Negotiations for a peace had been some time carrying on. Though in most general actions, the Catholics had been successful, yet the aid the Huguenots received from Queen Elizabeth, of England, from Flanders, and Germany, rendered them so formidable that the queen mother feared a longer continuance of the war; and, believing she could draw greater advantages from a pacification, she granted better terms to the reformed than they had ever before obtained; allowing them, beside a less restrained exercise of their religion, to retain the four fortified towns of Rochelle, Montauban, Coynac and la Charité, for two years, with many other favourable articles.‡

D'Aubigné, being in some measure recovered from his sickness, and the peace allowing him leisure to attend to his private affairs, he settled accounts with his guardian, and received from him a small sum of money and the deeds of his estate of Des Landes. But when he arrived at Blois, in his road to it, he was informed that the Duke de Longueville's maitre d'hotel, a maternal relation, had taken possession, claiming it as his heir; and when D'Aubigné required him to give it up, the possessor treated him as an impostor, and offered to prove to him that Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné had been killed in an attack on the village of le Soldat, under the command of the Baron de Savignac, affirming that he had authentic attestations of his death.

D'Aubigné finding that his living person would scarcely be sufficient to confute the legal testimonies of his death, applied to his maternal relations for their assistance; but they, being Catholics, disclaimed him. He had an ague upon him when he came to

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub tom. i. liv. 5. p. 302. Hist. Sec. D'Aubigné, p. 17.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. i. liv. 4. chap. 25. p. 336.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 20.

† Ibid. p. 21.

‡ Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 955. Varillas, tom. ii. liv. 8, p. 375. Mem. de Chatillon, p. 118.

Blois, which resentment, and vexation at the treatment he received, increased to a very dangerous degree, and reduced him to the last extremity. While he was in this condition, the man who had been his tenant, and still rented his estate, coming to see him, knew him perfectly, by a scar at the corner of his forehead, occasioned by a boil when he had the plague at Orleans; but perceiving him in so deplorable a state, without any probability of recovery, he would not acknowledge him; but, injurious as his relations, treated him as an infamous impostor, to avoid paying the arrears of three years rent, which he was indebted to him. The poor youth, though disowned by his family, destitute of money, abused by his tenant, deprived of every kind of assistance or relief, and almost at the point of death with the violence of his fever, yet he had not only spirit enough remaining to commence a prosecution against his unjust kinsman, but went by water to Orleans, where his cause was to be tried. In the dying condition in which he arrived there, he presented himself before his judges, who permitted him to plead his cause; which he did in so pathetic a manner, and described his complicated distress so affectingly, that his judges, irritated against his infamous opponent, rose from their places, and crying out, that "No man but the son of the deceased D'Aubigné could plead so forcibly," they condemned his adversary to restore to him his property, and give him all due satisfaction.*

As it does not come within my plan to enter into a detail of the history of France, during a series of years, which has been written by persons so much more capable of doing justice to the many extraordinary, and peculiarly interesting events, which distinguish that period, and render it more fertile in entertaining materials for the pen of an historian, than perhaps were ever furnished by any other nation in the same compass of time, I shall only take such notice of them as may be necessary to illustrate, and render better understood, the life of the man whose memoirs I have undertaken to write.

I have already said, that the queen mother, in the favourable terms granted to the Huguenots, had their destruction still in view. Her scheme was as deep as it was inhuman; and though some of the wiser part of the Huguenots were led by the extraordinary favour shown to them to suspect her of treachery, yet as few imaginations could form an idea of cruelty so horrible, her designs were beyond the reach of the most cautious and penetrating. Conscious that her disposition was well known, she was sensible that too great a change of measures in her would only excite suspicion, in men who knew her to be equally consummate in deceit and cruelty; the young king Charles IX. was therefore made to assume the reins of government, and to affect compassion for the Huguenots, and attachment to some of their chiefs. He openly blamed the rigour of the catholics; concerted measures with the admiral for assisting the reformed in the low countries, who where then endeavouring to shake off the Spanish yoke, and seemed as determined to protect them, as the admiral, whose heart was much set upon it. The king promised to trust to him the conduct of the whole affair. Under the colour of this intended expedition, Charles strengthened his forces, and quartered them in places, where they would be nearest at hand, to prosecute his secret intentions.*

By such means carrying on an appearance of regard and esteem for the principal persons of the party near two years, he gained the confidence of the admiral de Coligny, whom he called his friend and father, the Prince of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and other persons of the first distinction among their adherents; who took up their residence at Paris, in fancied security, under the protection of a prince who not only expressed the strongest personal regard for some of them, but to strengthen their confidence, had proposed the marriage of his sister Margaret with the young Prince of Navarre.† Great preparations were made for the nuptials: The Huguenot nobility, receiving pressing invitations from the king, flocked thither to do honour to their prince; and even the queen of Navarre, who had till then resisted all the queen mother's importunities, repaired to Paris on this occasion; but died soon after she arrived, at the age of forty-four, to the great loss of the Huguenot party; which she had assisted with her fortune and her counsels, and animated by her courage; and is acknowledged, even by the catholic writers, to have united the graces of manner, purity of conduct, and knowledge of polite learning, which become her own sex, to the wisdom and intrepidity so requisite to form a perfect character in the other.‡

The suddenness of her death, which was preceded by a sickness of only four days, gave rise to suspicions of its not being natural; and the horrible event which succeeded it, confirmed them: as she was the principal support of the party, it is improbable they should suffer her to live when they were endeavouring to destroy the Huguenots by one blow; yet to have comprehended that queen in the general massacre, must have rendered them odious to

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 22.

* Dav. lib. 5. p. 261. Discours Merveilleux de la Vie de C. de Medicis, p. 73. Varillas, liv. 9. p. 433.

† Dav. lib. 5. p. 253. Varillas, tom. ii. liv. 9. p. 393.

‡ Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 967. Dav. lib. 5. p. 262.

the whole world; a less evident method of procuring her death was therefore requisite and some of the best catholic historians acknowledge her being poisoned as an undoubted fact;* but we are told by others, that the king having caused her to be opened, an abscess in her side appeared to have been the occasion of her death†. At her decease her son Henry assumed the title of king of Navarre.

On the 18th of August, 1572, the king of Navarre was married to the princess Margaret; though so contrary to her inclinations (occasioned as was generally imagined by her love for the Duke of Guise) that she would neither sign the marriage contract, nor speak at the marriage ceremony; but the king her brother, standing behind her, bent her neck, which being considered as bowing her head, was received by the bishop for a token of assent.‡

The great favour shown the Huguenots, together with the death of the queen of Navarre, excited suspicions in some of the party; the nobility, who were at Paris, received from their distant friends intimations of danger, and were solicited to retire from court; but the great confidence the admiral, whose wisdom was held in high esteem, had placed in a king, skilful in dissimulation far above what could have been expected at his years, rendered all the advice sent them ineffectual. Langoiran, a Huguenot gentleman, was more prudent; and waiting on the admiral to take his leave, that great man asked him, why he would go from Paris? "Because," answered Langoiran, "we are too much caressed here; and I had rather save my life with fools, than lose it with those who are too wise."§

On the 22d of August, the admiral received a shot from a window as he passed through the street, which carried off one of his fingers, and wounded him in the left arm; but attributing it to the hatred of the Duke of Guise, who accused him of being concerned in the assassination of his father, his confidence in the king remained unshaken; and that prince, to confirm it, expressed the most violent resentment against the assassin, causing search to be made for him; but the villain had effected his escape.‖

Charles endeavoured to lull the apprehensions which this event might awaken in the breast of the admiral, and of the whole party, by the most affectionate assurances of an inviolable attachment; and so artfully deceived Mons. de Teligny, that when some of the admiral's friends earnestly solicited him to remove into the suburbs of Paris, as a less dangerous situation, Teligny answered for the king's sincerity; and added such strength to the admiral's confidence in it, that he refused to comply with their fears. The king, under a pretence of providing for that great man's security against any future attempts from the Guises, of which he expressed some apprehensions, desired him to cause his friends to lodge as near the house he lived in as possible, that they might be ready to assist him; and placed a guard at his door, contrary to his inclination, the command of which was given to a creature of the Guises. Thus the chief persons among the Huguenots, conveniently for the king's infernal purpose, were drawn together within a small compass, and more easily destroyed, than if they had been dispersed in different parts of the town.

Many writers,* with an appearance of probability, attribute the assassination of the admiral to the advice of the Duke de Retz; who imagined it as a means of exciting so strong a resentment in the Huguenots against the duke of Guise, on whom it would naturally be charged, that they would seek their revenge in attacking him; in defence of whom the catholics taking arms, might proceed to a general massacre of the Huguenots without the appearance of a premeditated intention; thus the odium would fall on the Huguenots, as being the aggressors, and their destruction be attributed to the sudden resentment of the people, whose fury, it was to be supposed, on seeing their idol the Duke of Guise in danger, could not be restrained by the influence of their superiors.†

It was indeed highly probable that such would have been the consequence of the assassination of the admiral; but the Huguenots, more patient than their enemies expected, made no attempts to revenge the injury; and although they might express in speech some resentment, they did not appear disposed to come to action.

Thus disappointed, the court was reduced to prosecute the detestable plan without the colour of provocation, and the 24th of August, the festival of St. Bartholomew, was fixed upon for the most horrible action ever recorded in history. To the Duke of Guise was entrusted the management of the whole affair; and to gratify his private revenge, he began it a little before midnight, by causing the admiral's house to be attacked. The admiral, waked out of his sleep by the noise, threw himself out of bed, and slipping on his night-gown, bade Merlin, his minister, who lay in his room, read prayers to him; but the poor man, less intrepid than the admiral, who thought not of preserving his mortal existence, but of

* Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 967. Dav. lib. 5. 262.
† Var. tom. ii. liv. 9. p. 419.
‡ Dav. lib. 5 p. 263.
§ Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 968.
‖ Dav. lib. 5. p. 265. Vie de Coligny, lib. 5. p. 396. Var. liv. 9. p. 437. Mem. de Chatillon, p. 128.

* Hist. Gen. D'Aub. tom. ii. p. 13. Dav. l. 5. p. 265.
† De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 52d, p. 573. Dav. lib. 5. p. 265.

preparing himself for eternal life, was little able to comply; which the admiral perceiving, said to him, and other of his attendants who were in the chamber, "Save yourselves, my friends; all is over with me; I have long been prepared for death." All but one of them sought their safety by flight. A soldier who knew not the admiral's person entered, and asking him who he was? the admiral, who was at prayers, replied with perfect composure, "I am he whom you seek. If you are a soldier, as you appear to be, you ought to respect my grey heirs; but do what you will, you can shorten my life only by a few days." The man instantly stabbed him. All the soldiers who followed him did the same, and threw the body, covered with wounds, out at the window, where it was inhumanly mangled by the bigotted populace, and his head sent to Rome.*

The massacre soon became general in every part of the town. A gentleman of above fourscore years old, who had the care of the young Prince of Conti, was not spared, though his venerable grey hairs seemed to exhort to mercy, and still more the infantine fondness of the Prince of Conti, who hanging about his neck, endeavoured with his little hands to ward off the blows of the murderer. La Force, in bed with his two sons, was slain with the eldest of them; while the youngest, only twelve years old, lying between them, and covered with their blood and his own, he being also wounded, appeared to be dead, and was thought so by all who saw them. In this situation he heard many commend the barbarity of their murderers, saying it was necessary to kill the young wolves with the old one: but he still acted his part so well, that no one supposed him living; till in the evening, he heard a person who had entered the chamber, execrate the inhuman perpetrators of such an action, and call on God to revenge it; he then started from under the dead bodies, and cried out to be conducted to the arsenal, which was immediately done; nor would Biron, who had the command of it, deliver him up, though he was severely menaced for affording him refuge.† This La Force afterwards became a distinguished commander among the Huguenots, and married Biron's daughter.

The massacre was in no place more furiously carried on than in the Louvre. Vicomte Tesan,‡ with his wounds bleeding, fled from his assailants into the Queen of Navarre's chamber, and throwing himself on her bed, covered her with blood, and filled her with terror, as she knew not what was passing.* The captain of the guard promised her to save his life, and having made her put on a gown, conducted her to the Duchess of Lorraine's apartment. In her way thither, a gentleman, mortally wounded by a soldier, fell dead at her feet. At so shocking a spectacle, she fainted away. She no sooner entered the Duchess of Lorraine's chamber, than two of the king of Navarre's attendants rushed in, and falling at her feet, besought her protection. She hastened to the king, her brother, who at her entreaty, ordered that their lives should be spared.†

In the midst of the horrible butchery, Charles caused the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé to be brought to him; and after telling them that the severities then exercising against their party were necessary for the peace of his kingdom and his own security, he added, that they were exempted from the general fate by the great regard he bore them as princes of his blood, and the hope he had that they would deserve his mercy by their fidelity to him and the abjuration of their heresy. The King of Navarre thought proper to temporize, and gave him reason to believe he would comply with what he required; but the Prince of Condé answered, that "he was accountable to God alone for his religion; that his possessions and his life were in his majesty's power, and he might dispose of them as he pleased, but that no menaces, nor even certain death, should make him renounce the truth." So bold an answer enraged the king to the most violent degree, and he swore that if the prince did not abjure in three days, he should die. Guards were set over him and the King of Navarre; their attendants were in greatest part murdered, and persons put about them who were entirely devoted to the Catholic cause.‡

Some of the Huguenots who were in the suburbs, taking alarm at the noise they heard, escaped; but, as they passed the Seine, the king himself shot at them, crying out, Kill, kill.§ After the admiral's body had been drawn about the streets, and mangled by the populace, they hanged it by the neck on a gibbet at Montfauçon, where the king went to take a view of it; and some of those who accompanied him holding their noses, offended by the stench of the body, the king laughed at them, and said, with Vitellius, the smell of a dead enemy is always agreeable.‖

That the design of the court was originally to attribute the massacre to the revenge they hoped the Huguenots would attempt against the Duke of Guise for the

* Vie de Colingny, liv. 5. p. 401. Dav. lib. 5. p. 268. Declaration of the furious outrages of France, with the slaughter of the admiral, p. 57.

† De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 52. p. 588. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. I. 18.

‡ Or Leran.

* Pere Dan tom. v. p. 972.

† Ibid. Mem. de la reine de Nav. p. 39.

‡ De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 52. p. 590. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. I. p. 19.

§ Ibid. Abregé Chron. de Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 1083. Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 973. ‖ Ibid.

assassination of the admiral, appears pretty strongly from the king's proceedings; who, on the evening of the second day, wrote with the same hand with which he had shot at the poor flying wretches, to several princes and foreign states, disclaiming his having had any share in the horrors of that business, and charging it on the family of Guise, as the effect of their private revenge, concluding his letter with these words, "I am with the King of Navarre, my brother, and my cousin, the Prince of Condé; if they are in any danger, I am determined to share it with them."* He at the same time ordered the massacre to cease, but was not obeyed; it continued while any Huguenot, of whatever sex or age, was to be found in Paris. The river Seine was covered with dead bodies, and the streets ran with blood. The rage of bigotry is so early imbibed, that children of ten years old dragged babes in swaddling-clothes through streams of blood to be slaughtered; and the inhuman bigots killed infants, who, too young to be susceptible of fear, played with their beards, as thinking them in sport till they felt the fatal stroke. An uncle murdered two of his little nieces who had hidden themselves under the bed, believing he was going to whip them.† The cruelties then committed are too many to be enumerated, and several of them too horrible to relate. Some orthodox Catholics were involved in this destruction, from the interested views of their legal heirs, or from the resentment of private enemies, who took advantage of this season of confusion. It had been deliberated in council whether Biron and the Montmorencies should not be included in the massacre, as favouring the Huguenots, and being at variance with the house of Guise; but as the constable was then absent from Paris, it was judged more advisable to spare the whole family, as they could not destroy them all. Biron, governor of the arsenal, defended himself by firing cannon against his assailants.‡ The screams and groans of the dying, and the imprecations of the murderers, so far overcame every other sound, that in the streets people could not distinguish the voices of those who spoke.

Writers differ in their computation of the numbers killed on this occasion. De Thou speaks of thirty thousand, others, of seventy thousand, and Perefixe says one hundred thousand,§ including those who fell throughout the kingdom, in the general slaughter. Some cities were much distressed for want of water, the rivers being so stained with blood that no one could drink of them. So little prepared were the Huguenots for an event of this nature, that there was but one man among so great a number of the bravest in the kingdom, and though the slaughter continued seven days, who was known to have died sword in hand, and but one house the inhabitants of which made any resistance to those who attempted to enter it. The bigoted populace were so diligent in their search, that the number that escaped was incrdebly small. Merlin, the admiral's minister, flying with Teligni, the admiral's son-in-law, on the approach of the murderers, in passing over the tops of houses, fell into a hay-loft, and was concealed by the hay that fell upon him. He lay there three days and a half, and was preserved from being famished by a hen which had her nest close to the place where he was concealed, and came daily to lay an egg; but Teligni, a man esteemed and beloved not only by his own party, but by every honest Catholic, fell in the common slaughter;* an event most fortunate to him, as he thereby escaped pains far more bitter than those of death, which reflection on his amazing infatuation, whereby the admiral was exposed to this dreadful catastrophe, must have inflicted.

An officer named De Resniers was saved by Des Vesins, a Catholic, who had a private quarrel with him, but was too brave to revenge himself so meanly; he conducted De Resniers, therefore, to a considerable distance from Paris, telling him he did not do it to save his life, but to take it honourably; and when he had got to a convenient place, he challenged him to fight. But De Resniers answered, "My life is yours, and I can no longer employ it but in your service; give me an opportunity to do so, and you will confer an obligation equal to that I have just received from you." "Can the Huguenots, then," said Des Vesins, "be so mean as not to resent the perfidy of the court?" "Whatever my friends may do," replied De Resniers, "should not I be wanting in the gratitude I owe to you were I to resent it?" "No," replied Des Vesins, "I love courage, both in an enemy and a friend." Thus preserved, the Huguenot repaired to his family, where he found his wife and daughters oppressed with the bitterest affliction, lamenting his death, which they thought so certain, having heard that he had been seen in the hands of Des Vesins, his private enemy, that he could not immediately convince them that he was not an apparition.†

Two days before the massacre began at Paris, orders had been sent into every province that the like barbarity should be exercised there; and in most of the great towns, they were too faithfully obeyed. But Mons. d'Orte, governor of Bayonne, on receiving the order, wrote a letter to the

* Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 1085. De Thou, tom. iv, liv. 52. p. 596. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 1. p. 21. Declaration of the Furious, &c. p. 64.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 1. p. 22.
‡ De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 53. p. 594.
§ Perefixe, p. 30.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 1, p. 23.
† Ib. p. 23.

king, acquainting him, that in all the garrison, he found only brave men and good citizens, and not one hangman.* In another place the hangmen refused obedience, saying they were legal officers, and only executed those the law condemned. But the soldiers performed the office which the hangmen had refused.

The governors of some few places delayed the execution of the orders received till the court relented; but this mercy was thought to have proved fatal to some of them.†

The king was soon brought to acknowledge that he had ordered the massacre, and even to glory in it. He went to the courts of parliament the third day, declared it was by his command, and pretended it had been done in consequence of a conspiracy formed by the admiral and his adherents against his person.‡ Processes were commenced against them, and condemnation given; which imposed on no one, as there was not the least colour for the accusation. Some of the French writers, indeed, pretend to suppose that the massacre was not long premeditated, but the effect of a sudden resolution formed in consequence of the menaces uttered by some of the Huguenots on account of the assassination of the admiral; but every circumstance of the affair so strongly contradicts the supposition, that one cannot but feel some surprise that they should expect to gain belief.§

After Paris had gained a less hostile appearance, the king sent for the Prince of Condé, and spoke only three words to him, but with an enraged countenance that added terror to the words, which were of themselves sufficiently dreadful, Mass, Death, or the Bastile. The prince replied, "To the first, I cannot consent; the choice of the other two I commit to your majesty."‖ But so bold a resolution did not continue long. A Huguenot minister, named Rosiers, had, to save his life, outwardly embraced the Catholic faith, (though as soon as he was at liberty he returned to his first profession,) and being employed to convert the prince and the King of Navarre, they seized it as a plausible excuse, and abjured their former religion.¶

D'Aubigné, of whom we have too long lost sight, came to Paris a little before the massacre, to obtain permission to lead into the service of the low countries a company he had raised; but happening to wound an officer who came to arrest him, for having been second to a friend in a duel, he was obliged to fly; and meeting with Langoiran, they left Paris together, three days before the fatal festival of St. Bartholomew.* On the rumor of some ill designs being entertained against the Huguenots, D'Aubigné had, before he left Paris, contrived to convey the following verses of his own composition to King Charles:

L'Egypte fut sterile, et fut neuf ans sans eau,
Quand Buzire, incité du malheureux Thrasie,
D'offrir á Jupiter ses hostes en hosties,
Paya le Conseiller de son conseil nouveau.

Sous Assuere aman á filé son Cordeau,
Comme l'autre fit voir á l'Egypte la Pluye:
L'Auteur de Montfaucon sa potence â bati,
Et Perille esprouva le premier son Taureau.
Sire votre France est tant seche et tant sterile,
Elle nourit prés vous mains Trasie et Perille;
Trasies en conseil, qui n'ont pas telle fin;
Ils offrent aux faux Dieux le plus cher sang de France,
Hè! punissez de feu ces Boute feux, afin
Que l'Artisan de mort en goute la science.†

He gives us in his memoirs a strong instance on this occasion of the panic fears which will sometimes seize the bravest men. When he heard the melancholy account of what was passing at Paris, he had with him eighty soldiers, some of them of the most tried and approved courage. As they were marching, we may suppose with great dejection of spirits, and filled with horrid ideas suggested by the relation of the massacre, they heard some one crying out very loud at a distance; whereupon they all betook themselves to flight, and running till want of breath obliged them to stop, they stood still, staring at each other with surprise at their own cowardice and shame at having so many witnesses of it, though every spectator was at the same time companion in the panic. "Upon which," says D'Aubigné, "we agreed that God does not give sense and courage, he only lends it." But they were in so different a state of mind the following day, that with half that troop, D'Aubigné having sent the rest to the town of Sancerre, then besieged by the Catholics, he attacked six hundred soldiers who were returning by the Loire, from the massacre at Paris to Boisgency, and killed a great number of them.‡

The court had so well taken their measures, that during the massacre they had surprised La Charité, (one of the fortified towns granted to the Huguenots,) but had been disappointed in their attempts on Montauban and La Rochelle. The latter, as of most importance, immediately became their principal object; and they tried, by the means of negotiations, to prevail with the inhabitants to receive a governor and garrison from the king. But after so detestable

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 1, p. 28.
† De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 52, p. 605.
‡ Dav. lib. v. p. 271. Memoires ou Œconom. Royal, &c. par Sully, tom. i. p. 72.
§ Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 975.
‖ D'Aub. Hist. Univ. tom. ii. p. 30. De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 53, p. 630.
¶ Ibid. Dav. lib. 5, p. 273. Hist. du Duc de Bouillon, liv. 1. p. 319.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 23.
† The Printer's Preface to D'Aub. Universal History.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 24.

a proof of that prince's treachery, the citizens of Rochelle could not be brought to put any trust in the fairest offers he could make them. He then sent to them La Noue, one of the most famous Huguenot commanders, who was just returned from the war in the low countries, to persuade them to submit; having first promised him to require nothing that was derogatory to his honour. When the deputies came to confer with him, they told him "they expected to have met La Noue, but they did not see him; that it was to little purpose the person to whom they spake resembled him in features, when in character he so widely differed from him." La Noue showed them that he had lost an arm in their service, and did not deserve to be forgotten. They replied, "Neither had they lost the remembrance of one of that name, their very excellent friend, who had, by his courage, experience and conduct, defended their lives, and crowned himself with honour, and who would not for any motive have endeavoured to deceive them by fair promises, like the person they were then addressing; a man resembling their old friend in face, but totally different in mind." La Noue found himself in the most distressing of all situations, reduced to appear wanting in honour either to the king or to his own party: in this extremity, his first engagements prevailed, and as his heart was with the Rochellese, he dedicated himself to their service, and was joyfully received into the town; in the defence of which he exerted himself with such ardour, that the only fault they had to lay to his charge, while he continued with them, was his hazarding his life too freely.*

The Catholic army immediately invested the City, and carried on the siege with vigour, (though with little success,) both by sea and land.

D'Aubigné, during the late short peace, had found leisure to fall in love with Diana Salviati, daughter to the Sieur de Talcy; and after the attack already mentioned, of the troop of six hundred, returning from the massacre of Paris, he retired with his men into the neighbourhood of his mistress, with an intention of leading them from thence to Rochelle, as soon as he could procure means to defray the expenses of his march. These not being easily found, though the society of Diana Salviati might enable him to support the disappointment with more patience than he otherwise would have done, he was lamenting his ill fortune one day to the Sieur de Talcy, in not having the means of executing his design of going to Rochelle, which was then hardly pressed by the enemy. De Talcy interrupted him, saying, "The misfortune is not without remedy:" You once told me "that the original papers relative to the enterprise of Amboise were deposited with your father, and that one of those pieces is signed with the seal of the Chancellor de l'Hospital, who is now of no use to any party, lives retired in his house near d'Étampes, and has entirely withdrawn himself from all connection with the Huguenots; if you will give me leave to send him word that you have such a paper, I have no doubt of procuring you ten thousand crowns; but if he will not give it to purchase his safety, I can at least get it from those who would, with pleasure, make use of his signature to effect his ruin."

D'Aubigné, without returning any answer, left the room, and fetching the bag in which were all those papers, he showed De Talcy that which he had mentioned, and then threw them into the fire in his presence. De Talcy being very angry at this proceeding, D'Aubigné replied, "I burnt them lest they should burn me; for possibly the temptation might at some time have proved too strong for me."

In whatever light De Talcy looked on that action at the moment it was performed, a little reflection brought him to esteem it as he ought; and the next morning, taking the young man by the hand, he said to him, "Though you have never declared to me the secrets of your heart, yet I am too discerning not to have discovered your love for my daughter. You see she is addressed by persons much superior to you in fortune, but the spirit and probity you showed yesterday, in burning those papers, pleased me so much, that I frankly tell you, I wish you for the husband of my Diana." D'Aubigné replied, "The action did not deserve so great a reward, since in return for the sacrifice of so moderate a sum of money, and that to be ill acquired, he gave him an inestimable treasure."*

A few days after he had received so agreeable a proof of De Talcy's generosity, D'Aubigné made a little expedition by water; and landing near a village in Beauce, he was set upon by a man well mounted, and with difficulty reached the door of an inn, where, snatching a sword from a servant who stood near it, he defended himself so well, that the assailant being wounded, rode off; but not without having very dangerously wounded D'Aubigné, who was carried into the inn, and perceiving by the countenance of the surgeon who was sent for to attend him, that the event was doubtful, he set out for the Sieur de Talcy's, without suffering the first dressings to be taken off; desirous, like a true enamorato, of dying at his mistress's feet. In this condition, he travelled twenty-two leagues, without allowing himself any rest; by which means

* Vide de la Noue, p. 79. De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 53, p. 656.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 26.

he lost so much blood, that he was deprived of speech and knowledge, but by good care, was cured both of his wounds, and of the ill consequences of so great an effusion of blood.

He was scarcely recovered, when his relations having learnt where he had taken refuge, prevailed with the bishop of Orleans to send his proctor, with six officers of justice, to oblige De Talcy to deliver his guest into their hands; but finding all their endeavours vain, they were reduced to desist from their attempt, though not without very severe menaces of razing De Talcy's house to the ground. D'Aubigné being informed of what had passed, mounted his horse, and overtaking them before they had gone six miles, by the eloquence of his pistol, made so thorough a convert of the proctor, that he abjured for the moment all the articles of the Roman Catholic faith, and gave an attestation in due form of the Sieur De Talcy's proper behaviour to him.

Though D'Aubigné grieved at being deprived of the power of giving his assistance to the Rochellese, and gaining honour to himself, yet the smiles of his mistress, and the good will of her father, had hitherto administered powerful consolation; and he in some measure lost his ardour for the war, in the pleasing expectation of an approaching marriage with his Diana. But his hopes were at once blasted; the chevalier Salviati, her uncle, opposing her union with a man of a different religion from her own, had influence enough to prevent its taking place; and perhaps D'Aubigné esteemed this separation the most cruel persecution he had ever undergone for his religion. The warmth of his temper always made him strongly affected by every vexation; and his body frequently suffered form the perturbation of his mind; on this occasion it operated so violently, that it threw him into a dangerous fit of sickness; from which, however, he recovered;* and seems to have lost his love with his malady; which gives reason to believe that Diana had submitted to the separation with more ease, than he thought consistent with a tender regard for him; and the supposition is confirmed by an incident he afterwards relates, on which occasion he attributes her regret to vanity rather than to love.

The Rochellese defended themselves so well, that they tired out the patience of the king and queen mother, whose thoughts being then engrossed by the election of the Duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland, they granted a pacification on terms tolerably advantageous to the city; one of the articles of which was, that they should receive a governor, but no garrison from the king. The cities of Nismes and Montauban were the only places comprehended in this treaty.†

The King of Navarre lived at court in a kind of honourable imprisonment, narrowly observed by spies set upon him; wishing to be free, yet not daring to attempt to regain his liberty. The Duke of Alençon, of a turbulent, ambitious, but wavering disposition, hoped to gain more consideration and advantage by embarking in the Huguenot party, than he enjoyed at his brother's court.

In this view he entered into secret negotiations with the King of Navarre, who thought such an ally might be of some service to the cause, though he could not by his counsel, or his courage, add much strength to the party. Henry received his advances with pleasure, and they entered into a confederacy with the marshals Montmorency and de Cossé to escape from the court, and to put themselves at the head of the Huguenots and the malecontents, a party of Catholics, which now began to be so called; but their design being discovered, the marshals were committed to the Bastile, and the Duke d'Alençon, and the king of Navarre, confined at Bois de Vincennes;* and though not very closely, yet neither of them would for some time make any strong effort to regain his liberty: but they endeavoured to attach to themselves some daring spirits, who would be fit for action whenever they thought proper to call upon them. In this light D'Aubigné was recommended to the King of Navarre, as one capable of the boldest enterprises, neither to be discouraged by danger, nor disgusted by difficulties or labour. Henry was sensible that such persons were necessary to him, but being narrowly observed, he judged it more prudent that D'Aubigné should appear as standard-bearer to M. de Fervaques, and as his dependant, than be publicly acknowledged equery to himself.† To this D'Aubigné agreed, though his pride so little brooked a seeming dependance on any private person, that some years before M. de la Case having said to him with an air of importance, "I will give you to the Prince of Condé," who had taken notice of D'Aubigné, and shown him particular favour, the youth, with more spirit than politeness or prudence, replied, "Give your dogs and your horses; but do not pretend to give such men as I am."‡ The King of Navarre's caution was necessary; for D'Aubigné was obnoxious to the queen mother, as appears by the treatment she gave him on meeting him in the palace, where she threatened and reproached him, and told him he would be like his father; to which he replied, "God grant it," an answer so offensive to

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 28.
† Pere Dan. tom. v. p. 992. Dav. lib. 5. p. 282. De Thou, tom. iv. liv. 56. p. 795. Com. de. Montluc, liv. 7. p. 595. Hist. du Duc de Bouill. liv. 1. p. 27.
* De Thou, tom. v. liv. 57. 41. Dav. lib. 5. p. 286, 288. Mem, de la reine Marguerite, p. 43.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 28.
‡ Ib. p. 18.

to her, that D'Aubigné, seeing her look about for a captain of her guards to secure him, none of which happened to be present, made his escape as swiftly as possible; and he was spared only by M. de Fervaque's swearing to the loyalty of his standard-bearer.*

At the time D'Aubigné entered into the King of Navarre's service, the Count de Montgomery was besieged in the town of Domfront by the Marshal de Matignon; who had received in charge to invest any city into which the count should retire; the queen mother bearing especial hatred to him, from the time, that by an accident, he had killed her husband, Henry II. in a tournament. It was well known Domfront could not hold out long; and the King of Navarre, and the Huguenots in general, ardently wished to save the count. Fervaques, from enmity to Matignon, was also desirous of disappointing his enterprise. On this occasion Henry applied to D'Aubigné, desiring him to accompany Fervaques at the siege of Domfront, in order to find an opportunity of conveying the count safely out of the town. D'Aubigné refused to serve in an army that was fighting against persons of his own religion; but by the arguments they used, they conquered his scruples, and he obeyed. He distinguished himself so much by his spirit and courage on two or three occasions, that Fervaques, who had a considerable post in the army, thought he could, with a good grace, give him the command of four companies, whose stand was near the postern gate, whereby the business he came about might be much facilitated. D'Aubigné, under pretence of examining the trenches, approached one of the sentinels in the town, and by his means got to the speech of a friend of his who was with the count, to whom he told his intention. The count met him in the same place the next night; and D'Aubigné offered to give him the means of escaping from thence; telling him that he might refresh himself at Alençon, a town which the reformed had just taken, and from thence go into Beauce, where we would find assistance to defend himself, and annoy the enemy; assuring him at the same time that his flight would save the people and garrison in Domfront, as the siege was undertaken only on his account, and would be raised when he was no longer there.

All offers and solicitations were vain; the count invited D'Aubigné to enter into his garrison, informing him that he expected succours from Germany very speedily; but could not be prevailed on to leave the town, which not long after was obliged to surrender.† The count was sent to Paris, where he was first put to the torture, and then beheaded: but it was not till after the death of Charles IX. who died the 31st of May,* that the Count of Montgomery was executed.

Henry Duke of Anjou, then king of Poland, on the news of his brother's death, made his escape in the night from Cracow.† lest he should be stopt by the Poles, who did not choose to lose so soon a king they had just elected: had he remained longer among them, they would have found sufficient reasons to reconcile them to his abdication.

The Prince of Condé had retired into Picardy, of which he was governor, on the imprisonment of the princes and the marshals, and from thence fled into Germany with M. de Thoré, brother to the marshals of Montmorency and D'Amville, and with other persons of distinction. The prince, in conjunction with the Marshal D'Amville, wrote to the reformed churches, and assured them of his best services, and the strongest attachment to their interests; in consequence of which he was chosen by them their chief, their general, governor, and protector, and the Marshall D'Amville was declared commander in Languedoc.‡

The new King, Henry III. entering into France with a determination to exterminate the Huguenots, disposed his troops in such a manner as to attack them in several places at the same time; but he found them by their junction with the malecontents, at the head of which were the Marshal D'Amville and M. de Thoré, and the assistance promised them by the elector Palatin, and some other protestant states in Germany, become so formidable, as to leave him little hope of success.

As soon as he arrived at Paris, he gave a nominal liberty to the duke of Alençon and the King of Navarre; but they were so diligently watched, that in fact they were still prisoners. A conspiracy was discovered among the malecontents against the king's life, with an intent to place the Duke of Alençon on the throne; and it appeared that it had been mentioned to the duke, but that he had given no answer to the conspirators. The Sieur de Fervaques, though much attached to him, had discovered it to the king, in expectation, as he himself declared, that the merit of such a service would secure his being made a marshal of France. The king forgave the duke, on his suing for pardon; but retained so strong a hatred to him, that he endeavoured to prevail on the King of Navarre to kill him; representing how much it was for the interest of that prince, to remove out of the way the only person who could stand between him and the throne, if he (the king) should die without issue; but such a crime

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 29.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. p. 125, and 126.

* Varillas, tom. ii. p. 622.
† Dav. lib. 6. p. 301. Mezeray. tom. iii. p 1104.
‡ Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 4.

was contrary to the noble and generous nature of Henry; and he absolutely refused it.*

Notwithstanding the precautions used to prevent the Duke of Alençon, and the King of Navarre from making their escape, the former effected it;† and was soon joined by a great number both Huguenots and malecontents; and the Germans thereupon quickened their march into France. The king got together as good an army as the time, and dispersion of his forces would permit, and sent them into Champagne. Almost all the young noblemen of the court enlisted in that army, and among them those most attached to the King of Navarre, who found it necessary to act the part of an obedient subject. The command was given to the Duke of Guise; Fervaques had a considerable post, and D'Aubigné attended him as his standard-bearer. The King of Navarre's guards marched before the rest, and took the town of Archecour by storm; and though D'Aubigné disliked the service he was in, yet his natural courage so far conquered his reluctance, that he was the first who entered the place: he distinguished himself in the skirmish at Pont d'Asne, and was one of the foremost in the battle of Dormans; where he took prisoner a gentleman of Champagne, who offered him a considerable ransom, and his horse; but though D'Aubigné's own horse was wounded in the battle, he refused the offer, and freely gave that gentleman his liberty, repeating to him a verse out of the Psalms, "Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar."‡

After this battle, the Duke of Guise, in pursuit of a flying soldier, got a wound in his cheek, from which he received the surname of Balafré. During this campaign, D'Aubigné grew into great favour with the Duke of Guise, who was equally pleased with his valor in time of danger, and his wit and vivacity in familiar conversation; and as the war was suspended by a truce, negotiated between the queen mother and the Marshal de Montmorency, (who with the Marshal de Cossé had been set at liberty on condition that they would join their endeavours with hers) on one side, and the Duke of Alençon on the other, the Duke of Guise, as well as the King of Navarre's guards, returned to Paris, where D'Aubigné continued in the duke's favour. This circumstance occasioned a very intimate connection between the duke and the King of Navarre, who frequently eat at the same table, lay in the same bed, and gave balls, masquerades and other entertainments in conjunction; which were all invented and regulated by D'Aubigné; a talent more likely to recommend him at a gay and gallant court, than any of the virtues he possessed. He accompanied the duke in all tilts and tournaments, and every kind of martial exercise, and was one of the King of Navarre's academy; a small society to which he gave that appellation, who met twice in every week in his apartment, to converse on literary subjects. D'Aubigné was well qualified for conversations of that kind, as his learning, his strength and acuteness of understanding, enabled him to enter into the nicest disquisitions, and his wit and vivacity gave him a power of enlivening discourse, when from the seriousness of the subject, it became dull to the King of Navarre, who had little inclination for literary studies. D'Aubigné's wit caused him to be more sought after than beloved; for it was of so satirical a turn, that it made some caress him out of fear, who possibly in their hearts hated him; and even those who were pleased with the jest, did not love the man that made it.

In many respects, D'Aubigné was ill qualified for a court where Catharine of Medicis presided. Frank and open in speech himself, he detested art and deceit in others; regular and virtuous in his conduct, his manners were a tacit reproach to the licentious; a zealous Huguenot in heart, and such a bungler in dissimulation, that he was little able to conceal his opinions, and absolutely incapable of assuming the appearance of a good Catholic, which too many did without scruple. He does not even seem to have given any attention to the measures necessary to elude the observation of bigots, as may be gathered from a blunder he committed. The queen mother had complained to the king of Navarre, that some of his attendants did not appear at church. As Henry was playing at tennis with the princes, on Easter Tuesday, seeing D'Aubigne, to whom he knew the queen principally alluded, he called to him, and asked if he had performed his Easter devotions? To which D'Aubigné only replied, "How can you doubt it, sire?" "On what day?" said the king. "Last Friday," answered D'Aubigné, not recollecting that it was the only day in the year on which mass was not said, nor the communion administered. The Duke of Guise cried out, "O, D'Aubigné! you have but ill learnt your lesson." Upon which, all the company laughed very heartily, except the queen, who, from that time, had him very narrowly watched, her majesty keeping a considerable number of spies in constant pay, to be ready for every occasion she had for them; and it was owing to the Duke of Guise's protection, that he was suffered to remain so long at court.*

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 25.
† De Thou, tom. v. lib. 61. p. 215. Mem. de la reine Marg. p. 71.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 30.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 33.

There still existed at that time among the French a kind of ferocious valour, which rendered duels, or combats of a few persons on each side, not only frequent but honourable. This we may consider as the dregs of chivalry, much of which remained till the death of Francis I., but was now sunk into a mere spirit of duelling, which D'Aubigné possessed in a high degree, notwithstanding his exact probity, and his religious principles. So much can the mist of prejudice blind, or the splendid glare of false honour dazzle the eyes of the rational and discerning, that we find him, in his own account of himself, performing his devotions with the greatest seriousness, as a prelude to murders thus sanctified by custom and honoured by prejudice. The frequent encounters of this kind wherein he was engaged, the courage and dexterity with which he acquitted himself in them, and the great success he had in some wild enterprises, where his opponents far exceeded him in numbers, gained him great consideration among the men of spirit of that age, and procured him still more favour from the Duke of Guise, than his ingenious and fertile invention in planning sports and entertainments, and composing poetical pieces to be represented by them.

Among the entertainments exhibited by those princes, one proved fatal to Diana de Talcy, D'Aubigné's first mistress, who, seeing him distinguish himself very much in a tournament with the King of Navarre and the dukes of Lorraine and Guise, and perceiving him favoured to a great degree by the first men in the kingdom, was so mortified at the inequality between the man she was going to marry and him whom she had refused, that she was seized with a dejection of spirits, which affected her health in such a manner that she died in a short time after.* But, whatever pleasures D'Aubigné might receive from the distinctions shown him, they were not unmixed with mortifications.

The Sieur de Fervaques had hitherto been a friend to D'Aubigné; and while he attacked them only with some strokes of wit and satire, the ladies of the court chose to keep well with him. The first that had felt the force of his raillery were three of the queen's maids of honour, whose ages united amounted to at least one hundred and forty years. When he first appeared at court, perceiving him new to the place, and desirous of diverting themselves with his embarrassment, one of them attacked him by asking, "What are you contemplating so seriously, sir?" "The antiquities of the court, madam," replied D'Aubigné. Though such kind of jests are not often very well received, yet D'Aubigné might have escaped with only being in his turn sometimes the subject of satire; but leaving the strain of wit, he took upon him the adviser, and made strong and serious remonstrances to Madame de Carnavalet, on the intrigue she was engaged in with Fervaques, which was, according to the canon laws, the more reprehensible on account of the near kindred subsisting between them, they being first cousins. The lady was so extremely offended by his remonstrance, that she complained to Fervaques, who promised to punish the insolence with death; and accordingly, endeavoured to engage D'Aubigné in a quarrel with one of the queen mother's spies; which he trusted would be a means of keeping his word with his mistress, without hazarding his own life; a scheme founded in prudence, not cowardice, for he always boldly exposed it in battle; but the Duke of Guise prevented the success of his views.

Fervaques thus disappointed, determined to perform his promise to the lady with his own hand. Accordingly, he called on D'Aubigné a few days after, and pretending to be in the utmost despair, desired him to walk a little way with him, but would not suffer him to take a dagger that his servant brought him, on seeing he was going out, which inclined D'Aubigné to suspect him of some bad design. As they were passing over a little bridge, Fervaques told him that, being oppressed with vexation, he was determined to put an end to his life; that he regretted nothing but leaving of him, and desired one kind embrace, and then he should die contented. "Sir," said D'Aubigné, retiring a little, "I have formerly heard you declare, that the greatest satisfaction you could have in death, would be, by the help of a good poinard, to carry your best friend into the next world with you. I would advise you not to quarrel with life, having no tolerable reason for doing so; but however you may determine on that point, a truce with your embraces at present." On receiving this answer, Fervaques, drawing both his sword and dagger, ran enraged at D'Aubigné, and with an oath cried out, "Since you suspect me, we will both die." D'Aubigne drawing back a few paces, and putting himself on his guard, answered, "No, it shall be only you, if I can help it." Fervaques seeing him prepare so resolutely to defend himself, threw down his sword and poinard, fell on his knees, and pretending to be out of his senses, desired D'Aubigné to kill him; but he not choosing the office, they separated, and returned home by different ways.

They were some time after reconciled, but the reconciliation proved more dangerous than their contest, for Fervaques caused some poison to be put into D'Aubigné's soup, which affected him very violently, which made his hair and skin come off; yet he was ignorant of the cause till long after, when the physician who attended him at the

* Hist Sec. D'Aub. p. 32.

time informed him of it, adding, that Fervaques had threatened to stab him if he acquainted his patient that he had been poisoned.*

In the midst of the amusements of the court, wherein the King of Navarre had so great a share, he could not be insensible to the many disagreeable circumstances attending his situation. No person of consequence of his own party was suffered to approach him. His guards were all bigoted Catholics, many of them the most active in the massacre of St. Bartholomew; his chamber and antechamber were filled with the queen's spies, who had in charge to watch vigilantly to prevent his making his escape. The chief persons near him, who were really devoted to his interests, were D'Aubigné, his equerry, and Armagnac, his first valet-de-chambre; they, as the former expresses it, being concealed under their insignificance, which, however, was scarcely sufficient for D'Aubigné, who was frequently in danger of ill treatment from the queen mother; particularly one day, when, having just left the King of Navarre amusing himself with flying a merlin at some quails, he met her majesty, who asked him how his master was passing his time? "In flying," he replied. The sound of that word alarmed the queen; the captain of the guard was called to examine into the affair, and when she found D'Aubigné had only played on her fears, search was made for him, and he would have paid dearly for diverting himself at her majesty's expense, had not the Duke of Guise's intercession obtained his pardon.†

Nor was the queen's care only confined to the security of the King of Navarre's person; she endeavoured, by the allurements of love and ambition, to enslave his mind, engaging him in a succession of amours, well knowing his weakness in regard to women, and flattering him with the hopes of being made lieutenant-general of the kingdom. So successfully did she play on these two ruling passions, that whenever a new mistress came in the way, or the proposal of the lieutenancy was renewed, he gave up any design he had formed of flying from the court. His two faithful servants, wearied with seeing all their views repeatedly frustrated, at length agreed to leave him, whom they had no longer any hopes of serving, and repair to the Huguenots, who were in arms in several parts of the kingdom; when one night, as they were watching by their master, at that time in a fit of the ague, hearing him sigh, they listened attentively, and could distinguish that he was repeating that verse of the eighty-eighth Psalm, which laments the absence of faithful friends.‡

Armagnac observed to D'Aubigné that this was a proper season to endeavour to prevail with him to attempt regaining his liberty. D'Aubigné, not backward in taking his advice, drew open the curtain and thus addressed the king: "Sire, is it, then true, that the grace of God still dwells and operates in your heart? You pour forth sighs to God on account of the distance kept by your faithful friends and servants; they at the same time are lamenting your absence, and endeavouring to set you at liberty; but you have only tears in your eyes, while they have weapons in their hands; they *fight* the enemies that you *serve;* they excite the fears of those whom, seduced by vain hopes, you court; they fear only God, you fear a woman, before whom you join your hands in supplication, while your friends grasp their swords; they are armed and well mounted, you are on your knees; they oblige their enemies to sue to them for peace, but you, having no share in the war, have no part in the advantages granted in a pacification. The Duke of Alençon commands those men who defended you in your cradle, and who cannot fight with pleasure under the banners of a man whose religion is opposite to theirs. What strange infatuation can make you choose to be a slave here, rather than be the commander of a brave soldiery with them? To be the scorn of the scorned, when you might be the chief of a party so formidable? Are you not weary of being thus concealed behind your outward appearance; and can obscurity be excusable in a person of your birth? You are guilty of your own degradation, and of the offences committed against you. Those who executed the massacre of St. Bartholomew remember it well, and cannot believe that those who suffered it will ever forget it. But still, if a shameful conduct were the road to safety, something might be said; but you can no where meet with so many dangers as threaten you at court. As for myself and my companion here, we were concerting measures for making our escape to-morrow, when your sighs interrupted us. Consider, sire, that when we are gone, the persons who attend you will not dare to refuse to employ poison or poniard, at the command of your enemies." They proceeded, then, to represent to their prince the offence he had given to the King of France, by the free manner in which he had spoken of him to his favourite ladies, who artfully put him on the subject that they might gain something to report, which never lost any of its bitterness by their repetition, and informed him that the promise of the lieutenancy of the kingdom was now turned into a jest at court, and served there as a subject for laughter.

This spirited address was afterwards strengthened by the Queen of Navarre, who reported some violent expressions used

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 36.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 2, p. 184.
‡ Ibid. p. 185.

by the King of France against him; which intelligence was corrobated by her physician, who told him that he had been desired by the king to poison him, at the same time insinuating, that the title of protector of the churches did not properly belong to the Duke of Alençon.

Fervaques, disgusted by a refusal of the government of Normandy, which he had solicited, and the Sieur de Laverdin, offended by a disappointment of the same kind, proposed, the former to D'Aubigné, the latter to Roquelaure, a servant to the King of Navarre, to persuade their master to make his escape from the court.* In a conference they had on this subject, the King of Navarre asking D'Aubigné for his new year's gift, as was the custom in France, D'Aubigné gave him a nosegay, composed of olive, laurel and cypress, with the following verses explaining the device:

J'estrenerai mon Roi de trois fortes de vers,
Un pale, un vif, un brun; nul des trois ne s'etonne;
Mais plus doux & plus fort, & plus beau rebourgeonne
Au vent & au soleil, & aux froids des Hyvers.
Moins que ce verd encore se fletiront mes vers,
Pour un Roi, qui de paix ses sujets environne;
Qui Vainqueur establit par le fer sa Couronne,
Ou qui avec l'etat met sa vie a l'envers.
Sage, brave, constant: mon Prince, fai ton conte
De regner, vivre, ou bien ne survivre a ta honte.
Si tu donne la Paix, Je te donne l'Olive;
Si tu vaincs, sachez que le Laurier vient apres;
Si tu meurs, le Ciprés couronne l'ame vive;
Si non rend tous Olive, & Laurier, & Ciprés,†

In these verses, D'Aubigné had in view the device worn, according to the custom of those times, by the deceased Jane, Queen of Navarre, chosen by her with reference to the situation of her affairs, and to which she had annexed this motto: "Safe Peace, Victory, or honourable Death."

Advice thus reiterated at length prevailed, and the 18th of February was the day fixed upon for the King of Navarre's flight. It was settled that Laverdin should seize Mans; Roquelaure Chartres, and D'Aubigné Cherbourg. Before they parted, they took an oath not to relinquish the enterprise, whether allured by caresses, or alarmed by menaces, and to be at eternal enmity with whoever should betray their purpose. It was agreed, that to facilitate the execution of their enterprise, the King of Navarre should appear well convinced that the lieutenancy of the kingdom would soon be given him; and while he thus lulled the court in fancied security, he should extend the liberty of hunting (in which he had been indulged) as far as the forest of St. Germain.

The next morning, at the break of day, he went into the Duke of Guise's chamber, and finding he was not risen, got into the bed to him, for the better convenience of familiar and confidential conversation. He took occasion to talk of his approaching preferment, boasting of the great actions he would perform, which he did with such appearance of frankness and vanity, that the Duke of Guise, thoroughly deceived, went, as soon as he was up, to divert the king with the King of Navarre's credulity and conceit. This morning visit proved very useful; for it became afterwards known, that the court had determined to deprive him of the liberty of hunting at so great a distance, till, believing him the willing captive of this flattering expectation, they thought any additional restraint unnecessary. Thus deceived, they suffered him to go to St. Germains on his hunting party, guarded by Monsieur de St. Martin, master of the wardrobe, and Monsieur de Spalonge, lieutenant of the guards; nor did any of those who were acquainted with his secret intentions attend him, except Armagnac,* as he did not design to put them so soon in execution.

In the evening D'Aubigné went to the King of France's Coucheé, where he perceived the Sieur de Fervaques whispering to him, and his majesty uncommonly attentive to his discourse; which excited such suspicions in D'Aubigné, as made him glad to retire without being observed, apprehending that if he were perceived he should be seized; and they were so very earnest in discourse that he succeeded. He went not far from the castle gate, but walked by moon light till two o'clock in the morning; when Fervaques coming out of the castle, he caught him suddenly by the arm, crying out, Wretch, what have you been doing? Fervaques thus taken by surprize, had not sufficient presence of mind to deny that he had betrayed the King of Navarre; but excusing his treachery on the obligations he had to the king, and that he received greater favours from him than he could expect from any other, added, "Go and save your master."

D'Aubigné immediately hastened to the King of Navarre's stable; where, with a view to what might happen, the equerries had some time kept their horses in breath, by galloping them in a covered course. While they were preparing their horses, the provost des marchands, for whom the king had sent, with an intention of charging him to guard well the city gates, and suffer no one to go out, passed by them: but before the order could be executed, the equerries had got out of the town, and proceeded with all speed towards Senlis.

The King of Navarre returning from the chase, which he had pursued from break of day, and seeing his horses in the suburbs of

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 2. p. 186.
† Printer's Preface to D'Aubigné's Hist. Universelle.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 2. p. 187. Dav. lib. 6. p. 316. Mem. de la reine Marguerite, p. 74. Oecon. roy. de Sully, tom. i. p. 90.

the town of Senlis, where they had received some rest and refreshment, he asked what was the matter? "Sire, (answered D'Aubigné) the King is informed of our whole design by Fervaques, who has confessed to me his treachery. Death and shame lie in the road to Paris; every other place offers you life and glory. Sedan, or Alençon, will afford you the most commodious refuge. It is time to withdraw from the hands of your gaolers, and to throw yourself into the arms of your true friends and faithful servants." "Fewer motives would suffice," replied the prince. Some of his attendants would have killed his two guards, to deliver him from any impediment they might give to his flight, but he would not suffer them. He called St. Martin, and telling him that Roquelaure was come to inform him that certain reports prevailed at court to his disadvantage, accusing him of a design of going to join the Duke of Alençon; he therefore desired he would go to the king, and learn whether his majesty chose that he should return to court to disprove the accusation, or continue his hunting.

When he had sent off St. Martin he made a feint of intending to pass the night at Senlis. He then went to a play, which some comedians who were passing through the town, and had been persuaded by his equerries to exhibit one of their pieces, were preparing to act. After having for some time appeared to give an easy attention to the performance, he called monsieur de Spalonge, and pretending to recollect that the king was to go to Beauvois-Nangi, which he had forgotten when he sent off St. Martin, he dispatched him another road, as the most likely to meet with his majesty.*

Having thus removed his spies, he selected a few of the gentlemen who were of his hunting party, and on whom he believed he might rely; and with no small difficulty, from the coldness and darkness of the night, and the forests they had to pass through, they reached Alençon on the evening of the following day, before the court had received any certain intelligence of their flight. In this journey the King of Navarre would have been wounded, if not killed, by an old woman with a hedging bill, who took him for a thief, and was going to strike him, when he little expecting it, was not prepared to avoid the blow, had not D'Aubigne seen her and prevented it.†

As they approached a village in their road, the gentleman to whom it belonged came out to meet them, with an intention to prevail on them to pass another way, lest they should offer some outrage to the villagers. Roquelaure being the best dressed person in the company, the gentleman addressed him as the chief; and intreated him not to fix his quarters in the village; a favour very readily granted by those who were in too much haste to retard their escape by unnecessary delay; but to prevent his remaining on the spot to give any information, if they were pursued, they required him to guide them to Chateauneuf, as the condition of their compliance with his request. As they rode along, mistaking the King of Navarre for an inferior person in the company, he entered into easy conversation with him, and talked very freely of the amours of the court, which were well known by common fame throughout the kingdom; and expatiated particularly on those of the princess, among whom the queen of Navarre's bore the greatest share, relating some of her gallantries of so ridiculous a nature, that the king was obliged to join in the general laugh they excited. When they arrived at Chateauneuf, by the command given to the officer to open the gates to the King of Navarre, the loquacious gentleman discovered, to his infinite terror, the person he had been entertaining so improperly; nor could any thing quiet his fears, but D'Aubigné's informing him of an indirect way whereby he might return home, which led him so great a circuit, that he travelled three days before he reached his own house. Soon after Henry's arrival at Alençon, two hundred and fifty gentlemen repaired to him; and among the rest Fervaques; who from some intelligence he had received, found it safer to trust to the generosity of the prince he had injured, than to him whom he meant to serve. In an hour or two after Fervaques had left the king, the night he had betrayed the King of Navarre's intentions, the famous Grillon come to his house, and calling him to the window, told him, that as soon as he retired, the king said to those about him, among whom Grillon was, "Observe the traitor, he first inspired my brother in law with the desire of escaping from us, and has suggested to him a thousand evil designs beside, and now comes to acquaint me with it, in order to betray us both. I will have him hanged; he is not worthy to be beheaded. It behoves "you, therefore," added Grillon, "to take care of yourself; for my part I do not choose to be seen here; but do not ruin me for having given you so strong a proof of my friendship."

Fervaques was not slow in taking advantage of this information; he fled directly from Paris, and as soon as he found himself beyond the danger of a pursuit, he wrote to the queen mother, telling her that though he was well informed they had determined to repay his fidelity with the death only due to a traitor, yet he would still persevere in his duty, and did not doubt but by repairing to the fugitive prince, he should be of more use to his majesty's service than his two best regiments of horse.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. p. 188.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 37.

When he came to the King of Navarre, D'Aubigné accused him of treachery from his own confession; but he pleaded in his defence, that Madame Carnavalet having first discovered the whole affair to the king, prevailed on him to confirm the account, which he did, as conscious that when once known, the farther confirmation was of no consequence. Thus apologizing for one act of treachery by the confession of another, since he was by his honour and his oath equally bound to disclose it to no one. But the King of Navarre, either actuated by the uncommon generosity and benignity of his nature, or induced by a consciousness of his own weakness towards the sex, to be indulgent to the frailty of another, accepted his excuse, and sent him to the Duke of Alençon.*

After passing some time at Alençon, the King of Navarre proceeded to Tours, where he abjured the Roman Catholic faith, and returned to the Reformed Church, which he had forborne till then, to avoid giving cause of discontent to the Catholics in his party. The malcontents and the reformed, with the junction of Prince Casimir at the head of his Germans, formed a considerable army, but the queen mother prevented their reaping much benefit from it, by her usual negotiations. In the month of May, a treaty of pacification was concluded, whereby a free exercise of their religion, a share in civil offices, and several fortified places, were granted to the Huguenots. The defamatory sentences pronounced against the Admiral de Coligny, and several others of the party, in consequence of processes carried on after their deaths, were annulled, and the Duke of Alençon, the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, declared good and loyal subjects, who had taken up arms only with a view to serve their king and country. The King of France also engaged to pay Prince Casimir's troops, and to give him some great private advantages for his own emolument. By some secret articles of the treaty, the duchies of Anjou, Touraine, Berri and the county of Maine, were ceded to the Duke of Alençon, and the government of Picardy was to be restored to the Prince of Condé.†

The terms of this treaty satisfied every wish of the Huguenots, but the delay of the execution excited their apprehensions, and some months passed in vainly soliciting the ratification of the edict. During this time, the King of Navarre, whose extreme weakness towards the other sex cast a shade over his character, sometimes interrupting his heroic actions, at others perverting the course of his virtues, was captivated by the charms of Mad. de Tignonville; but finding her little inclined to listen to addresses that dishonoured her, he endeavoured to prevail with D'Aubigné to undertake his cause, believing him well qualified, by his wit and address, to conquer any scruples that she would oppose; but he found his friend at least as scrupulous as his mistress. He could not be persuaded that the rank of his employer could dignify so mean an office, and he constantly refused to take any part in the intrigue, though the king attacked him by the most flattering promises, the most friendly caresses, and even descended so far from his dignity as frequently to beg on his knees, that he would assist him in an affair he had so much at heart. But all proving ineffectual; as he had found that when a woman has forfeited her reputation, her virtue is too apt to follow it, he thought the same process might succeed with his own sex; and believing D'Aubigné's pride was the only cause of his resistance, he endeavoured to make him pass for the confident and pander of his amours. D'Aubigné having one night, in company with others, attended him to a place of assignation, they were attacked by some disorderly persons; whereupon D'Aubigné, more lavish of his life than of his honour, stepped between him and danger, and defended his prince's person at the hazard of his own. This action the king, with praise and gratitude, related to the reformed ministers, and the principal persons of the party then at court; but in reality with a design of making them believe that however scrupulous D'Aubigné might be in an intrigue publicly avowed and carried on, yet he was as complying as others in his more private amours, where he thought his intervention would not come to the general knowledge of the court.*

But D'Aubigné, who always acted on fixed and strong principles, could not be prevailed on by such insidious artifices: nor by his master's attempts to distress his circumstances by retrenching his salary, and obliging him at the same time to an increase of expense. He well knew how to support poverty, but was incapable of enriching himself by mean practices.

As Henry wished by any method to reduce him to stand in such need of his protection that he would purchase it by assisting in his amour, he entered into the quarrel between him and Mons. de Fervaques, which still subsisted, that gentleman continuing his attempts on D'Aubigné's life. Accordingly the king said to D'Aubigné, in the presence of many persons, "Fervaques declares he was not guilty of the treachery you impute to him, and is ready to justify himself by his sword." "Sire," replied D'Aubigné, "he could not have sent me a challenge by a more honourable messenger; and as I have been his standard-bearer, I

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 189.

† Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 39. Dav. lib. 6. p. 319. D'Aubigné Hist. Univ. tom. ii. liv. 2. p. 215. Oecon. Roy. de Sully, tom. i. p. 103.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 39 and p. 43.

will show the respect due to a superior by pulling off my hat to him before I take my sword in my hand." As the king found this appearance of partiality was ineffectual, and had no intention of suffering them to fight, he was very earnest to reconcile them; but D'Aubigné reminded him of the oath they had taken when the plan for his majesty's escape from court was agreed upon; whereby they all engaged never to forgive the man that should betray them. Mons. de Fervaques' resentment rather increased than abated, by frequent disappointment in his designs, and he one night employed a young gentleman of Burgundy to lay in wait for D'Aubigné at the corner of a street; but the latter perceiving him, caught him so suddenly by the collar, that he took his pistol from him before he could discharge it; and as the young man had formerly been his companion in the war, and assured him that Fervaques, who was too powerful for him to resist, had forced him to that action, D'Aubigné forgave him; and he promised he would acquaint him with any treachery that should be hereafter undertaken against him.

M. De Fervaques' resentment was however rendered ineffectual by Mons. de la Boulaie, le Baron de St. Gelais, and some other of D'Aubigné's friends, who waited in the king's antechamber every night to escort him home. Fervaques then determined to withdraw himself from the King of Navarre's court; but before his departure, D'Aubigné having been told by an attendant on the princess Catherine (sister to the king) that Fervaques had lamented his ill conduct towards his old friend, and expressed a desire to ask his pardon before he left the place; D'Aubigné's generous nature led him to make advances to a repentant friend; and he hastened to his apartment: but as he went up the stairs he was met by a gentleman who stopped his course, by informing him that it was only a stratagem of Fervaques' to procure an opportunity of killing him before his departure.*

Public concerns soon turned the thoughts of all the Huguenots from those private affairs; quarrels subsided, and love intrigues were suspended, by the impossibility they found of getting the edict of pacification put in execution; their frequent applications, their reiterated remonstrances were ineffectual; and they experienced that the most flattering concessions cost nothing to a court guided by Catherine de Medicis, who was as ready to deceive as the Huguenots were to be deceived; and whatever hatred her constant dissimulation may excite, it cannot create greater wonder than the persevering credulity of the adverse party.

But on this occasion the court had more to plead in its excuse, than in any other instance where the terms of pacification had been equally violated. The catholics had taken alarm at the concession so liberally made to the Huguenots; and their bigotry being wrought upon by those who from political views were discontented with the administration, they united in a confederacy called the holy league; the general terms of which expressed only a firm engagement among themselves to defend the state and catholic church against every opponent; but the secret views of the principal persons of the party extended much farther. Many of them intimately connected with, and firmly attached to the Duke of Guise, wished to place him on the throne of France, to which he pretended as a descendant from Charlemagne; while the family of Valois who occupied it, derived their origin from Hugues Capet, an usurper.

This renowned confederacy began immediately on the treaty of pacification granted to the Huguenots; but appeared at first only in private associations, entered into by the catholics in several towns and provinces, of which Peronne, the capital of Picardy, was the first; but they soon became universal; and almost the whole kingdom united in one general league. Even the king signed it, though not ignorant of its dangerous tendency; but with a view of preventing the Duke of Guise from being the chief, by becoming so himself.*

The King of Spain was applied to for his concurrence in this *sacred* engagement; to which he readily agreed; it being much his interest to deprive the Huguenots of the power of assisting the reformed of the low countries, who were at that time endeavouring to shake off his yoke. This formidable confederacy would have prevented the court from keeping faith with the Huguenots, had it been so disposed. In the latter end of November, the preceding year, the estates, then assembled at Blois, requested his majesty to forbid the exercise of any religion but the Catholic, throughout his dominions; and to command all the Huguenot clergy to depart the kingdom. The Huguenot chiefs had refused to attend the estates, or to acknowledge them as a free assembly, ten thousand soldiers being quartered in Blois, and the adjacent parts; contrary to the promise given by the court when the treaty of pacification was agreed upon, and the estates summoned.† Deputies were sent to negotiate with the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, and the Marshal D'Amville, to invite them to concur in the resolution of the estates;‡ while those

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 41.

* L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 172. Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 1125. Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 55. Cayet, tom. i. p. 2.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 3. p. 238.

‡ Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 53. Hist. du Duc de Bouill. liv. 2. p. 79.

princes offered on their side to relinquish some of the advantages granted to their party by the treaty, on condition that the court should abstain from such violent measures.

During the course of negotiations from which no one expected to receive much benefit, both sides prepared for war; endeavouring to increase their forces, and to seize such towns as they could get into their hands by stratagem; avoiding as much as possible any open attack.

The King of Navarre, sensible that D'Aubigné was more inclined to engage in military, or political intrigues, than in those of love, sent him into the provinces of Guienne, Picardy, Saintonge, Angoumois, Aunix, Poictou, Touraine, Anjou, Maine, le Perche, Beauce, l'Isle de France, Normandy, and Artois, to examine into the state and dispositions of the Huguenots in those provinces; and to order the leaders to draw their men together; that they might, when occasion called for it, more easily assemble an army. He was likewise commissioned to get, if possible, an opportunity of speaking in private to the Duke of Anjou and Marshal de Cossé. The undertaking was somewhat hazardous, as he was well known to have urged the King of Navarre to make his escape from the court, and to have assisted him in effecting it. But danger rather allured than deterred D'Aubigné; he therefore in his progress passed through Blois, and having assumed a disguise, he found the means of speaking to the Marshal de Cossé, who answered him in a whisper, "Young man, the Duke of Anjou would be so far from accepting your offer of assisting us in escaping from hence, that you run extreme hazard in coming hither to speak to him who would sign the sentence for his own execution, were it presented him; not daring to refuse it. A bold assertion; but justified by the Duke of Anjou's pusillanimous conduct.

The ill success he had with this old officer did not discourage him from applying personally to the duke, as had been given him in commission; though he had been met by a person who knew him through his disguise; and finding no other means of approaching the duke of Anjou, he dressed himself for a masked ball, at which the court was to be that night; and went thither: but as he was standing among the company, one of the queen's maids of honour came up to him, and showing him two officers, who had received orders to seize him, urged him to make his escape. He readily agreed to take her advice; but to prevent giving any suspicion by too precipitate a flight, he conversed gaily with her till he got behind the king and queen; then stealing softly into her majesty's closet, got from thence into the yard; where changing clothes with his footman, he mingled with others of that rank; and accompanying them out of the court-yard, he went to the stable, where he found a person, who not knowing it was of any importance, furnished him with a boat in which he passed the river, and escaped the danger that threatened him.*

When he got to Chastelliers, he found La Noue giving orders for an entertainment which he was preparing for the Duke de Mayenne, who was come into those parts to secure the assistance of the nobles in Touraine, and Poictou; with great difficulty he convinced La Noue that the duke was no safe guest for him to receive. That great general, whose gentle and candid mind made him peculiarly favoured by the Catholics, and easily duped by them, urged the generosity of the Duke of Anjou, the good designs of the king, and the weariness of each party, as sufficient reasons to quiet all apprehensions of a new war; but D'Aubigné was armed with strong arguments to the contrary; and gave him such indisputable proofs of his error, that he at length prevailed with him to leave all festivity to such as were exposed to fewer dangers; and to repair with expedition into Poictou.†

The queen mother had set so many of her spies on D'Aubigné that he was traced by them to many places, but had the good fortune to be no where overtaken; and his mind was so little disturbed by the danger which threatened him, or the fatigues of so long a journey, that during the course of it he composed the harangue M. de Mirambeau afterwards spoke at Rochelle, which determined the citizens to join with their utmost force in the war against the league. When D'Aubigné had nearly reached the end of his journey, he met a troop of soldiers going to surprise Monsieur de St. Gelais, his intimate friend; and as no other means occurred to him of warning him of his danger, he yielded himself prisoner to this troop; and attending them till they approached the place, found opportunity to escape to St. Gelais, and acquaint him with the attack that would immediately be made upon him. He then joined him in repelling the assault, and narrowly escaped death; a musket ball passing through his coat.‡

The king of Navarre, as an acknowledgment of the service D'Aubigné had rendered him in this long and dangerous peregrination, gave him his picture, a present more genteel than useful to a man who never found the art of enriching himself in a war, where plundering made so considerable a part; and he showed his sense of it in a manner not very proper to improve his interest with the king; writing at the bottom of it the following lines:

Ce Prince est d'etrange Nature,
Je ne sai qui Diable l'a fait,

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 3. p. 239.
† Ibid.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 44.

Il recompence en peinture,
Ceux qui le servent en effect.*

Such satirical strokes as these, his blunt sincerity, his rigid virtue, and strict integrity, disgusted even Henry; who more patiently bore with decent frankness in his servants than most other princes. From loving D'Aubigné as a friend, he grew only to value him as a useful servant, an able negotiator, and a brave officer. He wished rather to be loved for his own sake, than for that of the religion he professed, in which there is good reason to suppose he was never very zealous. In D'Aubigné's heart religion was ever uppermost; and though he had an affection for the king, yet it was subordinate to his attachment to the general cause. He was sensible that his favour declined, but would not take any wrong steps to preserve it; though solicited by many of his friends, who represented to him, that the papists, less scrupulous, freely complied with the king's passions, and without reluctance assisted him in his amours, in order to win his affections; they urged that his want of compliance in these particulars might prove hurtful to the Huguenot cause; and the reformed churches might suffer by his too rigid principles; adding, that as no one equalled him in learning, eloquence, poetry, and every talent that could please at court, it was in his power to render himself more agreeable than any other person to his master; to secure his affections, and engross his confidence. To which D'Aubigné only replied; "You think then that I ought to change my nature, and force my conscience, for the good of our church. You say, God has bestowed on me uncommon talents; and for what purpose? To qualify me to become a pander to my master's vices!"†

The time drew near when an active servant would be more valuable than a servile flatterer. The edict of pacification had never been registered, nor any of the articles of it performed; except those relative to Prince Casimir and the Duke of Anjou; the chief view in granting it having been to divide the latter from the King of Navarre and the Huguenots; and in the month of March the petition of the estates was agreed to by the king, and the league published; whereby all who signed it expressly engaged, that no religion but the Roman Catholic should be suffered in the kingdom. As this was a plain declaration of war against the Huguenots, each side now openly rose in arms; but the Huguenots not having collected together a considerable military force, were not able to effect any enterprise of consequence.

D'Aubigné accompanied La Noue in an attempt on Marmande, a well fortified town; but their numbers not amounting to a third of the garrison, they were obliged to give it up, after having had almost all their men wounded. D'Aubigné being ordered to head an attack on the town, and finding his companions had no brassets (a piece of armour to cover the arms) in a sort of bravado took off his, that he might not be less exposed to danger than the rest of his troop; and in the heat of the action, while he was engaged in fight with one of the enemy, perceiving that a bracelet of his mistress's hair, which he wore on his left arm, was burning by the fire of a musket shot which had touched him, he shifted his sword into his left hand, that he might with the other save his bracelet; a piece of gallantry rather to be expected in a knight-errant, than in a man who like D'Aubigné made war so much more his business than love.*

An attempt equally unsuccessful, and more destructive, was made on the town of St. Macaire. A corps of two hundred and sixty undertook to scale it in mid-day. The town stood on a high rock, at the foot of which ran the Garonne. Part of this small company were to make a feint of attacking it by land; while the rest, who went down the river in two boats, were by means of two ladders which they carried with them to climb the rock, and enter the town that way. One of the ladders was given to D'Aubigné and another officer, and though it was too short, they assisted each other in such a manner, that they mounted to the top of the rock; but their design had been discovered; the windows on that side of the town were lined with well armed soldiers; D'Aubigné, and one of the officers who had ascended by the other ladder, each received a shot, and were beaten down into the river; but not being disabled, they returned to action; remounted the ladders, and with the rest of their party continued their attempt to enter the town; but the greatest part of them being killed, the few that remained were at length reduced, with almost equal danger, to return to their boats, one of which was now far more than sufficient to contain their slender numbers; yet above half of those died in the boat; and they must all have perished, had not one of the officers, though his shoulder bone was broken by a musket ball, had skill and resolution sufficient to steer them to a distance from the town.†

The court having succeeded so well in their desire of separating the Duke of Anjou from the King of Navarre, tried every means to gain over the Marshal D'Amville; whom there was more reason to think might be won, as he had not joined the Huguenots from a similitude of religion, being still a Roman Catholic, but from private pique,

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 44. † Ibid. p. 42.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 45. Hist. Univ. tom. ii. liv. 3. p. 258.

† Ibid. p. 264. Oecon. roy. & pol. &c. de Sully, tom. i. p. 96.

and apprehensions for his own safety, at a time when he well knew the court aimed at his ruin. This negotiation had not been carried on so secretly, but that the King of Navarre suspected the marshal's approaching defection. To obtain more certain information than he had received from any of the persons he had employed for that purpose, he sent D'Aubigné, whose discernment, integrity, and zeal, well qualified him for an able negotiator, though at that time he was only about twenty-seven years of age, into Languedoc to the marshal, giving him some ostensible instructions concerning matters he was to treat of, in concert with the deputies from the reformed churches who were then with the marshal; but in private charging him to obtain from that general a fresh attestation in writing, and well authenticated, of his adherence to their party; to prevail on him to draw his forces towards Auvergne, which there was reason to believe the Duke of Anjou would soon attack; and to get from him some pecuniary assistance.

When D'Aubigné arrived at Tholouse, he avoided meeting the officers on guard, that he might not be carried before Monsieur Cornusson, governor of the town. He could so well imitate the bad French spoken by the Italians, especially those of Lombardy, as gave the people he talked with reason to suspect him of belonging to the queen mother; and he pretended to be just come from Blois. An old man, who had long been one of Marshal D'Amville's chief counsellors, happened to alight at the same inn, and wished to know what was passing at the estates; which were not yet over. D'Aubigné, well inclined to enter into conversation, gave him the best intelligence he could; and after they had talked together some time with great seeming openness, he said to him, "Sir, the excellent account the gentleman with whom you found me conversing, gave me of your merit, makes me believe I may safely lay open to you the difficulties I am at present under. Being sent by the queen to treat with Marshal D'Amville on some points rather delicate, I find myself stopped short by a rumour of a perfect reconciliation between him and the King of Navarre; the only part therefore I think I have to act is to return to her majesty without further delay; except I hear that those accounts are erroneous."

The old man, seeing no cause to suspect the truth of what was said to him, and very unwilling a negotiation should be impeded that might be of use to his master, communicated to D'Aubigné many secret facts, as irrefragable proofs of the marshal's faithful attachment to the king of France; assuring him, that he only delayed a declaration of his return to his majesty's service, till he could secure some of the cities possessed by the reformed; that he might, by bringing to the Catholics such advantages, render himself the more acceptable, and of greater consideration in the party. On this intelligence, D'Aubigné immediately sent off a person to the King of Navarre with a letter in cypher, wherein he told him he might be assured of the detection of the marshal; and intreated him to order his affairs accordingly; adding, that he was proceeding on his commission, and should soon acquaint him with farther particulars.

The old counsellor attending the levee of M. de Cornusson the next morning, mentioned the Italian courier, imagining the governor had seen him; but finding his mistake, began to suspect he had been deceived; and desired the person might be secured. Cornusson immediately put himself at the head of a troop of horse, overtook D'Aubigné at Castelnau-d-arri, and having learnt that the Duke de Joyeuse was at Carcassone, he carried his prisoner thither. In their march, the soldiers and officers having abused the King of Navarre, and uttered many calumnies against him, the impatient D'Aubigné took fire, and gave them the lie; which was considered as so great an outrage, the men being under arms and on duty, that the officers with much difficulty prevented the soldiers from taking speedy and effectual vengeance. When they arrived at Carcassone, though in the presence of the Duke de Joyeuse, governor of the province, D'Aubigné found that Cornusson designed to try him himself; whereupon, taking out of his pocket a letter from his master, and springing from the people who had him in custody, he made some steps towards the duke, holding out the letter; who immediately advanced to receive it. He was then permitted to defend himself from the two accusations brought against him. He said that he had indeed passed through Thoulouse without having been carried before the governor, but as he was of the contrary party, he did not imagine it was his duty to teach the soldiers theirs; if therefore any fault was committed, it was not by him. He did not deny but he had learnt from the old gentleman's conversation, that Marshal D'Amville still kept his majesty in suspense as to the resolution he would take, and that his lady was endeavouring to make him dismiss Segur, who carried on the intelligence between her husband and the King of Navarre. He acknowledged that he had given the lie to an officer under arms, but it was in defence of the honour of one who ought to be respected by every man that bore arms; and he was very ready as soon as he had delivered to the marshal the dispatches with which he was charged, to return, and resigning himself into the hands of the king's lieutenant, maintain with his sword the lie he had given. The Duke de Joyeuse, satisfied with the defence he had

made, treated him with the greatest civility, and appointed guards to escort him nearly to the end of his journey.

When D'Aubigné arrived at Pezenas, the town where the marshal then resided, he ordered Segur, when the marshal should know of his being come, and ask any questions about him, to answer them in a manner that should imply his contempt for such a messenger. He had the night before drawn up for himself new instructions, composed of articles so trifling, and unimportant, that they might safely have been trusted to a common footman; and presenting these to the marshal, with some conversation equally insignificant, little attention was paid to him, or care taken to conceal any transactions from his observation. He passed ten days, in appearance, entirely given up to the sports and amusements which he shared with the son of the Marshal Bellegarde, and other young noblemen whom he had been acquainted with while at court; but he spent his nights with those Huguenots who had been deputed by the party to endeavour to retain Marshal D'Amville on their side, and in sending off despatches to all the towns belonging to the reformed, to warn them of the designs against them; at the same time instructing them how best to baffle any attempts; taking upon himself the blame of the actions he advised, should any thing amiss happen in consequence. This gave offence to some of the Huguenot ministers, who thought it insolent in a young man to presume so much on his own abilities: nor did the information he sent the King of Navarre meet with a better reception; he was accused by his majesty's principal counsellors of impudent conceit of himself, in pretending, even before he had approached the marshal, to contradict the accounts given by Segur de Pardaillan, a man whose judgment was matured by so great a superiority of years. D'Aubigné, finding that something more was requisite to make him believed and regarded, applied to Madame D'Usez for her assistance. That lady was near an hundred years old, but retained both strength and quickness of understanding. She lived at Pezenas in great figure; much respected by every party, but affectionately attached to the reformed. D'Aubigné, by seeking every means of obliging her, got so far into her favour, that she undertook to learn from Marshal Bellegarde the terms offered to Mons. D'Amville; and apprehending there was no surer method of making him betray the secret than by heating his temper till he was off his guard, she opposed his intention of reconciling his friend to the king, and gave so many reasons why it could not be for his benefit, that Bellegarde, growing angry, produced his instructions from the court, to convince her of her error.

The old lady read them with attention, and treasured them up in her memory; and when the marshal was gone, she and D'Aubigné drew up the form of the instructions as exactly as they could, adhering as much as possible even to the words used in them; and for such parts as Madame D'Usez could not perfectly recollect the terms in which they were expressed, they clothed them in the jargon of the court; interspersed with the persuasive blandishments usual with the queen mother.

This being done, D'Aubigné took advantage of a day that the Marshal Bellegarde was confined by indisposition to his chamber, and knocking at his door, was immediately admitted; the sick man expecting some entertaiment from the wit and vivacity of his visitor; but D'Aubigné with great gravity thus addressed him:

"Sir, if you will swear to me on that faith and honour you profess, not to force me by any method to disclose the author of the intelligence I am going to give you, I have something of importance to communicate." The marshal having given his word, D'Aubigné proceeded. "The instructions, Sir, that were given you to effect a reconciliation between the king and Marshal D'Amville have been transmitted to me, and I am much surprised to see the snares spread for your honour, and the honour of one of the noblest officers in Christendom. They would make you accessary to his ruin; the ruin of him to whom you owe your advancement. All the promises they give are false and vain; for the performance remains in the power of those whose faith has been as often violated as engaged. You would persuade your friend from being one of the chiefs of a strong and firm body, to become a servant to a weak state; a state already divided; and which will soon be under the tyranny of the ancient enemies of the house of Montmorenci; a state which you destroy by separating from your present friends, and which can find no resource but in their conjunction. If compassion for the kingdom is not a sufficient motive, at least suffer a due regard to your own safety to influence you. Either the king or the Guises will obtain their views; should it be the king, he will be careful to bring low those who have shown themselves so powerful against him. The offender being a prince, will not pardon those he has injured, or attempted to injure. The assassination and poison which the marshal escaped by the timely notice I gave him, (although now forgotten) will rankle in the king's breast; nor is he of so brave a spirit as to suffer a noble enemy to exist, who is over-reached by fraud, not won by virtue. If the Guises succeed in their designs, it will be long before they are sufficiently established in power to wish, or dare, to show favour to those whom they have cause to fear. Your reputation, Sir, will be blasted with the im-

putation of being the supplanter of your friend, to whom through another channel they promise (as I can prove to you) to extend his power at the expense of your authority. They have already tempted my master and the prince of Condé by promises more specious, and more honourable than those you bring; for they do not ask them to betray their sincere, their bosom friends; promises more alluring, as offering them the supreme command of all the armies in France; more secure, because all their party would partake of the peace granted to them. These princes had stronger inducements to accept those offers, for all the violence of war lies on them; here you are free from it; their finances are exhausted, the marshal's are overflowing. Thus hope and necessity unite to induce them to listen to such overtures; but fidelity and virtue render them deaf to all insidious offers; and to every invitation to treat without the concurrence of their companion in the war, the marshal, who now acts so contrary a part towards them, (his superiors in rank) unmindful that with the confederates all promises are valid, and could at his will be made effectual; but on a weak and divided party there can be no dependence. It is time to reflect on the solidity of the particular articles which you are commissioned to promise him; as for the first, not in order indeed, but in importance, what probability is there of dispossessing the Duke de Joyeuse of a government wherein he is established, authorized, cherished by the parliament of Tholouse, and supported by the favour of his son M. D'Arques, passionately beloved by the king? How shall Narbonne be taken from the Count de Rieux? or Beziers from M. de Spondillan? Have they not learnt from so many examples to adhere closely to secret orders, and to despise those that are ostensible? Consider what various interests oppose the execution of these promises; how many complaints, what heavy charges will be laid against you, to render you, who have hitherto been beloved, the object of detestation. Reflect to whom the promises are made, and at whose expense they must be performed. Can you be so blind as to believe they will strip the Duke of Anjou to clothe you with his spoils?"

The Marshal de Bellegrade perceiving the terms of his instructions in the articles alluded to, was confounded; but finding it to no purpose to deny that he was charged with such, only sought to refute the imputation of deceiving his friend; and therefore justified the validity of the king's promises. D'Aubigné, in order to get to the bottom of the whole affair, took occasion from thence to observe that they would be rendered much more secure by the concurrence of the King of Navarre, if he likewise could be brought to accept of the terms offered, as they would be a sort of security to each other. He then expatiated on the "necessitous circumstances of that prince, and the consequent distresses of his servants; that to instance himself, his master had great good will towards him, but was not able to give him any effectual proof of it; nor could he, or the rest of that prince's servants, expect any thing but poverty, while their master continued at variance with the court."

This gave the marshal occasion to sound him; saying, with a sigh, that "indeed he was sensible that the king's promises might be more safely depended upon if an engagement were at the same time entered into with the princes; this he confirmed by many reasons; adding, that if D'Aubigné would as diligently endeavour to bring his master back to the court, as he had laboured to carry him from it, the negotiation might be retarded, and the marshal and the princes unite in one treaty."

D'Aubigné replied, that "he would not promise any thing of that sort, not having sufficient power to answer for success; but if they would show him any solid means of securing his master from the deceitful arts of the court, and if he could be strengthened by the concurrence of those who had the King of Navarre's confidence, and who would be actuated by a regard for his repose and safety, he would show them how weary he was of poverty; but that as circumstances then were, he could promise them nothing."

Bellegarde then pressing his hand, mentioned Monsieur de Laverdin, and some others to him, as persons who were endeavouring to effect a reconciliation between the two kings; promising him rewards for his assistance: D'Aubigné replied, he would enter into no other engagement than to act the part of an honest man. The marshal, flattered by the hopes thus given him, forbade the execution of an enterprise which he was just going to undertake. D'Aubigné immediately repaired to Marshal D'Amville, and produced a memorial from his master, of more importance than the first he had presented. He then acted the same part he had done with Bellegarde. The marshal at first endeavoured to deceive him in regard to his negotiations with the court; but finding him too well informed, and that his friend had made overtures towards uniting interests with the King of Navarre, he grew more open, and exhorted D'Aubigné, and Segur, who was present, to prevail on their master to join with him in the transaction. They gave him all the reason to hope for their assistance, which he could gather from their attention to his discourse and their silence, but would enter into no promise; and the next day was appointed for treating the matter more fully. Segur related what had passed to the deputies, who returned directly to inform those who had sent them of the necessity of being

on their guard; and D'Aubigné having got all the light into the affair he could expect, set out for Castres without waiting for the next day's conference. From thence he took leave of the marshal by letter, wherein he made such remonstrances against his conduct, that with great concern the marshal told a friend, had he received them eight days sooner they would have prevented his quitting the party.*

Through a variety of dangers D'Aubigné returned to the King of Navarre's court, where La Noue was appointed to receive all the intelligence he had brought; and if he had communicated it to no one else, that gentleman's prudence was such, that the service D'Aubigné had done his master would not have turned to his own detriment; but his too great warmth of temper, the zeal he felt for the cause, and his honest detestation of treachery, impelled him to speak too freely, and too publicly, of the underhand practices of many of the Catholics, who were in greatest favour with the king; which raised him such powerful enemies, as frequently endangered his life, and filled it with vexation and disappointment. It is impossible that harmony should long subsist in a party composed of persons whose views and interests were not only different, but in many respects contradictory. The malecontents, who formed a very considerable part of the King of Navarre's adherents, were Roman Catholics; many of them had distinguished themselves little to their honour at the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and must of course be very odious to the reformed. Though the favour of princes is too complicated a benefit to be often sought from disinterested affection to their persons, yet a man so noble in mind, so amiable in manners, as the King of Navarre, was probably beloved by some about him, independent of all views of advancement; but the number must have been very small; for ambition will steal into almost every heart, when there is a prospect of its gratification; and when once entered, it seldom remains long a secondary passion; affection for the merits of the prince will turn into an attachment to his power; and having so much to hope for themselves, their attention will centre there; the regards of friendship will be considered as trifling gifts from a man who has so much more to give. As a possible benefactor, he interests every passion; as a friend he can engage only the calm and rational affections, which will not often keep their ground when strong and turbulent passions have gained admittance into the heart. The malecontents were less actuated by attachment to Henry, than by fear and hatred of the Guises; contempt for the reigning king; and hopes of acquiring a great share in that power to which Henry's extraordinary talents evinced, that he must one day be exalted. The great object of the Huguenots was their religion; Henry was more dear to them as he was at the head of those who fought in its defence, than for any merits peculiar to himself: they suspected his steadiness in this their great concern, when they saw how remiss he was in the practice of that religion of which he professed himself the defender, and how much he favoured its greatest enemies. Thus mutual jealousies and disgust, between parties so opposite in views, created continual discord, which it was not in Henry's power to reconcile; and in all their quarrels he was disposed to favour the malecontents. Their free manners and unbounded participation in all his pleasures, rendered them more agreeable companions than the Huguenots, who sometimes by speech, and more frequently by their decent and sober course of life, reproached him for vices that he was by no means disposed to relinquish. Their strong attachment to their sect he considered as a demerit; and frequently declared he was more obliged to the Roman Catholics, who had espoused his fortunes from affection, than to the Reformed, who adhered to him only for the advantage of their religion; a declaration rather designed as a specious excuse for his partiality, than as the expression of his real opinion.

Henry was too wise a man to believe the Catholics were disinterested in their attachment to him; and he evidently proved it by conferring almost all favours on them; he knew he must purchase their services: he trusted that the interests of their religion would sufficiently bind the Huguenots to his party, without the aid of private emoluments. He was sensible that all the power of the Huguenots was insufficient to place him on the throne, though their assistance was absolutely necessary. He must even foresee that there was little probability of ascending it, or at least possessing it in peace, while he professed a religion to which far the greatest part of the kingdom was averse; he therefore knew that at length he should disappoint their hopes; and thus the sense of every service they rendered him, was accompanied with a consciousness that one day they would be so many matters of reproach. Such reflections could not fail of alienating him from them; and he beheld as future enemies, men who were made his friends only by his professing a religion which sooner or later he should be brought to abjure. Another circumstance made against the reformed; the tenets of their religion were less favourable to absolute monarchy than those of the Catholics. A spirit of liberty had appeared among them wherever they had prevailed; and having shaken off the spiritual yoke of the

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 273.

pope, they began to consider how far the power of a temporal prince ought reasonably to exend; and did not think their persons, any more than their consciences, should be enslaved. No man could be more free from all inclination to tyranny, than Henry; and when his passion for women, the vice which cast a stain on his whole life, was out of the question, power in his hands was only the means of making his kingdom happy and prosperous: but it cannot be imagined that any prince will contentedly see his authority abridged; if some have, of their own free choice, set bounds to it, the smallness of their number, and the greatness of their virtue, will allow us to consider them as prodigies, to be admired, to be venerated, but not likely to be imitated.

The King of Navarre's court was divided between those two parties; Mons. de Laverdin was at the head of the Catholics, the Viscount de Turenne at the head of the Reformed. The accounts D'Aubigné brought from Languedoc of the secret negotiations of some of the Catholics increased the animosities, and rendered him very obnoxious to that party; their resentment went so far, that at Agen they formed a design of having him murdered one night in his bed; but the conspiracy was discovered while he was in the king's chamber, receiving a commission to go to the Cevennes, and take on him the command of the people of that province, who had requested the King of Navarre to send them one of his officers, to put an end to the contention among themselves for command, which disabled them from making the necessary opposition to the Duke of Anjou's forces, who had laid waste their whole country.

D'Aubigné being informed that the king had consented to the intended murder, addressed him as he sat at table in these words: "You have then, sire, formed a design to put to death a man, whom God chose as his instrument for the preservation of your life; a service which I do not reproach you, any more than all the wounds I have received in fighting your cause; but I take the liberty of reminding you, that I have served you faithfully, without your having been able to make me either a flatterer or a pander. May God forgive you this action! You may perceive by the freedom with which I speak to you, that I set little value on my life."*

The king was extremely offended at so free an accusation; and M. de Laverdin, as a more decent means of destroying a man so obnoxious to the party, brought D'Aubigné a challenge from the Sieur de la Magdelaine, who probably was the person charged with an intention of committing the murder; and though D'Aubigné being just recovered from a fever, was so weak that he could not wield a sword, yet taking a poniard in one hand, and a pistol in the other, he attended Laverdin to the place where the duel was to be fought, without having taken any other precautions to secure a fair combat except Laverdin's word of honour; but the captain of the adjacent citadel discovering eighteen Catholic soldiers who had laid aside their regimentals, and concealed themselves in a hut near the place agreed on for the duelists to engage in, he made his company take arms, and pulling up the draw-bridge, great slaughter would have ensued, had not La Noue and another gentleman exerted themselves very much to prevent it. Laverdin took refuge in the bishop's house; and the Viscount de Turenne, who had undertaken the defence of Villeneuve in Agenois, on Laverdin's refusing so dangerous an employment, having heard what had passed, set out post, to convey D'Aubigné safely from a place where such treachery was practising against him. The King of Navarre refused to give up the perpetrators of these actions, and by undertaking their defence, alienated the minds of many of the reformed, some of whom accompanied D'Aubigné to Castel-Jaloux, where he was advised to retire, being lieutenant to Vachonniere, governor of that town.*

As soon as he arrived at Castel-Jaloux, he wrote to Monsieur Laverdin in the following terms: "Sir, I must remind you of the frankness with which I repaired to the place of rendezvous on your word; though I had received several informations that it was a very unsafe one for me; which makes my part of the affair the most honourable. However doubtful this transaction has rendered your faith, or at least your foresight, if the Sieur de la Magdelaine has any inclination to measure swords with me, there is a very favourable spot between this place and Nerac, where I will meet him at such time as you shall appoint, without any other security than your word." The Sieur de la Magdelaine did not choose to accept this challenge.†

Soon after D'Aubigné arrived at Castel-Jaloux, Vachonniere solicited by his garrison to enter into action, set out with a troop of about eighty men on the road to Marmande, where they were most likely to find opportunities of skirmishing with the enemy. He sent D'Aubigné before with fifteen horse, supported by Capt. Dominge, at the head of a like number of musketeers; but unfortunately, the Baron de Mauzevin, without their knowledge, had at the same time draughted men from all the garrisons in the neighbouring towns possessed by the Catholics, with an intention of laying in ambush seven hundred and fifty musketeers,

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 46.

* Hist Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. p. 285.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 47.

in a place where he hoped by skirmishing to draw the garrison of Castel-Jaloux, if by insults or bravados he could provoke them to quit their fort to engage him. When D'Aubigné approached the river Garonne, seeing the banks of the opposite shore covered with soldiers, and that a boatful of them had reached the side of the river on which he was; he called to Dominge to make his men lie down on their faces, that they might not be seen; this order being obeyed, as soon as the enemy were landed, D'Aubigné attacked them, and killed sixty, with the loss of only one man.

Vachonniere perceiving the great numbers that were going to embark, thought it most advisable to return home; but D'Aubigné, desirous before he followed him to see to what purpose so considerable a body was destined, stayed to reconnoitre them; and observing that after embarking in a hasty and tumultuous manner, they landed at a little village named Coustare, he rode up to his captain, and advised him to march to a small plain they had observed in their road, there to halt and prepare to fight the enemy, who could not have leisure to put themselves in very good order, for he imagined they should only have infantry to oppose them, the town having concealed from his view a strong body of horse, with the Baron de Mauzevin at their head. Vachonniere approved his advice, but found himself much distressed by the rashness and impetuosity of some young volunteers in his company, who were so eager to engage, that they paid no deference to his commands. They ran to the attack without order, not having patience to march to the plain to which they were directed. A general confusion ensued. The numbers were very unequal; but the Huguenots in some measure supplied in courage their deficiency in men, and maintained the fight with incredible obstinacy. D'Aubigné had endeavoured to restore order among them, but it was impossible to restrain their fatal ardour; Vachonniere, mortally wounded, fell under the feet of D'Aubigné's horse; D'Aubigné, covered with wounds, sunk beside him as he was attempting to lay Vachonniere's body across his horse, and three more of their men fell dead upon them. As the small remains of this valiant troop were preparing to retire, Dominge saw D'Aubigné, who having shaken off one of the bodies that had fallen on him, though unable to rise, was yet defending himself with his sword against three of the enemy, Dominge, instantly calling to him three of his brave friends, came to D'Aubigné's rescue, and easily drove away the three officers, whom he had so severely wounded, that one of them died of his wounds. This small band setting D'Aubigné on horseback, carried him off, though not without being obliged to face about several times to defend themselves from some who pursued them till they reached the plain which had been designed for the field of battle. They found there a part of their troops, who, more obedient to orders, had not yet been engaged, and were determined to revenge the loss of their companions; but by good fortune, for their small number left them but little probability of success, the Baron de Mauzevin being wounded, sounded a retreat; and the garrison of Castel-Jaloux retired into the town with the loss of twenty-seven of their small corps.*

D'Aubigné was confined to bed for some time by his wounds; but having a spirit as little to be subdued by sickness as by danger, the confinement of his body did not restrain the freedom of his mind, and he employed that season of leisure from more important affairs, in composing verses, which he dictated to an amanuensis.

As soon as he was recovered, he led his garrison (for by Vachonniere's death he was become the commanding officer) to Castelnau de Maumes, a castle near Bourdeaux, which they scaled, having some secret intelligence in the place. The lady to whom it belonged, applied to Monsieur de Laverdin, of whose favour she enjoyed a greater share than was consistent with her reputation; and he had sufficient interest with the King of Navarre to prevail on him to disavow the enterprise, and to order the place to be restored to her; notwithstanding the chief persons of the Huguenot party strongly opposed it. But D'Aubigné, who thought private amours ought not to influence martial affairs, paid little regard to those orders. Thus disappointed, Madame de Castelnau prevailed on the marquis de Villars to besiege the place, having obtained the King of Navarre's promise to forbear sending thither any reinforcements. As the marquis approached with fourteen cannon, D'Aubigné entered the castle with two hundred and fifty soldiers, and drawing them up to advantage, they made so considerable a figure, that the marquis mistaking them for succours, sent by the king contrary to the promise given, quitted the attempt, and led off his troops towards Manciet.

As the appearance of so great an army could not fright D'Aubigné into obedience, M. de Castlenau, a near relation of the lady's, sought to prevail by treachery; and employed La Salle de Ciron, a catholic officer, who solicited two of the soldiers of the garrison of Castel-Jaloux to furnish him with an opportunity to take Castelnau by surprise, representing that as the King of Navarre had ordered it to be restored, there could be no treason in giving it up. The soldiers desired time for consideration; which being granted, they employed it in

* Hist. Univ. D'Aubig. tom. ii. liv. 3. p. 288.

communicating to D'Aubigné the proposals that had been made to them. By his directions they pretended to comply with La Salle's proposal, but said they could not effect it till the garrison of the castle should take the field on some enterprise.

Having thus gained all the leisure that was necessary, when every thing was prepared, they fixed the time, and agreed on the manner in which the place should be delivered into La Salle's hands.

D'Aubigné set out the evening before at the head of sixty men; but returned privately in the night, bringing with him likewise the garrison of Castel-Jaloux. La Salle, with his party, some of them disguised as peasants, others in women's clothes, having appeared at the gates of the castle at break of day, they received signs that they might safely approach; but met with so warm a reception, that of those that entered forty-eight were killed, and the rest were so roughly handled in their retreat, that few would have escaped, had they not at some distance been met by a troop of two hnndred men, drawn from the garrisons of St. Macaire and Langon; at the appearance of whom the Huguenots gave up the pursuit. This action exasperated the King of Navarre so much, that he sent M. de Castelnau to Castel-Jaloux, to threaten D'Aubigné that he would send four cannon against that town, and besiege it; to which D'Aubigné replied, that "those who had despised fourteen, "were not likely to be afraid of four."*

D'Aubigné, ever eager to be in action, made some attempts to harass the Marquis de Villars' army, which was then but weak; and took some prisoners near Sabres, but was soon checked in his career, by hearing that M. de Pouzanne, at the head of a considerable body of troops, had followed him, and was then approaching. This information obliged him to desist from his expedition, and the night coming on, he took advantage of the opportunity it afforded him of amusing the enemy, and facilitating his own retreat. As he passed through a village, he selected twelve of his men who were the best mounted, and sending the rest forwards, he caused fires to be lighted in the village, and took all proper methods to make the enemy believe he had fixed his quarters there for that night; wherein he succeeded so well, that M. de Pouzanne determined to attack it at the dawn of day; and while he was employed in the necessary preparations for that purpose, D'Aubigné and his men got off unperceived. But being afterwards informed by the prisoners he had taken, that the marquis's army was going to be divided, he returned, and early in the morning reached a plain, where he discovered a corps somewhat inferior to his, which he attacked, and subdued without great difficulty, it being only an escort to two ladies whom it was conducting to Bourdeaux, where they had been condemned to be beheaded. The corps was composed of twenty light horse of the Viscount d'Orté's, and some soldiers draughted from Dax and Bayonne; of those that belonged to Dax the soldiers killed twenty-two, by way of reprisal for the cruelties exercised in that town at the massacre of St. Bartholomew against the Huguenots, who being confined in prison by the governor, with an intention of saving them from the populace, the furious bigots broke open the prison gates, and put them to death in the most cruel manner. To the rest of the troops D'Aubigné restored their arms and horses; caused their wounds to be dressed; and sent them back to the Viscount, ordering them to tell him that they had been witnesses to the different treatment given to soldiers and hangmen: referring to the Viscount's answer to the King on receiving orders for the massacre. D'Aubigné conducted the ladies safely to their parents, who lived at Chatillon. In a week after, presents of worked scarves and handkerchiefs were sent from Bayonne, to all the garrison at Castel-Jaloux; nor did the citizens of that town omit on other occasions, expressing their gratitude to D'Aubigné, in the highest terms of affection and respect.*

The important services D'Aubigné rendered to the party by the early discovery of Marshal D'Amville's defection, and the information and instructions he sent to the cities in Languedoc to be on their guard against any attempts that might be made to get possession of them, appeared by the marshal's failing in twenty-two enterprises on the towns in that province, whereby he returned into the service of the King of France with far less importance and consideration than he expected; but nothing touched him so nearly as being disappointed of Montpellier, from whence his wife was expelled with very little ceremony.† The Huguenots of that province elected for general in his place Mons. de Thoré, his brother, a rigid Catholic, in order to keep well with that party; and because Mons. de Chatillon, son to the brave, but unfortunate admiral, on whom their future hopes were fixed, was then too young to undertake the command; though already one of their bravest officers.

Marshal Bellegarde laid waste all the country about Nismes, setting fire to the corn which was then ripe; and Marshal D'Amville laying siege to Montpellier, reduced the town to great extremity, Mons. de Thoré not having sufficient force to oblige him to raise the siege. The inhabit-

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 50, 51. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. p. 288, 289.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii.. p. 292.
† Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 59.

ants, and even the soldiers of the garrison, pressed by hunger, began to mutiny against their commanders, who refused to capitulate. Hereupon young de Chatillon, he being then in the town, offered to go and seek for succour from their neighbours and allies; promising, that successful or not, he would return to them, and share their fortunes; leaving his two brothers as hostages, after the besieged had engaged by oath to wait his return, even should they be reduced to such extremity as to eat each other. Taking with him a party of soldiers, he forced his way in the night through the enemy's camp; when sending back his companions, he hastened to the Cevennes, then into Rovergue, to Castres, to Montauban, and from thence, with amazing celerity, went to the King of Navarre at Bergerac; and obtaining from him, orders to those whom he had already disposed to follow him, he collected his recruits from their several places; and in nineteen days returned within sight of the enemy's army, with three thousand infantry, and three hundred horse; which united with Mons. de Thoré's troops, composed a body of four thousand foot, and five hundred cavalry.

By break of day this army marched, in order of battle, towards the bridge over the river Lez, just before which rises a little hill of craggy rocks, whereon Marshal D'Amville had encamped the best part of his infantry; and in the valley beneath lodged his light horse, to be at hand to sustain them. There was no means of approaching the bridge without previously forcing this well placed camp; a dangerous enterprise; but de Chatillon's ardour was equal to any attempt. He led part of his infantry against it, and after an obstinate fight of above four hours, wherein he several times seized, and again lost the hill, he drove the Catholics into the valley; where they communicated confusion and fear to the light horse, and thereby gave de Chatillon opportunity to force his way into the city. Without allowing himself rest or refreshment, he immediately attacked the besiegers' batteries, and drove them from the town. The citizens joyfully united their endeavours with his, to deliver the place from so formidable an enemy, and applying themselves to remove the works that had been raised against it, found the barricadoes chiefly composed of barrels filled with corn; and thus at once gathered so plentiful an harvest, that a loaf of bread, which the day before was valued at a crown, was the day following sold for a penny. The occasion of this extraordinary profusion of corn in the enemy's camp, was that they having ravaged the circumjacent country, and gathered in the harvest, all the vessels they had were scarcely sufficient to contain it; and they littled doubted finding a good market for a commodity become peculiarly valuable, from the great devastation they had made in that part of the kingdom.*

The next morning, by nine o'clock, the two armies were drawn up in order of battle; equally determined to engage, they marched towards each other, and the forlorn were commencing a skirmish, when a sudden stop was put to all hostilities by the arrival of two couriers, one despatched by the king of Navarre to Messrs. de Thoré and de Chatillon; and the other by the Duke de Montpensier to Marshal D'Amville, to acquaint them that a peace was concluded between the two kings.†

The articles of the treaty were less advantageous to the Huguenots than those granted them by the former peace, but still far better than they could have obtained, had not the King of France sought to bring the war to a conclusion, with a view of lessening the importance of the Guises, whose bold encroachments on the regal power very justly alarmed him. By assuming the title of head of the league, he had gained nothing; his authority was merely nominal; while the Guises enjoyed that plenitude of power, which the entire confidence, and ardent love of a whole people can alone bestow. They were considered as the bulwarks of the Catholic faith, and beheld with sentiments approaching to adoration.

The pulpits resounded with eulogiums of their pious zeal; the soldiers received courage from their intrepidity; and their gracious manners won the hearts of the people. In vain did Henry practice all the mummeries of monkish bigotry to gain the reputation of piety; the most scandalous irregularities were mixed with his solemn fopperies; and the Guises took care to have them made public, even from the pulpits;‡ till the whole nation at once despised him for his puerile superstitions, and hated him for his vices. He had good reason to fear that the league, declaredly formed in opposition to the Huguenots, would turn against himself, and sought by peace to dissolve so dangerous an association.

The peace having deprived most of the Huguenot officers of all martial employment, they repaired to the King of Navarre's court: but that was no proper place for D'Aubigné; he knew himself extremely obnoxious to the Catholic party, and disagreeable to the king; nor is it strange that in so licentious a court, treachery should be more easily forgiven than rigid virtue, and strict probity: frankness in speech will there generally displease; and in a society whose manners are depraved, integrity of conduct gives still greater offence, for actions

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 3 p. 313.

† Davila, liv. 6. p. 340. Mem. d'Etat, par Villeroy, tom. i. p. 16. Esprit de la Ligue, tom. ii. lib. 5. p. 185. Cayet, p. 7.

‡ Dav. lib. 4. p. 345.

reproach more severely than words: and so effectually had they jointly operated in D'Aubigné's disfavour, that Henry had given mean, but strong proofs, of his animosity against him on more than one occasion.

After the engagement wherein Vachonniere received his mortal wound, a young officer who had been in the heat of the battle, going to Agen, where the King of Navarre then was, that prince asked him the particulars of so obstinate a fight. The young man, warm with gratitude, believing that he and his companions owed their lives to D'Aubigné, who by the vigorous attack in which he so much exposed himself, had delivered them out of the hands of the enemy, was so lavish in his praises, and related so many astonishing proofs of his valour, that the king, provoked beyond decency, told him he lied. The young man, finding his honour concerned, wrote to some of his relations, then at Castel-Jaloux, desiring them to transmit him an account of the actions they had seen performed by D'Aubigné; and having received from them not only a full confirmation of all he had reported, but that six persons showed wounds in their faces (one of whom afterwards died of them) which they had received from D'Aubigné, as he lay wounded on the ground; he prevailed on M. de Laverdin to present this his justification to the king; to whom he also reported, that the Sieur de Dominge, who had been in the thickest of the battle, had likewise performed wonders. Not long after Dominge also came to Agen, and going to pay his respects to the king, who was then engaged at tennis, his majesty left off play, to inquire of him the particulars of the several enterprises in which he had borne a part; but in the course of his relation he gave such very high commendation to D'Aubigné as disgusted the king, and not only lost Dominge his majesty's favour, but the reward he had a right to expect for thirty-eight wounds he had received in his service.*

After the death of Vachonniere, the citizens and garrison of Castel-Jaloux would have requested the king to appoint D'Aubigné to that government; but he would not suffer them to do it, as it could produce no other effect than exasperating the king still more against him; for he well knew, that every acquisition of new honours, every proof of the esteem of others, can only serve to render the injured more hateful to the injurer.

D'Aubigné being no longer detained in France by interest or employment, formed a resolution of going to offer his services to Prince Casimir, second son to the elector Palatine; but first wrote a farewell letter to the King of Navarre in the following terms:

"Sire, Your memory will reproach you my twelve years faithful attachment, and twelve wounds received in your service; it will make you recollect your former confinement at court, and that the hand which now addresses these lines to you broke the bars of your prison; and has disinterestedly served you, unbenefited by you, uncorrupted either by your enemies or by yourself. I hereby recommend you to the favour of God, by whom I hope my past services will be accepted; and that my future actions will be such as shall convince you that by losing me you have lost a faithful and an useful servant."*

Having sent off this letter, he set forward on his journey; with an intention to take leave of his friends in Poictou, and sell his estate in that province, to enable him to proceed to the Palatinate. Passing through Agen, in order to visit an old lady who had shown him much friendship in some of his distresses, and to whom he wished to return his thanks before he left the kingdom; he found there a spaniel, formerly a great favourite with the King of Navarre, and accustomed to lie on his bed. The poor creature, now neglected, and almost famished, fawned upon and caressed him, in a manner that touched him so much, that he boarded it with a woman in the town; and caused to be engraven on his collar the following lines:

Le fidele Citron qui couchoit Autrefois
Sur votre lit sacré, couche ores sur la dure;
C'est ce fidele Citron qui appris de nature
A faire des amis & des traitres le choix.

C'est lui qui les brigands effrayoit de sa voix,
Des dents les assassins; d'ou vient donc qu'il endure
La faim, le froid, les coups, les dedains & l'injure?
Payement coutumier du service des Rois.

Sa fierté, sa beauté, sa jeunesse agreable,
Le fit cherir de vous; mais il fut redoutable,
A vos haineux; au siens, pour sa dexterité.

Courtisans qui jettez vos dedaigneuses vues
Sur ce chien delaissé, mort de faim par les rues,
Attendez ce loyer de la fidelité.

The King of Navarre passing through Agen the next day, the dog was carried to him; the collar drew his attention, and on reading the verses he changed colour, and was much disconcerted. But it was not the greatest mortification he received on D'Aubigné's account; for some time after, the Huguenots having held a general assembly at St. Foix, the deputies of Languedoc asked him "where was D'Aubigné, who had saved their province? and what he had done with so useful a servant of God?" He replied, that "he still considered him as his, and would take care to recall him about his person."†

But to return to D'Aubigné, whom we

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 49.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 51. † Ibid. p. 52.

left on his journey; which proved much shorter than he intended. Passing in his road through the town of St. Gelais, he cast his eyes up to a window where sat Mademoiselle de Lezay; whose beauty made so instantaneous a conquest of his heart, that he thought no more of the Palatinate; proceeding no further than to the house of his friends Messieurs de St. Gelais, and de la Boulaye; like a true knight errant, more ardent than ever in the pursuit of glory, in order to recommend himself to the object of his new conceived passion, and from a desire to render himself necessary to his party, and at the same time give his ungrateful master reason to regret the loss of such a servant. Nor was he likely to wait long for an opportunity of entering into action, the last peace proving as unstable as all the former.*

Hostilities commenced with the new year; the Catholics seized Villeneuf and Agen, towns belonging to the Huguenots. In Languedoc the war had never ceased. Marshal D'Amville having refused to suffer the troops Monsieur de Chatillon had collected, to return to their respective places, though that liberty was allowed them by the treaty of peace,† they divided into two parties; one of which fixing at Bruguerolles, the other at Tezan, they raised contributions on the parts adjacent, took prisoners, and carried on a war necessary for their subsistence; living under an uncommon kind of regulation. The numbers in each place consisted of about four hundred. They all eat in one common hall; at the head of the table sat the captain and the minister (or chaplain); at the bottom two lieutenants; and the other officers at certain distances, with the common soldiers between them. They were all clad in the same cloth, no distinction being allowed to the officers in any particular, but that the chief captains wore a small gold chain round their necks, and the others a red string to their caps. They were continually in action, and harassed the Catholic armies in that province, especially Marshal D'Amville's, to so great a degree, that they almost destroyed them; and although the towns they dwelt in were unfortified, no one ventured to attack them; awed by their superior courage, and by an apprehension that they were protected by de Chatillon.‡

The King of Navarre having sent an envoy to the court to demand his wife, the queen mother took advantage of the opportunity, and under pretence of restoring her to her husband, accompanied her into Guyenne. But the views of Catherine de Medicis were never confined to simple ceremonials. She was very desirous of detaching the King of Navarre from the Huguenots: but should she fail therein, she thought it possible to cajole him into a restitution of the places of security granted to his party, before the time specified by the treaty; and was so well skilled in the art of showing discord, that she did not doubt finding means to distress him, by increasing the dissentions which necessarily divided a court, composed of persons whose interests and inclinations were so diametrically opposite. But whatever dependence she might have on her political arts, she fortified herself with her usual auxiliaries; not practised statesmen, nor greyheaded politicians, but handsome young women, whose eyes spoke a language more prevailing than the eloquence of the most sublime orator, to a court where gallantry filled all the hours that were not passed in the field of battle. She always had in her train several of the most alluring, whose task it was by captivating the heart, to pry into the secret views of their admirers, and then to betray them. They were sometimes directed, by feigning a reciprocal attachment, to draw men of consequence off from their party; at others, by dividing their favours to excite a jealousy that broke the friendship of those most intimately connected. The use she made of these syrens was well known, and many had had fatal experience of it; but the pleasure of being deceived still ensured her success; and unlike most of the arts of the cunning, her's were not less availing for having been discovered. To this interview she brought two of her attendants, who had served her effectually while the King of Navarre was her prisoner, by reconciling him too long to his confinement, and betraying to her every token of his discontent; but on this occasion they were supplanted in his favour by two others of her train, who, if not possessed of more beauty, had at least the additional charm of novelty. Nothing but so extraordinary a reinforcement of beauty and coquetry, could have made the King of Navarre's court more gallant than it usually was. but thus recruited, pleasure appeared the only business; entertainments of every kind were invented, and followed each other in rapid succession. Even the oldest men at the court became the votaries of Cupid; those who were grown gray in the profession of the long robe, and ancient officers, disfigured with scars, and maimed by a multitude of wounds, sighed at the feet of the fair, and forgot they were no longer qualified to excite a reciprocal passion. Among these antiquated lovers, the governor of la Reole, named Ussac, was particularly distinguished, by the consequences of his passion. From his earliest youth he had not been less remarkable for prudence, sobriety, a judicious and regular conduct, than for valour, and had been proposed for

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 53.
† Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 68.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 333.

an example to all his young contemporaries; but in age he could not withstand the contagion of that court, where the very air seemed infected with gallantry; he was far advanced in years when the queen mother took this journey, but was rendered still older in infirmities and appearance, by the wounds he had received; his face was terribly scarred; and he had been so wounded in the mouth, that he could not speak without great difficulty. This man fell passionately in love with the most lively coquet in Catherine's train, and finding that the King of Navarre, and the Viscount de Turrenne, very freely ridiculed so absurd an enamorato, with which it is probable the lady herself took care to acquaint him, to turn his resentment to her mistress's grand purpose, he was so violently piqued at it, that he delivered la Reole into the hands of Monsieur de Duras, a man of the contrary party: giving Henry a strong proof that ridicule, which is always a dangerous weapon, generally recoiling on him that uses it, is more especially so in the hands of a prince, as by wounding more deeply it excites a keener resentment, and his situation gives the offended person opportunity of revenging himself by more important injuries.

The King of Navarre being engaged in a ball when this event was communicated to him in a whisper, he, and the Viscount de Turenne, immediately left the room unperceived, taking with them as many of the officers as could be spared, without interrupting the festivity of the night. They concealed their arms under a hunting dress; and marching with diligence, early in the morning arrived at Fleurance, and made themselves masters of the town without any difficulty; to the great surprise of the queen mother, who had not suspected their absence, but could more easily forgive Henry's having thus made reprisal, as the place was of less consequence than Reole.*

In whatever amusements the queen mother was engaged, she never lost sight of the point she aimed at: she made several attempts to persuade the king of Navarre to join her son; representing the dangers that threatened his succession to the crown from the enormous power of the Guises; she exaggerated the bad health of the Duke of Anjou, which rendered this a matter of near concern to Henry; and hinted a possibility that her son the king might be forced into a compliance with the ambition of the Guises, whom he was not able of himself to resist, every Catholic prince being on their side, and leagued to prevent a heretic from ascending the throne of France.† She also tried every means of prevailing with him to give up the cautionary towns; pretended an earnest desire to settle all the controverted articles of the treaty of peace, and to conclude a perfect agreement. In this particular the King of Navarre seemed to concur with her, and each was inclined to carry on the negotiation, while neither was very earnest to see it concluded. She wished to prolong her stay, as it forwarded her purposes; and Henry was glad to detain her, that he might the longer enjoy the company of the two ladies with whom he (not being a very sentimental lover) was at once enamoured. While these two principal persons of adverse parties lived together in great seeming amity, each side was continually committing hostilities, and taking every opportunity of cutting off small companies of thair adversaries' troops, or surprising towns and castles. It had indeed been agreed that a truce should be observed for a league and a half, or two leagues, round the place where the King of Navarre's court happened to be (for he had not fixed his residence in any one place) but the same persons who within those bounds behaved with all the complaisance of courtiers, if they met beyond those precincts attacked each other with the rage of the most implacable enemies.

Catherine's art in sowing discord at length appeared; producing an enmity between the King of Navarre and Prince of Condé, and between the latter and the Viscount de Turenne, which went so far that the Prince challenged the Viscount; but the affair was accommodated. She was still more gratified by a quarrel she had fomented between the Viscount and Mons. de Rozan, which occasioned a duel, wherein the viscount took the Baron de Salignac for his second, and Rozan Mons. de Duras his brother. The two former had the advantage; but the Viscount permitting Rozan to rise from the ground after he had him down, and the Baron suffering Duras to change his sword, instantly about sixteen men, part of whom belonged to Duras, and the rest to the queen, rushing from a place of concealment fell upon the Viscount, and after giving him twenty-two wounds, left him as they believed, dead, but happily none of the wounds were mortal.*

The queen mother having set so many of the adverse party at variance, and gained over Mons. de Laverdin, and some others, she took leave of the King of Navarre, and went to Montauban to be present at an assembly of the Huguenots: but as she did not expect much benefit from her ladies amongst severe religionists, and rough provincials, she took other assistants, and hoped for better service from the eloquence of Pibrac, and her own affected piety, and pro-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 335. Oeconom. Royal. de Sully, tom. i. p. 124. Mem. de Bouillon, p. 261.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 335.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 336. De Thou. tom. v. liv. 68. p. 603. Hist. du Duc de Bouillon, liv. 2. p. 94.

fessions of tender love for the people. In her discourses she interwove texts of Scripture and such pious expressions as she thought likely to influence them; composing her discourses over night, in confidential privacy with the ladies of her court, to whom it afforded much subject for mirth, and was called by them the language of Canaan.* But she and her orator were equally unsuccessful, the deputies heard them both unmoved; and the queen returned to court, disappointed of all her views in the last part of her negotiations, though by some favourable concessions to the Huguenots, she had endeavoured to engage their confidence.

The King of Navarre was then formally summoned to deliver up the cautionary towns; but having refused it, as the articles of the treaty were not yet performed, each side endeavoured to prepare against the renewal of war, which could not be far distant; if that can be said to be renewed, which in fact had never ceased; though a nominal peace still subsisted. It had indeed prevented either side from taking arms openly, but each had been assiduous in seizing every advantage by surprise, or secret intelligence, that opportunity offered; and the spirit of enterprise led many into attempts that proved fatal to them. Among the unfortunate were the Sieurs de Princai and le Bouchet, two gentlemen of the province of Limousin. An officer of the garrison of Limoges, whose life they had often saved, by giving him refuge in their houses, when by crimes he had rendered it forfeit to the laws, offered to deliver that town into their hands. They judged it necessary to commit the affair to one of the Huguenot party, who had sufficient credit and influence to procure all the requisites for such an expedition; and applied to le Sieur de la Boullaie, a man of great spirit and courage, and particularly favoured by the King of Navarre, as having been bred up under his protection.

La Boullaie not being of a temper to neglect an affair where honour might be acquired, or where service might be rendered to the party, sent for D'Aubigné, as more skilled in such undertakings; and after Princai and le Bouchet had bound themselves by oath to be entirely guided by him, the officer of Limoge, who had assumed the name of captain Le Mas, was brought to confer with him. D'Aubigné questioned him on three points; why he would sell his country? how he could perform it? and what security he could give for his sincerity? In answer to the first, Le Mas related the quarrels in which he was engaged with some of the principal citizens; and with prosecutions carried on against him; in consequence of which he had been banished, and since condemned to death; and all being testified by the gentleman to be real fact, D'Aubigné, who had no intention to discourage a design which promised so much advantage, declared himself satisfied as to that point; and desired him to proceed to the second. Le Mas then told him that the gates of the city were not guarded, but that every night the chief consul took a view of them all, or gave the keys to one of his friends, who went the round for him; that the consul and Monsieur de Vertemond his friend, one of the principal citizens, were in the plot, being included in the criminal prosecutions with himself; that the night fixed on for the execution, the consul would give a supper to D'Aubigné, and six or seven of his friends, who might bring some of his best soldiers under the disguise of footmen; and the affair would be rendered so easy to them, that God alone could impede their success. He then offered him for security himself or Vertemond, either of whom would deliver himself up as an hostage the night before the enterprise; and expatiated on the great number of citizens who would join them, the rich prisoners they would take, and the great booty that must fall into their hands from the plunder of the city.

D'Aubigné declared himself well satisfied as to the two first points, but not at all as to the latter; which greatly offended his companions, who thought his suspicions groundless; but Le Mas told them, they did not understand their true interest; he commended D'Aubigné's caution, and rejoiced that he had a man to deal with who so well understood those affairs. D'Aubigné demanded a conference with the consul and Vertemond; and a place was fixed upon where they were to meet him the Saturday following.

As D'Aubigné and his associates approached the place of conference on the appointed day, he sent a servant before to look into the town, to see if there were any women or children in the streets; as a sure method of discovering whether there was any ambuscade laid for them. Le Mas coming out of the town to meet them, D'Aubigné, who was before his companions, clapped a pistol to his breast, and with the fiercest countenance he could assume, cried out, "Traitor, thou dyest!" But Le Mas, not at all disconcerted by the consciousness of evil intention, as the other imagined possible, told him, that would not do, he too well knew he had confidence in him to be frighted by such a menace; and then, complaining they were come so late that the consuls could not meet them; added, the cause would make amends for their absence, for they were detained by a messenger from the Catholics, who having got possession of the town of Figeac, had sent for their cannon to batter the citadel, and if they

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 337.

complied, it must be accompanied with five or six hundred of the best soldiers of the garrison: that the absence of those men would facilitate the enterprise, but the loss of the cannon might prove an inconvenience when they had made themselves masters of the town; the two confederate consuls therefore desired him to tell them what he would have them do in the affair, as they did not doubt having sufficient interest to govern the rest of the citizens. D'Aubigné, for the benefit of the besieged citadel, desired the cannon might not be sent; but still insisted on a conference with the consuls, which was again fixed at the distance of four days. D'Aubigné then drew up a plan of the method he intended to pursue, and of the means of drawing together from different places a body of fifteen or sixteen hundred chosen men; himself undertaking at the head of the forlorn hope the battle that must ensue within the town; and sent it by La Valliere, a kinsman of Du Bouchet's, to the King of Navarre, desiring it might be well considered; while he would go and hazard his life for the security of his companions. He then went into Limoges; and alighting at an inn in the suburbs, sent a servant for Le Mas, to whom he told that he was come to reconnoitre the town, and to get well acquainted with the several parts, and the avenues to it; designing to pass some days there till the time of conference arrived; and as he had offered to introduce him to several very agreeable women, desired he would keep his word, and carry him into good company.

Le Mas approved D'Aubigné's intention; but observing that it would not be proper to accompany him while he was reconnoitring the town, as it might be taken notice of, said he would go to engage him an agreeable party against the next day. D'Aubigné then pursuing his purpose, had not gone far before he perceived one of the guards following him; and observing the man's motions, saw evident proof that he was a spy set to watch him. This was sufficient to make him suspect treachery; but as he thought it not his business to show his suspicions, he took out his pocket-book, and drew, or pretended to draw, a plan of the town, that he might seem not to have the least supposition of being observed; then took the shortest way to his inn in the suburbs, with a design of mounting his horse and getting off with all speed: but Le Mas got there as soon as he did, and accosted him with great gaiety; upon which D'Aubigné (whose presence of mind never forsook him) taking him aside, told him that "he saw plainly all he had said was true, and that the town might indeed be taken in the manner he had mentioned; begged pardon for having entertained any suspicions against him, but hoped he would excuse it, in consideration that the lives and honour of so many men were at stake; and promised he should see nothing like it for the future; as a proof of which he was by all means for hastening the enterprise; and instead of expecting him to deliver himself up as an hostage, desired he would only give two of his footmen, which would serve to satisfy the Prince of Condé, who intended to make one of the party; for that he was convinced he (Le Mas) would be of great use to them in the town on their approach."

Le Mas believing D'Aubigné was thoroughly duped, and hearing he should have an opportunity of getting into his snare so considerable a person as the Prince of Condé, broke off discourse abruptly, pretending that the city gates were going to be shut, and that he would first step home to give his family notice not to expect him that night, and return immediately; and then went directly to the soldiers on guard. As he left the room, some officers came in disguised like tradesmen, some with books, others with mercery, and such kind of things to sell; of whom D'Aubigné bought, without having the least inclination to purchase; but as more still entered, and the room filled, Le Mas came in, and whispering one of them as he passed, sent them all back into the town, telling them the gates were going to be shut. Above forty men were by that time gathered together at the gates, with the provost of the town at their head; but Le Mas going to them, and repeating what D'Aubigné had said to him, describing the perfect confidence in which he appeared; and the spy who had dogged him having assured them that D'Aubigné had so little suspicion of being observed, that he had in his view drawn a plan of the place, they readily agreed that it would be imprudent to lose so great a prize as they had reason to expect, by doing any thing at that time; and therefore very peaceably drew up the bridge, and returned.

The drawing up of the bridge gave great joy to D'Aubigné, who after talking for some time to Le Mas with mirth and gaiety, and seeming eagerness to hasten the enterprise, brought him by degrees to approve of his returning that night, in order to quicken the preparations.

When he got back to the Sieurs de Bouchet and de Princai, and related what had passed, they treated his suspicions with great contempt, but he gave them such cogent reasons to believe they were deceived, represented so strongly the improbability that men so considerable in rank and fortune as the chief consul and Vertemond, should unite themselves with so great a villain as Le Mas, and should hazard their lives, their honour and their fortunes to ruin their country, without any prospect of advantage, that they promised to hold no further correspondence with Le Mas, except

in D'Aubigné's presence; and to bring the traitor to condign punishment.

D'Aubigné was obliged by business that called him another way, to leave that place directly; and after he was gone, the two young gentlemen, recollecting all Le Mas's promises; the reasons he gave for the action; his seeming sincerity; and the obligations he had to them; they again blamed their too cautious conductor; and determined to examine into the state of the town themselves. They went to the same inn where he had been; were shown into the same room; the same disguised officers came to them; and Le Mas having secured their swords, which they had put in the corner of the room, the pretended tradesmen seized them, and the next day they were beheaded; Le Mas having found out before they came that D'Aubigné had discovered his treachery.*

Had D'Aubigné so freely ventured his life only on such occasions as these, it would have been allowed truly heroic; but to hazard it in private duels, deserved severe censure rather than honour, though the customs of that age may in some measure excuse it. He had no sooner escaped the treachery of Le Mas, than he exposed himself to a danger that could produce no benefit. Mons. de la Boulie, talking with the Sieur de la Magdelaine, of his former quarrel with D'Aubigné, he acknowledged that some of his friends had endeavoured to bring on a duel between them without any reason. La Boulaie, then young and spirited, and strongly infected with the false honour of the times, told him, that, if he wished to have a trial of skill with his friend, he would bring them sword in hand together. This being reported to D'Aubigné, he would not appear backward in what was then (I wish I could say the error was confined to that age) esteemed an affair of honour; and which he thought particularly necessary to his reputation, as Magdelaine was accounted the most able swordsman of his time, enjoying the savage credit of having killed eight gentlemen in single combat, without being once wounded; he therefore wrote to La Boulaye to invite La Magdelaine to lie at night at his house, and to conduct him the next morning, towards the road between Barbaste and Nerac, where he would meet him, and fight La Magdelaine in his shirt, with sword and dagger. He set out post for the place appointed; and received answer from La Boulaye that La Magdelaine accepted the challenge, and he would accompany him to the place of assignation. The affair thus agreed upon, D'Aubigné rose very early, and after having said his prayers very devoutly, and breakfasted well, he proceeded to the place of rendezvous, where after waited half an hour, he saw two gentlemen riding towards him; one of whom being La Boulaye, as soon as he saw D'Aubigné he spurred his horse into a gallop, calling out, when he came within distance to be heard, "A miracle and no battle!" informing him that at midnight La Magdalaine was deprived of the use of his limbs; upon which D'Aubigné cried out, "There is the effect of my prayers!" It must appear strange to a sober mind, that a man should suppose those prayers could be availing, which were preparative to a deliberate intention of killing another, or exposing himself to be killed, out of an idle bravado: but honour has its bigots as well as religion; and D'Aubigné might justly be charged with more bigotry in the former than in the latter, though perhaps not absolutely free from it in either.*

The King of Navarre had been so often reproached by the Huguenots for his neglect, (to call it by no harsher term) of D'Aubigné; and was so much mortified by the defection of some of the persons he had most favoured, that he began to wish for him again about his person; a wish increased by the several noble actions performed by D'Aubigné, which were reported to him, and with pleasure related by him to his courtiers. Actuated by this inclination, he wrote him four letters, at different times; but D'Aubigné's haughty spirit retained too much resentment to suffer him even to read them. Not daring to trust himself with the perusal of what was written by a prince he still loved, and therefore feared might influence him more than he believed it ought, he threw the letters all into the fire. But being told that the king, on hearing he was taken prisoner in the enterprise on Limoges, had set apart some of the queen's rings for his ransom; and that being afterwards informed he was beheaded there, he was so much afflicted as even to lose his rest, his heart, too noble not to be grateful, melted; and though deaf to the calls of interest, he was not proof against those tokens of affection; and determined to return to a prince who certainly had used him ill:† though D'Aubigné himself was not to be justified, since even sincerity, the strongest attachment, and fidelity, will not excuse a failure in decent respect to persons in that exalted state, wherein this excellent man appears sometimes deficient; and though Henry's natural temper enabled him to bear more than any other prince would have permitted, yet his distressed situation ought to have rendered his servants particularly careful to avoid taking undue liberties, lest they might be suspected of ungenerously presuming upon it; for it is a more especial duty not to give reasonable cause of offence to a man who cannot resent it without great detriment to himself. To challenge a man who

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 344.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 55. † Ibid. p. 54.

has not the use of above half his limbs would be deemed cowardly; to insult one who from the precarious state of his fortunes is not at liberty to retaliate, is a more cruel sort of cowardice, as it is more painful to restrain the emotions of just indignation, than to submit to the consequences of a natural debility of body. Some excuse for D'Aubigné, and other of Henry's servants may be drawn from the character of the times; we must not judge their words by the delicate criterion of modern politeness; refinement had not then banished sincerity from conversation; and truths were suffered to approach the throne, which would sound very harsh and uncouth to most princes in the present age. But even then frankness had its just bounds, and ought not to have degenerated into rudeness.

We have a strong instance of the too great freedom then taken even by inferior persons. On D'Aubigné's return to the King of Navarre, he sent before him, to give notice of his approach, a young man named de Court; who had first belonged to him, and by him been recommended to the King of Navarre for his valet de chambre; but on D'Aubigné's disgrace he left the king, being determined to share the fortunes of his first master. As Henry knew him again, he asked from whence he came? De Court answered, Yes; the king put several more questions; to all which he made the same answer; it being remarked that this word did not well agree with the questions asked him, he replied it was very true, but he thought it proper to avoid using any other, as he had observed that honest men lost the favour of princes by not saying Yes on every occasion. All the young nobility of that court came out to meet D'Aubigné: the king received him with great marks of affection, and the most gracious promises. Soon after his arrival, Henry being doubtful whether to take up arms directly, or wait for further provocation, consulted only with the Viscount de Turenne, Messrs. Favas, Constant, and D'Aubigné; among whom three were equally desirous of war, and from much the same motives, which sprung rather from love, than from any good political reasons.

The Queen of Navarre, fired with resentment against the king her brother, who had not treated her well while she resided at his court, and after she returned to the King of Navarre, had written to him strong intimations of her entertaining a criminal commerce with Mons. de Turenne, was very desirous of renewing hostilities; but as she had not much interest with her husband, she copied her mother's art, and influenced a young girl who was then Henry's favourite mistress, to practise the lessons she gave her for that purpose; repeating, perhaps inventing, the most contemptuous expressions made use of by her brother, and the Guises, when they spoke of Henry; and trying by every means to exasperate him against them.* She made the same use of the mistresses of many noblemen of the court to incline them likewise to war. She herself condescended to gain over Mons. de Turenne; and though D'Aubigné's love, not being of the same kind, nor fixed on any of the ladies of the court, who were an easy prey to their lovers, and easy dupes to the queen, she had not the same means of influencing him, yet his ardour to recommend himself to Mademoiselle de Lezay by an increase of reputation; and his inclination to a military life, made him of the same opinion. Mons. de Favas, who alone was governed by reason, was the only one that opposed it; alledging the weakness of their party, and the strength of the other; who, though divided among themselves, would unite on the appearance of a common enemy. On the contrary, the continuance of peace, or something like it, would widen the breach between the leaguers and the king of France's party, as their dissentions daily increased. Arguments directed to reason were not likely to prevail with those whose reason was little consulted in the affair; and notwithstanding all de Favas could urge, a war was determined, which from the motive, received the appellation of the Lover's War; and D'Aubigné was sent into the provinces of Perigort, Saintonge, Angoumois, Poictou, Bretagne, and Anjou, to dispose the Huguenots to take up arms.†

He fell sick at St. Jean d'Angeli; but that could not prevent his complying with an invitation from La Boulaie, to join in an enterprise he meditated on the town of Montagu. De Pommieres, a Gascogne officer, had cultivated an intimacy with some soldiers of the garrison of Montagu, who from the habit of plundering were become little better than highway robbers, and was invited by them to join in a robbery on the road to Nantz. By the advice of La Boulaie and D'Aubigné, he accepted the party; and with them took two hundred crowns from a merchant that was travelling that way; but which were afterwards restored to him. De Pommieres then advised his companions not to expose their lives for such small booty, as those actions were as liable to be discovered, and would be as severely punished as if they were more considerable; but telling them of a rich tradesman, who in his return from the fair of Fontenai always took up his lodging near his house, promised to inform them when he should arrive. At the proper time he sent them a notification of the man's being come, with three more tradesmen; observing, that it would therefore be necessary that their

* Vide de la Noue, p. 255.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 346.

numbers should be equal. The expectation of so good a prize determined the captain, who commanded in the castle, to be of the party, bringing five more with him. As they were laying in wait for their expected prey, they were surrounded by near a dozen of De Pommiere's men, and being secured till the next night, were threatened with death if they did not procure the postern gate to be opened, in the same manner as was usual for themselves when out on such excursions. Their danger was too great to suffer them to refuse; they gave the watch-word, and by the use of it La Boulaie's company gained admission, and seized the castle without any trouble; but La Boulaie was much surprised to find that out of the number he had invited to the enterprise, he had only sixteen assistants. The town still remained to be taken, which was full of people, and had above sixty persons in it who knew the use of arms; but trusting to the concealment of the night, he made the attempt, judging that were his numbers known, all hope of success must vanish; and the ignorance of the citizens proved so favourable to him, that they almost all fled, and left an empty town; which, with his small numbers, it was more difficult for La Boullaie to keep, than to conquer.*

As the citizens of Rochelle had refused to concur in the war, offended with the King of Navarre for commencing it, in their opinions imprudently, and without necessity; the people of the country imagined that the party which had seized Montagu, had nothing more in view than to defend themselves against the citizens of Limoges; who, offended at the attempt they made on that town, had sent officers of justice about the country to seize them; after having condemned and executed them in effigy. If this opinion made the enemy less vigilant in attacking them, it also prevented others from joining them; and after having passed a fortnight there, they had not been able to get thirty men together. It became necessary to consult on their future conduct; the greatest number proposed to conduct themselves, as they termed it, with prudence, avoiding all acts of hostility, to prevent giving their neighbours any provocation to form an attack which they were little able to repel. D'Aubigné and La Valliere only opposed this plan, saying, "Either let us quit the place like cowards, who have committed a foolish action; or let us make war to the utmost of our power; and for that purpose collect soldiers; who will never come to take a part in our prudent conduct, to which they will give no better name than cowardice: What man of character will unite himself to people whom he supposes are only defending themselves against the hangman?" But this opinion was overruled by a majority of voices, and six weeks more were spent in a peaceable manner, without their having been able to increase their numbers to above thirty-six effective men; while the Catholic troops in that neighbourhood made it a practice to march round the town, insulting those who were in it by shaking cords at them, as a menace of the fate to which they were destined. Some of the gentlemen in the town had sent part of their horses to Rochelle to be sold there, ordering that provisions should be purchased with the money; but the magistrates, determining to keep the peace, not only prevented the sale, but imprisoned the venders; and though the ministers and the inferior citizens had forcibly set them at liberty, yet they returned back without bringing any supply. It then became necessary to follow the advice of D'Aubigné and La Valliere; who leaving in the place only La Boullaie, and five other gentlemen, with the menial servants of the whole party, divided their thirty men into three corps, and with them took three different roads to Nantz, on a market day; and when they reached the place of rendezvous where they were again to unite, they found their numbers increased to sixty; and that they had taken as many prisoners. They carried their plunder to Montagu, and only waiting to change horses, set out again; and beside pillaging the villages in their way, burnt six or seven churches; which so much increased the reputation of the strength of their party, that within ten days after, their numbers rose to fourteen hundred; and the Catholics durst no longer insult them.

The government within the town was given to La Boullaie, and a proper number of soldiers appointed for its defence; but the whole garrison bound themselves by oath to obey D'Aubigné without the walls of the city. He first led his men against St. George's, which the Catholics had begun to fortify, and forced them to relinquish the attempt. He then took the castle of l'Abergement, scaled the castle of Montagu, and the town of Garnache; and took the castle. The great readiness shown by the garrison of Montagu to undertake any enterprise, induced three catholic officers, named Nivaudiere, Turtrie, and Laleu, to offer to betray into their hands the town of Blaye. These men, bred up in the house of the Baron d' Hervaux, then governor of Blaye, having received some offence from him, came to La Boullaie, and made him the proposal. He referred them to D'Aubigné; to whom they told, that having been lately at Blaye, being all intimate with, and one of them related to Villiers, who commanded there as lieutenant to the baron, they had observed that there never were more than eight soldiers in the little castle, and those not chosen with particular care; and that

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 349. De Thou, tom. vi. liv. 72, p. 7.

they three could without difficulty seize it, if they were sure of receiving due, and timely, assistance. They added, that in conversing with Villiers they had excited in him some inclination to embrace the King of Navarre's cause, if he could obtain an advantageous post with some of the reformed chiefs.

D'Aubigné not having the same difficulty in believing them, as in giving credit to captain Le Mas, agreed to join in the undertaking; only advised that they should begin by endeavouring to gain Villiers; but if they found him changed in his way of thinking, to take care of their lives, and of the execution of their enterprise, for that he would not fail one minute of the time appointed, as he would sooner die than break his word; and La Boulaie having assured them with the strongest asseverations of his friend's truth and punctuality, they delayed fixing the time of execution, only till they had concerted their measures more maturely.

The prosecution of this affair was retarded by the care necessary to frustrate two attempts on Montagu; the first undertaken at the instigation of a gentleman of the garrison, named de Butterie, who being in love with the sister of a principal officer in the troops of the league in Poictou, had agreed to purchase his mistress by betraying Montagu to the leaguers; engaging with the assistance of four soldiers whom he had corrupted, to cut the throats of the guards of the castle, at two o'clock in the morning, if the catholic army would be ready on the spot to assist him, when he should throw over the wall the bodies of the murdered guards. In the evening D'Aubigné discovering by De Butteries countenance that his mind was in great agitation, and perceiving that he had a coat of mail under his clothes, suspected there was some treachery on foot; and ordered him to choose out six stout men, and to get privately out of the postern gate, keeping ready for further orders. A relation of De Butterie, with proper assistants, was there to seize him; who brought him to confess his design, and that four of the six men were the persons engaged with him to betray the place. Having learnt from him the signals the conspirators were to make, La Boulaie ordered they should all be performed; accordingly they made the appointed noise against a grate, lighted fires on the top of the dungeon; and when the army arrived, they stabbed the four treacherous soldiers, and cast them down from the top of the castle. De Butterie being fastened by a string tied to his foot, walked about in sight of the enemy's troop encouraging them: some of the garrison made an appearance of scaling the castle walls; and every means was taken to persuade the enemy that the design was executed: but whether De Butterie had not acquainted La Boulaie with all the signals; or that they saw other reason to doubt the truth of the farce that was acting, they would not approach; and when the garrison found they could not entrap them, they precipitated De Butterie likewise from the top of the castle.

The other enterprise was formed by the governor of the castle, who had a great share in taking it; but being offered by Marshal de Retz fifty thousand francs if he would deliver it up to him, he could not resist the sum. This likewise being discovered in time, the traitor was stabbed before he could put it in execution.*

After these affairs were over, the design on Blaye was resumed; and it was agreed, that D'Aubigné should take with him forty gentlemen from Montagu, and eighty musketeers; that the three persons who had engaged to seize the castle should go with him as far as St. Jean d'Angeli, and there quitting him, repair to Blaye; while D'Aubigné prepared the troops in that part of the country, where he had good interest, to be on the counterscarp the first Wednesday in July, exactly at six o'clock in the evening. The three conspirators promised to throw the dead bodies of such of the garrison as they should have slain, over the wall, and even the lieutenant governor if he refused to join them; and that one of the three would descend from the bastion before the castle, as an hostage. The last article was satisfactory, the first was but little regarded, in consideration of what had so lately passed at Montagu.

Nivaudiere, one of the conspirators, fell sick at Angoulesme; the other two proceeding on their way, were taken prisoners and carried to Pons, a town belonging to the Huguenots. D'Aubigné, with part of his troop, hastened thither; and offering to pay two hundred crowns for the ransom of the prisoners, the captain asked his pardon for the unlucky action he had performed, by which he found he had prevented, or postponed, the greatest service that could have been rendered to their cause; a compliment by no means agreeable to D'Aubigné, as it showed him the captain was too well acquainted with what was going forward, wherein secresy was so necessary. It was immediately reported at Pons, and in all the adjacent parts, that some men were taken, who were going to seize by surprise the town of Blaye; and the governor of St. Jean d'Angeli wrote word, that he did not choose to lend any of his men for an enterprise already discovered.

In the mean time Nivaudiere, having recovered from his sickness, and arrived at Blaye, wrote to the two prisoners to agree for their ransom, and that Villiers, who had heard of their being taken, would pay it;

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 359.

that he had never thought the affair so easy as he then found it; and that the only alteration necessary in the plan they had agreed upon, was to delay the execution for eight days.

On the receipt of this letter the conspirators bound themselves by the most horrid oaths to perform their engagement; and strongly solicited D'Aubigné, to proceed in the enterprise. He represented to them the danger they must incur in entering the castle, after a rumour had been spread of their intention to betray it; but they declared Villiers's partiality for them to be so great, that they might betray him ten times before he would once believe it. Villiers's acknowledged friendship for them gave D'Aubigné more apprehension than confidence, as it rendered their villany in betraying him almost too great to be believed. But some gentlemen, powerful in that province, encouraged him to proceed. Monsieur D'Usson, governor of Pons, and the governor of St. Jean D'Angeli, refused to give him any assistance; but the garrisons came to him without the consent of their governors; upon which D'Usson joined him. When they approached the town, a thick mist prevented them from seeing the signal agreed on with the conspirators, which damped the ardour of D'Aubigné's troops, and many pressed him to relinquish the enterprise; but having engaged his word, he would not listen to them; and as it afterwards appeared, the conspirators performed their part.

Laleu and Turtrie had no sooner returned into the town, than advices came from all parts of their treachery, and the forces which were marching against Blaye; every hour brought letters to Villiers, acquainting him with it; which he, not being able to read, gave to Turtrie, who read what he pleased to him. The people of the town being less infatuated, took arms, and pressed Villiers to do the same; but his confidence in those villains was so implicit, that all information proved to no purpose.

About ten o'clock in the morning of the day agreed upon, Turtrie sitting down by Villiers, reminded him of the disposition he had shown to enter into the King of Navarre's service; but Villiers having answered that he was far from intending any such thing, Turtrie drew his poniard and stabbed him. Nivaudiere and Laleu at the same time killed the three men who guarded the gate; and of three that then only remained in the fort, they confined two in a vault, and the other, being an old intimate of the conspirators, promised to join with them in the enterprise. At noon the soldiers and people of the town receiving intelligence that a body of the enemies troops were marching towards them, went to the castle, but were refused admittance, under pretence of a suspicion that they designed to betray it. On receiving this answer they endeavoured to storm it, but the four men in the castle defended themselves so well that the attempt failed. The assailants having been re-inforced from some neighbouring towns, were beginning at five o'clock to renew the attack, when fresh accounts of the near approach of the enemy making them fear lest the suburbs should be pillaged, they laid aside their first intention, and applied themselves to put the suburbs into as good a state of defence as the time would permit; for which business they had but an hour: D'Aubigné and his troop arriving precisely at six o'clock.

The affair not wearing a very promising appearance, D'Aubigné was severely reproached for bringing so many brave men into danger, merely to gratify the mad ambition which blinded him to the event. Equally averse to hazard the lives of others unnecessarily, or to break the engagement into which he had entered, he stole unperceived from his troops, and advanced alone within shot from the garrison, to endeavour to seize one of a few soldiers who were at some distance from the rest, in order to learn from him what had passed, and the real state of the town. To get to him he jumped over a ditch which few horses would have ventured to leap; but the soldier resisted so obstinately, that even the fear of immediate death could not prevail on him to go with D'Aubigné. At his return he found the rest of the officers determined to give up the enterprise, being persuaded that the garrison and people of the town, would not have thought of fortifying the suburbs, had they been under any apprehensions for the castle. D'Aubigné hereupon, turning to the soldiers, cried out, "Let those who came here for my sake follow me; I have pledged my honour, and my life must go to redeem it;" and alighted from his horse; a great part of the troops did the same, and marched towards the suburbs. He ordered that his baggage should follow him, but unfortunately omitted to specify two scaling ladders which he had brought with him. He forced the three different intrenchments that had been made, and being arrived at the place where he had promised to advance to the assistance of the conspirators, and no longer able to support the weight of his helmet and buckler, he laid them down till he had taken breath, intending then to return, having kept his word, and believing, as the rest of the party did, that the conspirators had been discovered, and that no one remained in the castle. But finding himself too much exposed to the enemy's shot, as soon as he was a little recovered, he began to put on his helmet again, when Nivaudiere called to him, and desired he would not put himself to any inconvenient haste in his proceedings, only by midnight to send a ladder to the bastion, when one of

them would descend by it, and in the mean time they would throw down the body of the lieutenant governor.

D'Aubigné now found the want of the ladders; and promised two hundred crowns to two of his men if they would fetch them. Some of the soldiers of the town had fortified themselves on the counterscarp, in order to scale the castle; but D'Aubigné's troops forced them from the post just as the ladders were brought; when he, seeing all obstructions removed, cried out, He was king of Blaye! But a panic at that instant seizing the conspirators, Laleu, and then Nivaudiere, came down, and throwing away their arms, jumped into the ditch that surrounded the castle, and from thence ran with their utmost speed to a body of horse which had been placed at about eight hundred paces distant, to support the enterprise. Immediately after them came Turtrie with the keys of the castle in his hand, and cursing the fears of his companions, offered to reascend the bastion. With his assistance D'Aubigné was continuing the attempt, but the soldier, who to save his life had agreed to join the conspirators, had shut the postern gate of the bastion; and with some assistants, whom he had admitted, fired so briskly upon them, that D'Aubigné found nothing remained to be done but to carry off their dead and wounded companions. Had the ladders been ready when D'Aubigne first reached the castle, he would have completed his undertaking, before the time that the conspirators were seized with so strange a panic; and in his memoirs he blames himself very severely for his negligence in that omission.*

One of the most odious circumstances attending a military life, especially in civil wars, which consist more in stratagem and surprisal of places, than in pitched battles, is the necessity of treating and associating with villains, from whom alone can be expected those advantages, which on both sides are so assiduously sought after; and it is difficult to conceive any wretches more detestable than the three men that undertook to betray the castle of Blaye; who not only were willing to sacrifice the interests of the party to which they belonged, but a friend whose confidence in them was so entire, that no evidence could persuade him of their treachery, and who offered to pay the ransom of the very man who so soon after shed his blood. Such actions as these, represent the miseries of war in more horrid colours than a field of battle, covered with the mangled bodies of the dead.

When the King of Navarre first determined to recommence hostilities, plans for the surprisal of above sixty places were presented to him, but none succeeded except those on Montaigu and la Fere.* The greatest action performed during the whole campaign was the taking of Cahors, a very strong town, the capital of Quercy: the fight continued five days and nights; and that it was at last conquered, was owing to the courage and conduct of the King of Navarre, who distinguished himself in so extraordinary a manner throughout the whole attack, as raised his character above that of any other general of his time. His people frequently urged him to abandon the enterprise, but as that could not be done without sacrificing a great part of his troops, he resolutely persisted, declaring, "he had rather die with his friends, than live after they had perished in his cause:" and another time, when pressed to select a body of men with whom to open to himself a way to retreat, with a cheerful and spirited countenance, though smarting with the wounds he had received, and worn down with fatigue, he replied, "What shall befall me on this occasion is written above: Be assured that my retreat out of this city without having taken it, would be more irksome to me than the retreat of my soul out of this body. My honour is too much engaged to suffer me to act otherwise than I do; let no one therefore propose any thing to me but conquest or death."

There were about two thousand soldiers in the town, besides the citizens, whom de Vesins, the governor, kept constantly under arms. Henry had only about one thousand five hundred; and was under great disadvantage in having so many intrenchments to force, and being continually annoyed by stones, and logs of wood thrown from the tops of the houses. Even night brought no cessation; nor had he a sufficient number of men to enable him to allow them alternate rest. No one durst quit his arms even for an instant, neither move from his post; what nourishment they took was eaten with their arms in their hands; and the only rest they could have was by leaning against the shops for a few moments. Henry was present in every place where the greatest danger threatened, sharing the fatigue; exposing his person as freely, and fighting as ardently as a common soldier; while with the presence of mind and calm prudence of the most experienced general he directed all the operations, and seized with the utmost celerity every advantage that offered; but had not a reinforcement arrived, all Henry's courage and conduct might have proved ineffectual, from the excessive weariness of his men, who when they took the town had scarcely strength left to pillage it.†

The Huguenots of the province of Lan-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4, p. 363. Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 58.

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 80.

† Dav. lib. 6. p. 352. Oecon. roy. de Sully, tom. i. p. 134. Mem. de la reine Marguerite, p. 180.

guedoc were divided among themselves, the greatest part disapproved the King of Navarre's taking arms, and adhered to the treaty of peace; but at length de Chatillon raised a sufficient army to force Marshal D'Amville, now by succession to his elder brother's title called Marshal de Montmorenci, to retire before him, though superior in strength to de Chatillon. In order to bring over the whole province to his party, the King of Navarre sent the Viscount de Turenne with the greatest part of his troops into Languedoc, where he served him successfully; but in the mean time Henry was obliged to retire to Nerac, with less than four hundred horse.

Marshal Biron was then at the head of an army on the borders of the Garonne; and with four thousand infantry, six hundred horse, and two culverines, advancing as far as the vineyards adjacent to Nerac, and discharging some cannon at the town, threw the small garrison of that place into great consternation; which was, probably, increased by the ladies of the court, whose courage was not sufficient to reconcile them to so dangerous a situation.* D'Aubigné, after a journey of eighty leagues, which he had undertaken in order to refute some misrepresentations of his conduct, arrived at Nerac, at the time of this bravado; and observing that Marshal Biron had fixed his camp in a place of such disadvantage as rendered him less formidable than might have been expected from his superiority in numbers, he selected forty men who had been his old friends and companions at Castel-Jaloux, and led them to a skirmish with the enemy; he maintained the fight during two hours in such a manner that the Marshal retired from the place. The terrors into which a few cannon shot had thrown the Queen of Navarre, and the rest of the ladies, had rendered the Marshal's vicinity so very terrible to their imaginations, that they were very eloquent in their commendations of D'Aubigné, for having discouraged him from those alarming bravados.†

The occasion of his coming into court through the numerous dangers and difficulties to which he must be exposed in travelling so far through a country of armed enemies, was an information he had received, that D'Usson, and the Comte de la Rochefoucalt, had misrepresented the affair of Blaye, and endeavoured to turn it to his disadvantage. He brought with him Laleu, and three other gentlemen, who had been engaged in that enterprise; and when he arrived, desired the King to call into his presence his two calumniators, before whom he gave so exact and circumstantial a detail of all that had passed, that D'Usson was obliged to confess the truth of the whole relation; and the King not only permitted D'Aubigné to give the lie to any person that should attempt to altar the least circumstance in his account, but gave under his hand a testimonial of his approbation, in terms the most satisfactory and honourable.*

Having thus vindicated his conduct, he returned to Montagu; accompanied by fifteen musketeers: In passing near Cours, he was met by sixty light horse of the enemy; but he placed his men in such advantage, that he dispersed them.

In pursuing his journey he had another encounter which was ridiculous enough, and might have exposed him to some disgrace. As he was marching at midnight through the vineyards of St. Preux, near Jarnac, in a narrow path, which allowed only five men to go abreast, he was met by some people on horseback, who immediately drawing their swords attacked him; as he had no other design than to prosecute his journey, had the place allowed of it he would have avoided them, being in a spot surrounded with garrisoned towns belonging to the enemy; but finding himself obliged to engage, he soon discovered that his opponents were only two priests, and two drunken men, who had sworn to attack the first people they should meet; a frolic for which they were severely punished, before D'Aubigné perceived how ridiculous an enemy he opposed.

When he arrived at Montagu he again put himself at the head of the light horse belonging to that garrison, and made frequent excursions to a very great distance, defeating parties of the enemy of more than double his numbers, wherever he would meet with them; and bringing much plunder, and many prisoners to the town. He performed these small expeditions with such order and dexterity, that one time, having occasion for refreshment, he entered a house which fronted the suburbs of a town; shut up in it his twenty-seven horses, confined fourteen persons who belonged to the house, and such people as came to visit the owner; and all so quietly, that no suspicions were conceived of any strangers having taken possession; till at night, setting forward again, he left his prisoners at liberty, to inform their neighbours what had happened. One of his enterprises was of a sort that will not often be imitated. The King of France had from the commencement of the war, allowed freer exercise of the reformed religion than he had ever before permitted; with a view of ingratiating himself with the Huguenots, and of casting more blame on the King of Navarre for breaking a treaty, which he thought thus to prove his own in-

* De Thou, tom. vi. liv. 72. p. 16. Mem. de la reine Marg. p. 183.

† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 59.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 59.

tention of observing. This conduct gained the reformed ministers so generally over to his side, that it was difficult to prevail with any of them to quit their usual places of abode, to reside among the military. The garrison of Montagu was one of those reduced to live without any public worship; which being very disagreeable to them, D'Aubigné, selecting a party of his well tried soldiers, went to St. Fulgent, and brought by force a minister from thence; who pleased to see a numerous body of soldiers free from blasphemy, quarrels, dice, harlots, or robbery (except that of pillaging at a great distance from the town, according to the rights of war) conceived so sincere an attachment to them, that he voluntarily remained there till the town was besieged.*

The frequent excursions made by this garrison, at length induced the leaguers to commission the Count de Lude to drive them from the town. No less than ten fruitless attempts were made to surprise it; most of them being frustrated by the effects that the perturbation of the minds of the conspirators had on their countenances, which could not escape the penetration of D'Aubigné. After nine conspiracies had been thus discovered, and the town was threatened with a siege, the governor and his council had all acquired such faith in the science of physiognomy, that they determined to watch the countenance, and course of life of every man in the garrison; holding suspected such as they should observe gloomy, pensive, and often engaged in private conferences with each other. In consequence of this search they selected thirty, whom they sent by way of garrison to the castle of l'Abergement, being sensible that they must give it up as soon as siege was laid to Montagu. The conspirators by this honorary expulsion from the town, perceived themselves suspected, and found their design frustrated; but observing one man in their company who was not of their party, and whose ill-favoured countenance had deceived the physiognomists, they drove him from among them; though not without treating him very ill.†

The preparations making by the Comte de Lude cast a great damp on the spirits of the garrison, which was increased by frequent advices from the neighbouring gentlemen, of the considerable force he was collecting; their visible dejection induced D'Aubigné, with some other of their leaders, to proclaim by beat of drum, that "all cowards, whose hearts sunk at the thoughts of the approaching siege, had leave to depart, and go to the devil." Though the terms were not very polite, the permission was so agreeable, that almost three quarters of the garrison took advantage of it; not quite four hundred remaining in the town. These were divided into three companies, the command of one of which was given to D'Aubigné, who had been before elected lieutenant colonel. He rendered the enemy's approaches very troublesome, seldom suffering a night to pass without forcing some of their quarters. But being gone at the head of forty horse to meet a regiment that was coming to join the Count de Lude; and learning from the prisoners he took that the count did not intend to form a regular siege till a week from that time, he made no haste to return; busying himself in such little enterprises as his forces would permit.

But the enemy being informed that D'Aubigné, with some of his boldest soldiers, were then abroad, hastened their approaches, in order to stop every avenue to the town, and prevent his returning into it. In a skirmish between the army and the garrison on that occasion, the commander on the side of the latter, with twenty of his officers, being surrounded by the enemy, was going to surrender, when a younger brother of D'Aubigné's, then only an ensign, at the head of thirty of his men, broke through the enemy and brought them off; but as he was retreating, an old soldier seeing two fresh companies of cavalry coming upon them, cried out to them to fly, adding, here are horse coming: "Well," replied the youth, "they are only so many more beasts:" however he made his men retire over a hedge; but not able to prevail with himself to follow them without making some opposition, he, by a well aimed blow, struck the captain of the troop to the ground; but the soldiers too well revenged their leader by falling on the youth and killing him on the spot.

He had already shown himself the worthy brother of Agrippa D'Aubigné; having a little time before, at the head of only forty men, routed three hundred and twenty. The daring spirit of the youth made his brother wish to repress his ardour; and before he left the town he said to him; "You have gained the reputation of a good soldier; I do not wish you to be covetous of your life, but housewife it well." To which the young man replied, "I will soon have the pleasure of being respected, or not be at all."*

It was not long before D'Aubigné heard from some prisoners he had taken that the siege was commenced; and resolving at all hazards to return to the garrison, he attacked that part of the enemy's camp which appeared to have the weakest guard; and forcing it in the night, conducted his men without any loss into the town; where he received the afflicting intelligence of his brother's death.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 375.
† Ibid. p. 377.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 379.

By frequent sallies at the head of his little band he kept the besiegers incessantly harassed, and determined them to change the siege into a blockade. During the four months that it continued, D'Aubigné commanded in twenty-nine sallies, wherein he engaged in close fight parties of the enemy far superior to his own; but always came off conqueror.

In one of these, with two hundred men, he drove eight hundred back into their intrenchments. The last skirmish was occasioned by his having perceived, from the top of a tower where he was taking a survey of the besiegers, that they were placing four hundred musketeers in ambush, in a wood on the left side of the town, making them lie down on their faces, to prevent their being seen. When the men were, as they imagined, thus concealed, an officer at the head of his regiment advanced towards the town, in order by a bravado to attract part of the garrison to an engagement, which, by retiring, as is usual on such occasions, he was to draw into the snare prepared for them. But D'Aubigné, sending two captains at the head of sixty men to amuse that regiment, led one hundred and fifty to the wood, where falling on the ambuscade he killed several of them, and drove the rest into their intrenchments.

At that time two armies were seldom long in sight of each other, without private combats. Several challenges passed between the Count de Lude's officers and those in the garrison; and at length, at the desire of the besiegers, a combat of ten men on each side was agreed upon, among whom D'Aubigné was one; but the Count de Lude put a stop to it, as the news of a general peace had reached the army.

A dispute then arose between the besiegers and the besieged, which should first publish the treaty of peace. The Count de Lude desired to confer with D'Aubigné upon it, asking his opinion; to which D'Aubigné replied, "that the publication came with a better grace from those who were masters of the field, than from the garrison of a besieged city; and as a pacification would necessarily put the count in possession of the town, he owed the sufferers some small compensation; and could give none that would be less to his own disadvantage than first publishing the peace." The count in the course of their conversation asked him, "if he should demand the performance of the challenge given by the ten catholic officers?" D'Aubigné answered, "That so far from it, he was sensible that if his general treated him and his companions according to the rigour of the ancient military laws, he would cause all the ten to be beheaded, for having so imprudently hazarded the loss of the town."*

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 383.

The first place the Huguenots had seized in this short war, was La Fere in Picardy, which the Prince of Condé had taken by stratagem the last day of November, 1579.* But the disagreement between him and the King of Navarre, and the dissensions among the reformed, prevented any increase of his forces, and disappointed him of further success in Picardy. Receiving intelligence the following spring that the King of France designed to besiege la Fere, he went into England, Flanders, and Germany, with a design of levying a sufficient body of troops to enable him to resist the royal army; but more difficulties having occurred than he expected, he did not succeed in time to save the place; to which Marshal Martignon laid siege on the 7th of July, and reduced it to capitulate on the 12th of September.†

The peace granted this year to the Huguenots was owing to the Duke of Anjou, who being invited to accept the sovereignty of the Low Countries, judged it necessary to put an end to the civil wars in France, that he might carry with him a sufficient army to assist his new subjects in their opposition to the power of Spain.‡ The articles of the peace were kept secret, except that the cautionary towns were allowed to the Huguenots for six years longer. The Prince of Condé, who had engaged a considerable body of Germans, opposed the pacification, and the province of Dauphiny refused to accede to the treaty. But the Duke de Mayenne, at the head of a good army, with ease brought them to accept it, as they were destitute of troops to oppose him.

On the conclusion of the peace, D'Aubigné returned to the King of Navarre's court, which was then at Cadillac, though it soon after removed to Libourne, to meet the Duke of Anjou, who desired to confer with the King of Navarre, before he went into the Low countries; but the king, detained by the charms of the Countess de Guiche, did not arrive there till some time after. The Queen of Navarre, suspecting D'Aubigné of having given some intelligence which occasioned the discovery of an intrigue she was engaged in at Cadillac, took advantage of the king's absence to entangle him in a negotiation, whereby she hoped to get an opportunity of exposing him to the resentment either of her husband, or her brother. Being informed that D'Aubigné arrived early in the morning, she sent for him, and complained that a military life had rendered him ill bred and savage; that it was not for persons so much esteemed to wait for her rising, but to come into her chamber at any hour: then ordering a chair to be brought, made him sit down, and thus

* De Thou. tom. v. liv. 68. p. 615.
† De Thou, tom. vi. liv. 72. p. 19. Cayet, tom. i. p. 8. Mem. de la reine Marg. p. 156.
‡ Dav. lib. 6. p. 353.

addressed him: "You have come very luckily, if not rather too late, to perform a service that will be highly agreeable to the king my husband, and your master. There is in this town a Portuguese prince, Count Antonio Virmioso, constable of Portugal, of whose fame you have heard in the war carried on by his sovereign in Barbary. I would have you judge of him yourself, before I tell you my opinion of him. I know you will give little attention to his ungraceful bows, or his awkward manner of dancing. He speaks well; excels in every kind of gallantry; and is so eloquent on the subject of love, that it is a pleasure to hear him converse upon it. You are not ignorant of the miserable situation of Portugal, and the distressed condition of its King, Don Antonio, who is in danger of being deprived of all his dominions. His subjects are inclined to shake off the Spanish yoke, but foreign assistance is requisite. You cannot doubt but that to reinstate him on the throne, would be of very great advantage to the prince who should effect it. My brother, whose dangerous ambition you well know, is in treaty with him, but with no other view than to deceive him; and fearing that the constable should be informed of his disposition, he keeps every one from his presence, under pretence of defending him from such as might be tempted by assassinating him, to obtain the great reward of forty thousand ducats, which the king of Spain has set on his head; and Alferan, whose office it is to receive strangers, has six Switzers under his direction for that purpose; which renders it difficult for any person who is not concerned in the negotiation, to get access to him; but I am persuaded this difficulty will only increase your ardour to render an important service to your master, in bringing the king of Portugal to commit his cause to the Huguenot party, on whom alone he can rely for any defence against Spain and Italy: yet I am sensible there is some danger of occasioning a quarrel between my brother and my husband, and that consideration a little perplexes and distresses me; but my mind will rest at peace in the confidence I have in your experience and fidelity, on which I can safely rely."

"Madam, (answered D'Aubigné) Languillier and Beaupré, counsellors in ordinary to the king your husband, are here; they are of more authority, and more mature in age than I am; I beseech your majesty to order them at least to share this business with me: command me in every thing within my power, but do not appoint me so dangerous an office; nor lay upon me a burden too heavy for me to sustain." The queen excused herself from this request by saying, that Languillier was not qualified to talk with any one superior to a maitre d'hotel; and that Beaupré was attached to the Duke of Anjou; and thus after some further conversation, left the affair solely in D'Aubigné's hands.

When he retired from her apartment, and reflected on what had passed, he was well convinced that she was actuated by malice; though being ignorant of her suspicions, he knew not any cause of offence he had given her; and that she embarked him in this delicate affair, in order to ruin him, either by accusing him of neglecting his master's interests if he declined the negotiation, or of sowing dissention between the duke and the King of Navarre if he undertook it. Only one means occurred to him of disappointing her malice, which was to deceive her in the course he intended to pursue, and thereby lead her to abuse him for the part he had not acted. In this view he returned the next morning, and declared he chose rather to be remiss than mischievous; and thought he should be less culpable in depriving his master of an opportunity of undertaking an honourable war, than in engaging him in one with his brother, and the house of Valois.

But ever ready for enterprise, whether to be performed by arms or negotiation, having learnt that four of the Duke of Anjou's confidants had a conference every morning with the constable, he no sooner left the queen than he exchanged his cloak and hat with his servant, and placing himself in a street through which the duke's agents were to pass, he, mixing with their train, accompanied them to the constable's house; and concealing himself in the corner of a poultry yard, waited the departure of the agents. When he saw them retire, he entered the house, and going directly to the constable's chamber, obtained admission, by telling the servant he was a gentleman sent by the King of Navarre. He approached the bed where the constable was, saying to him in the words of a Portuguese proverb, "Regard not, sir, the hat, but what comes forth from the head;" and began to plead the necessity of disguising himself. Don Virmioso immediately understood him; and ordering that Alferan should not be admitted, in the same language answered, "To a clear-sighted person, sir, the rough covering cannot disguise the good will." Being then left alone, D'Aubigné thus addressing him:

"Your excellency will give me leave to observe, that there are six qualifications which ought to concur in the person to whom the defence of a state against a powerful enemy is intrusted. These requisites are, indisputable integrity; experience in arms; the confidence of the soldiery; vicinity of dominion; an equal cause of hatred to the oppressor; and, if it can be found, an absolute impossibility of any reconciliation with the enemy. You seek protection from the Duke of Anjou, of whom the Queen of

Navarre said to me but yesterday, that if all infidelity was banished from the earth, her brother had a sufficient portion to replenish it. Reflect, sir, (for you may have already heard it) on the return he made to that party, which not only saved his life and honour, but procured him the great advantages he now enjoys; he embraced the cause of their enemies, and endeavoured to wound the bosom that had cherished him. As for his experience, he has never been at the head of an army, except at the siege of la Charité, and then was commander only in name; the Duke of Guise performing all the functions of the charge. In regard to the confidence placed in him by the military, they make a suitable return to the sentiments he has for them, hating him to so great a degree, that they lay the most shocking vices to his charge. His affairs carry him far distant from the frontiers; and instead of being at enmity with Spain, he is united to it by consanguinity and inclination; and though private interest may for a short time interrupt so natural an amity, yet the most insignificant nuncio the pope could appoint, would bring him on his knees to beg for pardon, and reconciliation with Spain.

If in these particulars you oppose to the Duke of Anjou, the king, my master, you will perceive a striking superiority in every respect. His probity has shone conspicuously in quitting the court, where he had the promise of being made lieutenant general in preference to the Duke of Anjou, to espouse the cause of his distressed adherents; and involve himself in a war, where he had nothing to oppose to the great inequality of numbers, but the superiority of his virtue. In the support of that oppressed party he has gained experience; and by having already three times obliged the Catholics, with all the forces of the kingdom at their command, to desire peace, by being always the foremost in an attack, and the last in a retreat, he has infused that confidence in his valour and prudence into the breasts of the military, which I have mentioned as the third requisite in the ally you ought to seek. His courtiers are the bravest officers in France; military merit is the road to promotion in his family. He is so much beloved by the gentlemen of his party, that when they have spent two-thirds of their fortune in his service, no farther inducement is required to make them expend the remainder, but the promise of a battle. His dominions are so conveniently situated, that his subjects, from their strongest forts, behold out of their windows the western sea, or the Pyrenean mountains: a proximity which renders the increase of the power of Spain doubly formidable to them; and must necessarily create such an union of interests with Portugal, that they would not only be attached to you by pay, but by their passions. "Then, what is almost beyond expectation, but greatly desirable in your ally, the road to reconciliation is utterly destroyed; not only by the injuries already received, but by those with which he is still threatened. The cruelties practised by the Spaniards, and the unquenched fire of their inquisition, have excited such horror and detestation in the auxiliaries I propose to you, that your cause will become theirs; and even should you abandon it, they would of their own choice maintain it. This, sir, in plain and honest terms, is what I have to propose to you. I have not sought to adorn so reasonable a proposal with the flowers and graces of rhetoric. I have no credentials to offer, being just arrived from the other side of the Loire; but unwilling to lose so favourable an opportunity, I made use of my master's name; yet that you may give me such credence as is usually previous to a negotiation of this kind, I will engage to write immediately a few words to the King of Navarre, who I am certain, notwithstanding the dangers to which it may expose him, will take post to meet you, in any place you may please to appoint."

The constable had listened to D'Aubigné's discourse with great tokens of concern; which made the speaker judge that he was more deeply engaged with the Duke of Anjou than he then wished; but the constable, without declaring he was so, being on the point of removing from Libourne to Coutras, appointed a conference with the King of Navarre in the warren near that town. When Henry received advice of it from D'Aubigné, he disguised himself in the dress of a cook, and passing through Bourdeaux, where he was more hated than in any place in France, came to the appointment; where D'Aubigné performed the office of interpreter between him and the constable; but the negotiation proved ineffectual, from the too strong engagement the latter had entered into with the duke; who gave him very flattering promises of sending powerful assistance to king Antonio.*

The king of Navarre, after the conference ended, repaired to Libourne; where his queen did not fail to pour forth a violent invective against lukewarm servants; informing him that she had omitted no endeavours to prevail on those whom he most trusted, to do him an important service; but either too great fear of the duke of Anjou, or too little love for their master, had prevented their undertaking it: insinuations which could have had little effect, even if the fact had not contradicted them, for, as D'Aubigné himself observes, Henry well knew the heart both of his wife and of his equerry.

In the latter end of July, in the following year, the succours sent to the king of Portugal having fallen far short of the pro-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 414.

mises made him; and even those not accompanied by the duke of Anjou, who was employed in prosecuting his views on the Low Countries, the Count di Virmiosa was mortally wounded in a battle with the Spaniards; and very soon after, the king of Portugal was dispossessed by them of every part of his dominions. The night before the battle, which the count had determined on in a fit of desperation, resolved not to live to see his country subjected to the Spanish yoke, he wrote the following letter to D'Aubigné and sent it to him at Nantz.

"SIR—You too faithfully foretold our misfortunes; and well knew the nature of the man who has deceived us. The remedies you would have administered, have through our errors proved useless; but I give you my word I will seek the only relief that remains, an honourable death. I am sure of your compassion, and hope for so much of your esteem, that you will not blush to have ranked among your friends,

"ANTONIO COUNT DI VIRMIOSA."

D'Aubigné returned for answer:

"I would gladly have been your physician, and not your prophet: I shall not deny you my compassion, but should with much greater pleasure have expended my breath in congratulations; and have dedicated to your service, the hands of your faithful

"THEODORE AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ."

Before this reply reached Portugal the count was no more; and it was delivered to the unfortunate king.*

The last pacification was on the whole better observed than that which preceded it; yet some gentlemen endeavoured to take the usual advantage of the confidence which many placed in the treaty, who cherished the belief of security as a desirable and uncommon blessing; seldom enjoyed since the first commencement of the civil wars. Of these gentlemen were the Sieurs de Lansac, de Lusan, and the Viscount D'Aubeterre, who, under the false pretence of a private quarrel, levied men with an intention of surprising la Rochelle. But as private interest was the motive of their undertaking, so it proved the cause of their failure of success. Divisions of property are with difficulty adjusted to the satisfaction of all parties; Lusan, discontented with the share assigned him, repaired to the King of Navarre, and disclosed the whole design; informing him that a plan was laid to enter the town by a grate which was considered by the inhabitants as a defence to one side of it.

As soon as Henry received this information, he dispatched D'Aubigné to Rochelle, to make it known to the citizens. On his arrival he desired they would appoint three men of approved fidelity, to confer with him on an affair he had to communicate: to which they replied, that they were all deserving of confidence, and incapable of betraying any secret with which he should intrust them; therefore desired it might be imparted to them all. D'Aubigné replied, that they were then more infallible in their judgment than our Lord, who had one traitor amongst those he had chosen for his apostles; and since such was their determination, he should take his leave of them without any further intercourse. Perceiving him so resolute in his demand, they complied, and deputed three of their most considerable citizens, to whom he made known the danger that threatened the city, and went with them to take a view of the grate, which they found was all filed nearly asunder, except two of the bars; but he could not prevail with them to form an ambuscade to surprise those who had designed to surprise them.

The Viscount and Lansac, finding their enterprise discovered, gave up all immediate attempts; but in little more than a month they again levied some troops; which greatly alarming the King of Navarre, D'Aubigné undertook to frustrate their design, and taking with him ten chosen soldiers, he mixed in with the viscount's troops as they marched only in the night; and before break of day withdrawing his small corps, lodged apart; till the return of night, put them again in motion; accompanying them in this manner till they approached the town; when advancing before them, and calling a few musketeers from thence to strengthen his party, he returned back; and meeting them a quarter of a league from the town, charged them in such a manner, as sufficiently proved that their design was discovered; and nothing remained for them but to measure back the road they came.*

The King of Navarre being freed by the peace from all military employment, went one day to visit Mons. de Candale, a man famous for philosophic knowledge; and having asked to see his curious library, Mons. de Candale readily promised it, on condition that no ignorant or illiterate person, should enter with him. "No, my good uncle," replied the king, "I will bring no one with me, who is not more capable of distinguishing the merits of your collection, than myself." He kept his word, and was accompanied only by D'Aubigné, and five other gentlemen of learning and knowledge. While they were amusing themselves with a machine, by means of which a child of six years old raised the weight of a cannon; D'Aubigné observing a large square piece of black marble, which served the purpose of a tablet to Mons. de Can-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 467.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 64.

dale, with a pencil lying near it, he wrote upon the marble,

> Non est hæc princeps regem tractare doceto,
> Sed docta regni pondera ferre manu—*

then covering the marble again, he rejoined the company.

When they all came together to the marble, Mons. de Candale said to the king, "Here is my tablet," and taking off the cover, perceived the Latin distic; on reading which he cried out, "Ah! ah! here is a man amongst us!"—— "But one!" said the king; "do you take the rest of us for beasts?" and desiring his uncle to guess the writer, it gave occasion to some mirth.

D'Aubigné never had appeared more firmly established in his master's favour than at this time; of which he received no slender proof, on the following occasion. The flagrant irregularities in the Queen of Navarre's conduct, exposed her to the serious censures of the grave, to the ridicule of the wits, and to the sarcasms of the satirical. D'Aubigné was not unlikely to offend in speech under each of these several characters, for his morals were as severe, as his wit was pointed. But Margaret was too careless of her character, and too shameless in the prosecution of her amours, to be much affected by serious censure; she could not expect the persons among whom she lived to be blind to her vices; but she required them so far to respect her rank as not to make her the object of their ridicule. D'Aubigné probably thought, that vice, like death, levels all conditions; or rather, that vice was more infamous in the great, than in their inferiors; as from the better cultivation of their minds they ought to have a a deeper knowledge, and nicer sense of right and wrong; besides that additional incentive to virtue, the desire of general esteem, so necessary to their happiness, yet so impossible to be obtained without deserving it, by persons whose conspicuous station exposes them to universal observation. At least, whatever might be his motive, it is certain she did not escape the lash of his sarcastic wit. The most refined satirist will not easily be forgiven, however delicately he gives the wound; but in grosser times, the rough, blunt edge of satire, hacked and mangled in a fearful manner whatever it attacked; it is not therefore much to be wondered at, if the queen's resentment against D'Aubigné was somewhat violent.

Her situation was no where very agreeable; she treated her brother's favourites with contempt; and they found ample matter for revenge in making him acquainted with her dissolute conduct, which subjected her to very disagreeable treatment from him. The king her husband was not ignorant of her intrigues, but his interest required him to keep on tolerable terms with her; he even at times received some advantage from her amours, as by her own charms, and those of the ladies who attended her, she had successfully counteracted the arts of the queen mother, with her train of seducers. But however convenient she might find the King of Navarre's affected blindness in these particulars, they strongly proved his contempt for her; and though she rather promoted, than obstructed his amours, yet she must be exposed to impertinent treatment from his mistresses; who would hate her as a woman they injured, and could not respect her as a virtuous queen. The consciousness of being deservedly despised, rendered her uneasy wherever she was; and she sought relief not from a change of conduct, which could alone give it, but from a change of place. Weary of the indignities she received at her brother's court, she had wished to leave it for that of Navarre; without reflecting, that however abandoned her mind, the sight of a husband she was daily injuring in the most cruel manner must be painful. While the war continued she was obliged to remain with him, but taking advantage of the peace, she chose to return to her brother's court. The King of Navarre, not sorry to have his shame removed further from his view, had no inclination to detain her; and the queen mother, desirous of a conference with him, agreed to receive her daughter from his hands, at the town of St. Maixant in Poictou.

When they met there, Margaret prevailed on her mother to join with her in soliciting the king to banish D'Aubigné from his presence; the hatred of Margaret being still increased, by a belief that he had been the occasion of an affront, offered to one of the ladies most in her confidence. She threw herself at her husband's feet; besought him to give her this proof of his regard; and solicited it so powerfully, that with the queen mother's assistance, she prevailed with Henry to promise compliance, though he had no intention of keeping his word. A politic desire of sending the two queens away in good humour, got the better of his sincerity; and having dismissed the offender, he gave him private orders not to depart, but to keep himself concealed. In consequence of this arrangement, D'Aubigné hid himself all day, and passed every night in the king's apartment; and he tells us, that by means of this seeming disgrace, he distinguished his real from his false friends; a dangerous, though not useless experiment.*

As such kind of concealments did not much suit his open nature, he soon took this opportunity of going to St. Gelais, in order

* Nearly to this effect:
These things are little worth the monarch's care;
Teach him the burthen of the state to bear.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 67.

to renew his addresses to Madem. de Lezay; which had been for some time interrupted. Her beauty and her rank had procured him many rivals, much superior to him both in quality and fortune, to whom her guardian and relations gave the preference, and had engaged very far in a treaty with one of them; but by its not taking effect, we may reasonably suppose it met with opposition from the young lady, who paid less regard to fortune than to merit. The King of Navarre wrote her several letters in recommendation of D'Aubigné; but some of her relations, and her less favoured lovers, unwilling that his interest with her should be strengthened by the solicitations of so honourable an intercessor, insisted on their being mere forgeries; whereupon Henry came himself to bear testimony of their truth: and to do honour to his faithful servant, and the object of his affections, gave many public entertainments, such as were then in fashion, as courses at the ring, masquerades, &c. D'Aubigné after the king's departure continued those amusements, at which the Prince of Condé, the Count de la Rochefoucaut, and several other persons of great distinction were often present; and all the persons of rank in Poictou repairing thither, it spread an air of joy and festivity over the whole province, which increased the hatred of his rivals, and inclined many to envy a courtier, whose splendid appearance seemed almost an insult on their more frugal manners. Nor did it make any favourable impression on those, whom next to his mistress he wished to please. He found that dazzling the eyes of her guardian and relations, was not the way to gain their approbation; and like a true soldier, and a true lover, holding all stratagems in both love and war to be fair, he had recourse to art.

He had a friend in the town whose name was la Tiffardiere, formerly an intimate of the Sieur de Baugouin, Madem. de Lezay's guardian, but then a little at variance with him. D'Dubigné prevailed on this gentleman to assist him in his scheme, and gave him the necessary instructions.

The Sieur de Tiffardiere having learnt his part, sought a reconciliation with the Sieur de Baugouin; and pretending to interest himself in all his concerns, said to him, "I find that several princes and noblemen of the first rank, solicit your consent to D'Aubigné's marriage with Madem. de Lezay, but I know you have another person in view, and are actually under some engagements to him; if you will give me your word never to discover that I took any part in it, I will tell you by what means you may deliver yourself from his importunities; without giving any one the least reason to complain of, or censure you." The Sieur de Baugouin, rejoiced to hear that he might be so well extricated out of the difficulties in which this affair involved him, overflowed with gratitude and affection to his kind informer; and made him the most solemn promises of inviolable secresy. Tiffardiere then continued, "You must tell Monsieur D'Aubigné, that you are sensible the addresses of so well born, and so accomplished a gentleman do your ward great honour; but that unhappily, some of his rivals have published stories derogatory to the nobility of his extraction. You may remind him that at an entertainment some letters were shown from the Sieur de Fervaques, containing many things to the disadvantage of his character; that you indeed well remember he had thereupon declared, that if he could not by repeatedly giving the lie to his detractors wound their consciences, he would by wounds of which they had a nicer sensibility refute their calumny; to which no one returning any answer, he afterwards gave the lie in due form to the Sieur de Fervaques; and you are entirely convinced that all the reflections cast on him were only the slanders of malice; that you have not the least doubt of his honour; but those defamatory reports having come to the knowledge of many ladies of great quality, related to Madem. de Lezay, you wish in your own justification to give them proofs that you have not inconsiderately permitted his addresses. For this purpose you may propose an agreement to be entered into between him and the young lady's relations, whereby they shall oblige themselves to consent to his marriage with her, when he shall produce indisputable testimonials of his noble extraction, and the antiquity of his family; and he in return, shall bind himself to desist from his pretensions, if he cannot give full satisfaction on those particulars. This, continued the Sieur de Tiffardiere, I know he cannot do, and therefore by this compromise you will be delivered from all future persecutions from this pertinacious lover."

The Sieur de Baugouin was caught in the snare; and having again thanked and embraced his good friend la Tiffardiere, followed his advice minutely; and the conditions were agreed to on all sides. It was owing to chance, that D'Aubigné had in his hands those testimonials which induced him to form this stratagem; ambitious only of the honour to which a man has the best title, that resulting from his own actions, he had never much regarded that derived, that secondary honour, which so many claim from their ancestors; the little regard he paid to the adventitious circumstances of birth, and his early engagement in the pursuit of military glory, had never given him leisure to examine into, or even reflect on his genealogy; but having recovered some effects that had for security been deposited in the castle of Archiac, he found among them title deeds, and other papers, relative

to his family, which first acquainted him with its antiquity and original.

In consequence of the agreement, he deposited his testimonials in the hands of one of his mistress's relations, on whose honour he could depend; and at whose house others of her kindred met to examine them. They found among them all the papers relative to a quarrel, and a long process at law, in which D'Aubigné's father had been engaged. A gentleman having disputed with him the right of precedency at a procession, and a duel between them having ensued, his antagonist, not succeeding therein, had sought his revenge, in giving information of the Sieur D'Aubigné's holding certain crown lands, without acknowledging the tenure. To show they were freehold, D'Aubigné had been obliged, in the course of the process, to prove his descent both by male and female line for several generations, beginning with Savari D'Aubigné, commander in the castle of Chinon for the King of England; and to produce the contracts of marriage of those his ancestors. From this genealogical account, it appeared that he was descended from the family of the D'Aubignés d'Anjou. By these, and other papers to the same effect, D'Aubigné's rank was so clearly ascertained, that the Sieur de Baugouin, with the rest of his opponents, could by no means evade their agreement, and the two lovers were united.*

The favour he was then in with the King of Navarre, would not allow him a long absence from that court; in three weeks after his marriage, therefore, he went to Pau, where Henry then was; to show that even his bride could not make him remiss in the service of a master, who had condescended to solicit his success in an affair he had so much at heart. On his arrival he found the king greatly offended at the treatment the queen his wife had received from her brother, the King of France; and at the little satisfaction that prince was inclined to make for the affront.

The King of France, scandalized at Margaret's ill conduct, and possibly more exasperated at the contempt she showed for his favourites, and the freedom with which she censured his vices, banished two of her ladies from her presence, and soon afterwards ordered her to return to her husband; refusing to see her before her departure. She had not gone far when she was overtaken by a captain of the guard and fifty archers, who searched her litter, obliged her to unmask, seized her master of the horse, her physician, and apothecary; while an officer had taken another road to secure the two banished ladies, and bring them before the king, by whom they were interrogated apart concerning the morals and conversation of his sister. Their depositions were put down in writing, and some of these persons sent to the Bastile.

This treatment having been reported to the King of Navarre, he sent Du Plessis Mornay to the King of France, desiring him to declare of what the queen of Navarre was guilty to subject her to such indignities; demanding justice to be done on her, if she had committed any fault deserving such treatment; but if she had not, requiring those to be duly punished who had so atrociously affronted her; adding, that his majesty had done too much or too little; too much, if the fault was not extreme; too little, if esteeming her to deserve the loss of honour, he had suffered her to survive it.

The King of France giving only evasive answers, Du Plessis found he had no satisfaction to expect, yet pursuing the subject, added, "But what will Christendom say, sir, if the King of Navarre receives her, embraces her without scruple, thus returned to him stained and dishonoured?" The king answered, "That he has received the sister of his king; what can he do less?" "But should it not be of a just and equitable king," replied Du Plessis, "who would not require this obedience from such a subject, at the expense of his honour?"*—Though the king did not choose to make any reparation for the affront he had put upon his sister, nor to justify himself by accusing her, he hoped to stop any further altercation by writing to the queen mother to detain Maragret on the road. But this did not satisfy the King of Navarre; who was greatly enraged at the neglect shown to his complaint, when D'Aubigné arrived at his court; having assembled his council, it was judged by all that he ought to insist in still stronger terms on a justification, or reparation, from the King of France; and in case of refusal to renounce his friendship; but all declined undertaking an affair, at once so delicate, and so dangerous, except D'Aubigné. He indeed represented, that having been accused of contriving his master's escape from the court, and suspected of some writings, and some verbal reflexions, wherein an offensive liberty had been taken with some persons in power, he was of all men the most improper; as what might be endured from the mouth of any other, would be intolerable from him; yet rather than disappoint his master's just resentment he complied: the king having given him full instructions in writing, and signed by himself, concerning the manner in which he should act. But as the long habitual licentiousness attending civil wars, had rendered the roads very unsafe, that he might not be robbed of these instructions, which by the king's signature were a security to him from any censure, should the event prove disagreeable, he caused them to be copied;

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 71.

* La Vie du Plessis Mornay, liv. 1. p. 72.

and sent the original sealed up in a box to Madame D'Aubigné, prohibiting her opening it, ("which command," says he, "she obeyed contrary to the usual practice of her sex,") and carried only the copy with him.

The King of France, who was then at St. Germains, received D'Aubigné's remonstrance with great marks of displeasure; and showing by his studied delays, and tedious evasions, that he had no intention of giving the King of Navarre satisfaction, D'Aubigné, in his master's name, renounced the honour of his alliance and friendship. The king bade him return to the *king* his master, since he dared to give him that appellation; adding, "and tell him if he comes this way, I will lay such a burden on his shoulders, as would be too heavy even for the grand seignior to bear.——Go tell him this;—go to him—for he wants such people as you are." "Sire," replied D'Aubigné, "My master was bred, and has increased in honour, under the burthen with which your majesty threatens him; if you do him justice he will serve you with his life, his fortune, and his dependents; but his honour he will never sacrifice to you, Sire, nor any prince alive, while he has an inch of sword in his hand."

The queen mother being informed of the message from the King of Navarre, spake to D'Aubigné; and told him that some of the insolent villains who had affronted her daughter should be put to death; to which he replied, "Unclean beasts were never judged worthy of being sacrificed to Diana; nobler victims are requisite to expiate such an offence."*

The King of France was too much enraged at what he termed D'Aubigné's temerity, willingly to suffer him to escape punishment; but not choosing to call him openly to account for it, he dispatched a party of soldiers to watch for him on the road; but by the assistance of Messrs. de Grillon and D'Entragues, he eluded their search, and got safe back to the king his master. His embassage had been esteemed so dangerous, that his friend the Baron de St. Gelais, grieved at his being engaged in it, was seized with so deep a melancholy, that from the time of his departure he would neither suffer his hair nor beard to be shaved; which occasioned the King of Navarre on seeing D'Aubigné enter the garden, where his majesty was then walking, to order one of his gentlemen to go and tell St. Gelais that he might send for his barber, for D'Aubigné was returned.†

Other deputations from the King of Navarre to the King of France on this subject succeeded D'Aubigné's; and Henry was at length prevailed upon to receive his wife.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 415. Bayle's Dict. notes to the article Navarre.

† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 72.

Though during the war the King of Navarre exposed his person without caution or reserve on every occasion, yet the dangers that threatened him during this short interval of peace, were little inferior to those in which he voluntarily engaged. Conspiracies were formed against his life, and assassins employed to perpetrate by treachery, what his invincible courage, or rather, what the protection of a superior power, prevented their effecting in the field of battle. On two of these occasions the Sieur D'Aubigné had a great share in his preservation, particularly in the latter: for the most striking particular in the first was the king's courage and presence of mind.

Having been informed that captain Melon was bringing him some recruits, he ordered him to quarter them at Gontaut; and declared publicly that he would ride thither the next morning to see them. He set out accordingly, attended only by D'Aubigné, D'Arambures, and Frontenac. As they were pursuing their journey with speed, for Henry kept a stable of small light horses which he used when particular expedition was required, they met on their road a gentlemen named Gavaret mounted on so fine a horse, as raised a suspicion in their minds of his being the person meant, by some intelligence that had been sent the king of an assassin, to whom a horse had been given which cost six hundred crowns.—Henry's attendants immediately surrounded him; while he, in the most easy and cheerful manner, asked Gavaret if his horse was a good one; who answering in the affirmative, the king desired he would let him try it. Gavaret turned pale, and appeared much confounded; but seeing no means of evading the request, he dismounted; and the king getting on the horse, examined the pistols, which finding charged and cocked, he fired into the air; and spurring on the horse, rode full speed to Gontaut, where he delivered it again to Gavaret, but desired Melon to dismiss him.*

Gavaret had been bred an Huguenot; but it appeared on inquiry that being converted to Popery, he had promised his confessor to make a public recantation of his former opinions; and bring such proof of his being a good catholic, that no one should ever after be able to doubt the truth of his conversion. It was supposed that the murder of the King of Navarre was to have been this indisputable proof of his sincerity. He paid but an ill compliment to the Church he sought to enter, for he seems to have believed there were no means so acceptable, nor so likely to procure his admission within the pale, as the perpetration of some execrable crime; and having been disappointed in his design against the King of Navarre, whose death would have been

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 417.

a fatal blow to the whole Huguenot party, he was reduced to recommend himself by the destruction of persons of less note; but where the enormity of his villainy and ingratitude did, possibly in his opinion, in some measure compensate for the comparative insignificance of the victims of his treachery.

His enormous vices having in very early youth so exasperated his father, that he renounced all future connexions with him, he so effectually excited the compassion of the Sieur de Semans, another Huguenot gentleman in the neighbourhood, that he not only received him into his family, but treated him as his son; and breeding him up with a young kinsman of his, gave him every advantage of education.

The elder Gavaret dying, his son inherited his fortune; and after being disappointed of his intended assassination of the King of Navarre, he set out to take possession of his estate; and invited the Sieur de Semans, whom he had always with sufficient propriety called his father, together with the young man who had been his companion in education, six other gentleman of the neighbourhood, and four merchants, all Huguenots, to accompany him on so agreeable an occasion. During dinner, Gavaret entertained his guests with an enumeration of the various obligations he had received from the Sieur de Semans; observing that he had been more than a father to him; but the table was no sooner cleared, than sixteen assassins entered, who fell upon the guests; but Gavaret stopped them when they had killed but three of the company, declaring that to give the fatal blow belonged only to him; and having first killed his venerable and generous benefactor, he stabbed all the rest; except his foster brother, whom he led to a window, and making him sit down, bade him sing him the most melancholy air he could recollect, the young man being remarkable for a very fine voice.

This command was not immediately complied with; horror and grief, the execrable barbarity he had just seen exercised, and by a man too with whom he had always lived as a friend and a brother, the latter having been the constant appellation they had given to each other through a course of many years, had deprived him even of speech: but Gaveret gave him time to recover his senses so far that he thought it possible to mollify the cruel wretch, and to awaken gentler sensations by the recollection of former familiarity; he therefore sang a favourite air, accompanying it with the most touching attitudes, and petitionary countenance; but as soon as he had finished it, the execrable monster, whom in vain he endeavoured to move, swearing that no one but himself could properly finish so noble a tragedy, stabbed the young man first in the throat, and then in the heart, and threw his body, and those of his murdered companions, out of the window. Such tragic effects of popish zeal, so many dreadful instances of which had appeared within the last twenty years, must have more powerfully attached the Huguenots to their religion, than the best sermons their ministers could preach; argument can only influence the reason, such events work on the passions; erroneous opinions may be calmly abjured, but treachery, ingratitude, and cruelty, must be abhorred.*

The other design on the King of Navarre's life, was committed to a soldier of the garrison of Fontarabia named Loro; and undertaken some months after that already related. An officer who had forsaken the King of Navarre, and wished to be reinstated in his favour, had, during the siege of la Fere, formed an enterprise on St. Sebastian; and to facilitate the execution, endeavoured to bribe some of the garrison of Fontarabia; flattering himself that success would secure a reconciliation with his former master. This attempt having come to light, put the Spaniards on forming an enterprise in their turn, though of a different kind; but they founded their hopes of success on this proof that the King of Navarre extended his views of conquest to so great a distance.

Loro being come to Nerac, where the King of Navarre then kept his court, addressed himself to D'Aubigné; and having desired to speak with him in private, after complimenting him on his great reputation, the essential services he had rendered his party, his experience in the most arduous undertakings, his great credit and power with his master, he told him that these considerations had determined him to commit to his management one of the most important affairs of Europe; no less in fine than the taking of Fontarabia. He then proceeded thus to explain the means of effecting it. "We have in the castle of Fontarabia only forty soldiers; I frequently, with the consent of my brother, who is the commander, lead twenty-five of the ablest among them in search of plunder; which we find in great plenty both on the river, and on the land, by means of the good intelligence between us and some officers and gentlemen in the adjacent parts; and as we are not very apt to spare either the boats or the persons we have plundered, we have hitherto remained undiscovered. As I imagine nothing can be more agreeable to your master, than to make Fontarabia the frontier of his dominions, I have taken a resolution to deliver it up to him; on condition that he will give me an adequate recompense; for which I only require your word of honour, as I am assured you will perform all you promise with the utmost exactness. The manner in which you must proceed I have already

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 419.

considered. When the time of execution is arrived, you must conceal in the house of a gentleman in the neighbourhood of Tallemont, on the river Gironde, to whom I will direct you, a party of soldiers; and among them twenty-five of the most brave and determined that you can select; my men will expect me to land there, as I usually do; and I will bring them to you by degrees, four at a time, in the manner we commonly practice when we form an ambuscade, and as fast as they arrive we will kill them. We will then embark your men in my boat, at such an hour as to reach the postern gate of the castle in the night, which by means of the watch-word will be opened to us; and as my brother has on these occasions only fifteen men left with him, we shall with ease make ourselves masters of the castle; where it will be necessary to kill all we find, particularly my brother; for if he can keep but one corner of a tower, he will be succoured, and we lost."

One cannot think without horror on those times, when the frequency of crimes of the blackest dye, should encourage a man to dare to confess, or pretend, intentions so detestable. They shocked D'Aubigné; and made him suspect the villain of different views; which suspicions were increased by his horrible countenance; a circumstance of some weight with a man who it has been already observed, had no little faith in the science of physiognomy. Loro's features must to such an one speak much in his disfavour; he squinted; his nostrils were uncommonly wide; his short broad nose turned up almost to his eyebrows; and his forehead was large, bloated, and prominent; which, with a gigantic person, gave him a very terrible appearance. But however strong the prejudices were that D'Aubigné had conceived against him, he would not entirely neglect his offer; but sending him to lodge with a man in whom he could confide, he repaired to the king, and acquainting him with what had passed, offered to bring the man to him, "if," said he, "your majesty will consent to receive him under such restraints and precautions as Frontenac, to whom I will communicate the affair, and myself shall prescribe; for surely if there ever were an assassin, this man is one: if he be not, the brutal affair he proposes is dreadful to your enemies, but highly advantageous to you.

The king was extremely angry at having such conditions as D'Aubigné and Frontenac required, imposed upon him; but they persisted in refusing to let his majesty see the man on any other terms, and he at length complied. They introduced Loro to him in a passage near the King's chamber, so narrow that only one person could pass at a time; and placing themselves with each a poniard in his hand, between the king and Loro, they set their backs against one side of the wall, and their legs against the other; having also obliged the king to wear a coat of mail, and to hold a short sword in his hand. In this manner passed the first conference; but the king not being satisfied without inquiring further into the affair, met Loro the next day in an open plain, both of them on horseback: but D'Aubigné and Frontenac still persisted in their care; and being well mounted, placed themselves in such a manner between the King and the Spaniard, that the necks of their horses served as a barrier to his majesty; who being a stranger to fear, bore with impatience the effects of their just apprehensions; and that he might be at liberty to treat with Loro in a manner more agreeable to him, he sent away D'Aubigné, to conduct a design he had conceived upon Brouage.

After D'Aubigné's departure, informations were sent to court from some of the soldiers in St. Sebastian and Fontarabia, (who had been gained over to the King of Navarre's interest at the time when, as before mentioned, an enterprise was planned against the former) of Loro's designs; with descriptions of his person, that the king might be on his guard against him. On this intelligence, contrary to his majesty's inclinations, he was seized and thrown into prison; which rendered him so furious, that he sought every means of destroying himself; being almost frantic with rage. Henry declined bringing him to a trial at Nerac, finding that he had been borrowed for this traitorous purpose by one of the princes of France, whose honour he wished to spare; and with whom he judged it not advisable to come to an open and personal quarrel. It was therefore thought proper to remove the villain to Castel-Jaloux, where justice might take its course, without the affair becoming so public. As they were conveying him thither, they passed over the bridge of Barbaste, from whence the wretch threw himself into the river; the precipice down which he fell seemed to promise him certain death, but falling between two rocks where there was water enough to buoy him up (almost the only spot where he would not have been dashed in pieces) his conductors got to him time enough to save him; though not without great difficulty, as he tried by keeping his head under water to drown himself; obstinately resisting, to the utmost of his power, their endeavours to get him on shore. When they reached Castel-Jaloux, he was brought to a trial, confessed the whole plot; was executed in prison, and his confession suppressed; to avoid giving offence to those concerned in the conspiracy, and rendering them irreconcileable enemies, from a consciousness that their treachery was discovered.*

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 421.

The King of Spain, much offended by the Duke of Anjou's acceptance of the government of the Low Countries, and the troops he carried to their assistance; and also by the queen mother's pretensions to the kingdom of Portugal, who claimed it as her inheritance; sent two Castilian gentleman into France, with offers of assistance to the king of Navarre, whose affairs were then in too desperate a situation to suffer him to refuse so powerful an ally; and D'Aubigné and Monsieur de Segur were appointed to treat with them. When they met, D'Aubigné thus addressed them. "We come to you in such a manner as enemies may meet, but such enemies as have not on either side any perfidy with which to reproach each other, nor ingratitude to estrange them. You seek in us assistance, and opportunities to revenge yourselves of those who have been perfidious and ungrateful to you; we wish to defend ourselves from those who have treated us in the same manner; our interests therefore are united; let us try whether mutual integrity, and faithful observance of reciprocal engagements, can procure us success, and establish a sincere friendship between us."

The plainness of this address was suited to Castilian manners, and pleased the persons to whom it was made. They offered to pay two hundred thousand ducats to the King of Navarre, on his giving his word and honour that he would renew the war;—that as soon as he should have taken four towns of importance, the King of Spain would send him four hundred thousand ducats more;—the same sum on the first day of the next year;—and six hundred thousand yearly as long as the war should continue.

D'Aubigné and Segur returned to their master to obtain his consent to this treaty; but the Duke of Anjou dying while they were on the road, gave rise to other views; and the negotiation dropped. A little time after the queen mother having reproached the King of Navarre with his entering into treaty with Spain, he replied, "Madam, I will arm against you all hell, where you have so much interest, if you render it necessary!"*

The Duke of Anjou having by his ill conduct disgusted his friends in the United Provinces; disappointed the hopes of Don Antonio, king of Portugal; and covered himself with shame, returned into France; where he lived retired, and despised, till the 10th of June, when he died of the complicated effects of his vices, and vexation.†

This event could not fail of having important consequences. The King of France had no children, and by the Duke of Anjou's death, Henry of Navarre became the next heir to the crown; a circumstance which alarmed all the zealous catholics, on account of his religion; and some of the principal nobility for more private interests. The family of Guise were sensible that the loss of the power they had so long possessed, would be the certain consequence of his ascending the throne; for under none but weak princes could they expect to maintain it. But if their ambition took the alarm, it was not in a manner to depress it. The event which seemed to bring Henry nearer the crown, they considered as a very powerful means of removing him further from it; for by terrifying the Catholics in the kingdom, and the neighbouring Catholic powers, with the danger of having an heretic prince ascend the throne of France, they strengthened the league; and having a little time before appointed the cardinal of Bourbon, uncle to the King of Navarre, the head of it, they now declared him next heir to the crown, by double right; as being one degree nearer than his nephew, and also because that nephew was rendered by his religion incapable of succeeding to the throne of France. Though the cardinal was far advanced in the vale of years, yet he had still a sufficient share of ambition, or vanity (for ambition should belong only to stronger minds) to be pleased with the prospect; and had not discernment enough to perceive that he was no more than a puppet in the hand of the Guises; which they made such use of as best suited their towering designs; well convinced that when they ceased to prompt, his consequence would be annihilated.

The King of France's weak and vicious conduct, had rendered him so despicable in the eyes of the whole kingdom, that although a bigoted Catholic, he was not even considered as a defender of that religion, to the superstitions of which he was so implicit a slave. The Guises were esteemed the bulwarks of the Catholic faith; and they affected to charge the king with secretly favouring the Huguenots, and alleged as one proof of it, his majesty's having sent the Duke d'Epernon to treat with the King of Navarre; though the business with which he was intrusted was in reality in favour of the Catholic religion; but very contrary to the interest of the Guises.

The king, sensible that he had no enemies so inveterate as that family, who under the pretence of religion aimed at his crown, was very desirous of gaining over Henry of Navarre, conscious that he must prove his most powerful defender. In this view he had deputed the Duke d'Epernon to tell him that he considered him as heir to his crown, but could effect nothing to his advantage while he persisted in his heresy; urging him by all the reasons which policy suggested, to conform to the Catholic

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 458.

† Guerra di Fiandra di Bentivoglia, parte 2. lib. 2. p. 44. De Thou, tom. vi. liv. 79. p. 378. Cayet, tom. i. p. 7.

church, and repair to his court; as by their united power they might be able to conquer those who were equally enemies to both, and whom neither of them alone could resist. The King of Navarre returned the king the strongest assurances of his fidelity; and gave him room to hope that he might be one day converted; but intimated that even while he continued in the reformed religion he might be of service to his majesty.*

The Catholics who adhered to Henry, took occasion from this overture to persuade him to go to the King of France's court; but D'Aubigné prevailed with Mons. de Segur, his chief counsellor, to oppose this advice very strongly. The Catholics, who knew Segur's disposition, soothed him so artfully, that they brought him to agree to go thither himself; and when there, his vanity was so powerfully attacked by every sort of flattery that could be bestowed on him, that he changed his opinion entirely; and promised to determine his master to come to Paris.†

Having this in view, on his return he was lavish in praises of the King of France; charging his ministers with every thing that was reprehensible in that court: and to strengthen his interest, paid assiduous services to the Countess de Guiche, at that time Henry's favourite mistress, with whom Segur was before on very ill terms. By such measures he brought about a total change in his master's intentions, who, to the surprise and mortification of all his Huguenot servants, determined to wait on the king.

None of them were more sensibly grieved at this resolution than D'Aubigné; but it was his custom on all occasions rather to endeavour to prevent an evil, than to acquiesce supinely under it; and knowing Segur to be rather deficient in courage, he chose to attack him where he was most vulnerable. Seeing him pass through a saloon where the young gentlemen of the court were exercising, he with much seeming agitation, which the rest of the company naturally attributed to the violent exercise wherein he had been engaged, led Segur to a window, which opened on the rocks of la Bayre, and pointing to the precipice beneath, said to him, "I am commissioned by all the brave and honest men in this room to inform you, that this is the leap you must take, the day *your* master and *ours* sets out for the court of France."

Segur, astonished at so bold a menace, asked, "But who dare do that?" "If I cannot do it alone," replied D'Aubigné, "here are gentlemen enough ready to assist me." On this Segur turning round, saw about a dozen of the most spirited young men, who with a determined air, cocked their hats, as was their custom when any one looked them in the face, though they were totally ignorant of what was passing. Their formidable countenances so terrified Segur, that he went directly to the King of Navarre, not to recount his terrors, but to tell him that D'Aubigné openly called the Countess de Guiche a sorceress, accusing her of having bewitched him; and that he had even consulted Hotteman the physician upon it, desiring him to prescribe some philtres to remove the effects of her witchcraft; adding, that a chief of the Huguenot party had as many controllers of his actions as he had servants. He then related to him that Mons. de Bellievre, when he was there, having lodged over against the countess's apartments, and seeing her go to mass, without any other attendants than a bawd, a buffoon, a negro, a footman, a monkey, and a shock dog, asked D'Aubigné, how the courtiers could suffer that lady to go so ill accompanied, and not have the politeness to attend her; alleging the honours paid at the French court to the king's mistresses. "It is," replied D'Aubigné, "because we have in this court only a brave and generous nobility, who respect nothing but virtue; and that the pimp, the buffoon, footman, negro, monkey, and shock dog, that accompany her, are the only mean-spirited wretches we have here."*

While Segur was thus employed in doing him ill offices with the King of Navarre, D'Aubigné, ignorant of what was passing, went into Poictou to make a short visit to his wife; but as he was on his return to court, he received advices, from the Sieurs de la Boulaie and de Constant, to avoid appearing there, as he tendered his life; the king having promised the Countess de Guiche and Segur to cause him to be put to death. This information, which he received at Monlieu, instead of retarding, hastened his journey; for leaving his baggage and attendants there, he took post, and alighting from his horse at Madame de la Boulaie's, threw her into extreme terror, as she knew the danger that threatened him. She most earnestly intreated him to return back instantly; but animated by conscious innocence, he was not to be moved from his purpose; only, contrary to his custom, putting a poniard into his belt, he went up a private stair-case, that he might surprise the king, before, receiving notice of his arrival, he could give any orders in consequence of it; and found him tête à tête with the countess in her apartment. Henry, disturbed and confounded at his unexpected appearance, could not immediately determine in what manner he should receive him; which D'Aubigné perceiving, he assumed the same free air, and familiar ex-

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 131.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 73.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 75.

pressions, that he was accustomed to use when they were in private conversation, and asked, "What is the matter, my master? Can a prince so brave be disconcerted? I am come to learn in what I have offended; and whether the return you intend making to my long services are those of a good king, or of a true tyrant?" Henry with great emotion replied, "D'Aubigné, you know I love you; but I beg you will bring Segur into temper, who is strangely exasperated against you."

D'Aubigné obeyed this command; but being well acquainted with Segur's disposition, did not think it necessary, in order to pacify him to alter the tone which had first given him offence; on the contrary, he frighted him so thoroughly with severe reproaches, and the sight of his poniard, that he dared no longer be angry; and as soon as D'Aubigné left him went to the king, and told him that his equerry was an honester man than either his majesty or himself; and to give a substantial proof that he no longer harboured any resentment, he caused D'Aubigné to be paid twenty-five hundred crowns, expended by him in journies undertaken by the king's command, of which he never expected to receive any part.*

The Queen of Navarre, on her return to the king her husband, had reconciled herself to every person except D'Aubigné; but neither private friendship, nor personal enmity could bias the integrity of his mind; and therefore being present at a council, where almost all the members advised to have her put to death, he remonstrated so powerfully against the harshness of such a proceeding, that they gave up the design; and the king very warmly acknowledged the obligation he had to him on this occasion, as his majesty was very averse to those violent measures; and it is probable was no less sensible than D'Aubigné, that it would be cruel at a time when the most dissolute manners were become general, if she alone should suffer death for incontinence.†

As D'Aubigné was obliged by his marriage contract to purchase an estate in Poictou, he bought one about this time, notwithstanding the opposition of some of the King of Navarre's servants, who judged it dangerous to suffer him to increase his possessions and interest in that province; but he made them ashamed of inducing his majesty to interfere in affairs so trifling. The king had been strongly advised, for the same reason, to prevent his marriage with Madem. de Lezay; but he showed himself superior to such counsel: if he more easily complied with it in the latter transaction it is not strange, as the purchase of an estate could not appear to him so important to D'Aubigné's happiness as the success of his love; for Henry's great susceptibility in that article, might naturally make him feel too much for others, to be easily persuaded to disappoint a faithful servant, in a particular where his heart was so deeply interested. Though D'Aubigné secured his purchase, his thoughts were soon taken off from his private affairs.

The apprehensions of an union between the two kings, hastened the proceedings of the leaguers; who by the power of money, rather than by force of arms, got possession of a great many towns; while the King of France opposed them only by proclamations and declarations, which proved of no service to him.* The desire he had to gain over the King of Navarre led him to consent that the Huguenots should retain their cautionary towns two years longer, the term stipulated being nearly expired; but they had refused to deliver them up, as the articles of the treaty by which they were granted had not been performed.

The league published a manifesto, whereby it appeared that their views were not confined to religion, but extended even to the king, under the mask of reforming the government.† A private league was entered into by some of the citizens of Paris, whereby they obliged themselves to inform the Duke of Guise of every thing that passed; and dividing the city into sixteen parts, appointed persons who should each in his district keep a constant watch; and also make it his business to spread every sort of calumny that could increase the people's hatred of, and contempt for the king. From this division of the city arose the name of the league of sixteen, an association greatly prejudicial to the king's affairs.‡

The manifesto of the league containing several scandalous aspersions on the King of Navarre, he published an answer wherein he refuted them; and declaring such calumnies false and base, he offered to decide the difference between him and the league, by single combat with the Duke of Guise; or by two, or ten, on each side; to save the effusion of the best blood of France, and that the people might be no longer afflicted with civil wars. But his challenge was not accepted.§

The Huguenots had the satisfaction of seeing their enemies at variance, and engaged in a kind of covert war with each other; some of the Catholics adhered to the king, but far the greater part entered into the league. The King of Navarre's council was divided as to the part he ought to act; he therefore assembled the principal of the Huguenots to consult with them on

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 76. † Ibid. p. 77.

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 134, 135. De Thou, tom. vi. liv. 81. p. 456.
† Ibid. p. 454.
‡ Pere Dan tom. vi. p. 142. Cayet, tom. i. p. 12.
§ Cayet, tom. i. p. 8.

the point. The assembly consisted of sixty persons, and he desired them to advise whether it was more eligible for them to sit as calm spectators of the disturbances in France, mixing some of their troops in the king's armies, without name, and without authority; or to fight separately in his cause; and seize such opportunities as should offer of strengthening themselves.

The Viscount de Turenne being first called upon to speak, expatiated on the propriety of waiting for further provocation, in order to give a stronger colour of justice to their arms; observed that by strengthening the king's forces under hand, their humility and moderation would recommend them to his favour; but that more formidable proceedings, by exciting his fears, would render them the objects of his hatred; and induce him to join with the leaguers to their destruction; against whom they had not sufficient means of defence. Twenty of the assembly had declared themselves of the viscount's opinion; when D'Aubigné was required to speak his thoughts on the occasion; which he did to the following effect:

"If truth were not at this time more needful than discretion, the honour and respect due to those who have already spoken would oblige me to keep silence; but the oath I have taken to God, to his cause, and to you, sire, force me to declare, that in my opinion, to doubt the justice of the occasion of our former wars, is to trample under foot the ashes of our martyrs, and the blood of our valiant soldiers; to cover with ignominy the tombs of our deceased princes, and noble commanders; and to condemn to the death of traitors those who still live, and have dedicated their lives to God. It is even calling in question his justice who has so far blessed their arms with success, as to enable them to treat with kings on the common rights of mankind; to curb the violent persecutions with which they were in all places afflicted, and obtain some seasons of peace for their church and their country. It is even charging this assembly with treason; for how could we dare to meet here to deliberate on the choice of peace or war, were we not well assured of the justness of our cause? This is no season to employ ourselves in a retrospective view of past events, which can present us nothing but churches, towns, and families ruined, by the perfidy of our enemies, and the pusillanimity of those who sought to excuse themselves from the labours and dangers to which God is sometimes pleased to call his servants. If you arm, the king, we are told, will fear you; and that if he fears he will hate you: —would to God that hatred was yet to begin!—If he hates you he will destroy you.—If we have not yet felt the power of that hatred, very useful has been the fear which has prevented its effects. Happy will those be, who by inspiring fear shall prevent their ruin! wretched those who draw it upon themselves by becoming objects of contempt. In my opinion, we ought not to be alone unarmed, while all France is in arms; nor to permit our soldiers to swear obedience, to those who have sworn our destruction. Shall we teach them to reverence the men whom self-preservation obliges them to kill? and to march under those banners against which they should direct their fire? Consider how contrary the lessons they learn in the different parties: there they would fight for pay; with us the only reward is a consciousness of having defended a just cause, and the interests of our religion; there they would enjoy the pleasures of life; here unceasing labour. The desire of glory is the great incentive to excellence in every art, but more especially in the art of war. Shall our young nobility behold among us only examples of ignominious supineness; while they see our enemies acquiring honour! We may sink their courage below the lowest of the vulgar; but how shall we again inspire with valour, hearts so depressed and abject? What is to become of our princes of the blood, and the principal noblemen of our party? Shall they give to their most inveterate enemies the troops, and the authority, which they have gained by heroic actions? What confidence can be placed in them by new soldiers, who have never been witnesses of their valour? Shall they annihilate their natural dignity? for they must either debase it by submission, or lose their honour by their indolence. We are told we must show our humility——but let not the proofs of it be accompanied by meanness. Let us remain capable of serving the king, when his distresses call upon us; and of serving ourselves likewise, when we are distressed; at a proper season let us bend our knees to him; and swear fidelity with our gauntlets in our hands; let us lay our victories, not our fears, at his feet. Our destruction is the pretence on which the leaguers have shaken off the king's authority: it is therefore necessary that our swords should awe those whom the sceptre cannot control. Let not them reap the advantage of our attachment to the king; it is sufficient if we serve him in a collective body, who would wish to dissipate and reduce us to nothing. I shall conclude therefore with observing, that if we remain unarmed, the king will despise us; contempt for us will induce him to join our enemies; when united they will attack, and easily destroy us, unprepared for defence. If we take up arms, we shall become considerable in the king's eyes, his esteem for us will lead him to apply for our assistance; and thus strengthened we shall reduce our enemies to reason."

The King of Navarre found D'Aubigné's arguments much more agreeable to his na-

tural valour, than the tame advice given by the Viscount de Turenne; and with ardour signified his approbation; which it is probable had a greater share in bringing the assembly to vote for war, than all D'Aubigné's arguments.* Commissions for raising regiments were immediately signed; D'Aubigné was among the number to whom they were given; and Saintonge and Poictou were the provinces of his destination, where the prince of Condé was to be commander in chief.

D'Aubigné left the court without delay; and a week after he had received his commission, while he was gathering recruits in l'Angoumois, being informed that La Motte, at the head of four regiments of Catholic soldiers, was near, and intended to interrupt him in his business, he agreed with St. Gelais to attack him in the town of Contre, where he had fixed his quarters. D'Aubigné had one hundred and twenty musketeers; St. Gelais forty-five horse. As they proceeded to the execution of their design, their scouts found two of La Motte's regiments well intrenched at St. Mande, and supposing them to be only a party of freebooters, charged them; but were so warmly received, that D'Aubigné found it necessary to lead his troops to sustain them, the enemy consisting of above two hundred infantry, advantageously situated, and well intrenched. By a vigorous attack he drove them from their intrenchments; but they taking refuge in the houses, defended themselves so well, that almost every house cost D'Aubigné a battle; and by delaying his progress, gave time to La Grange, the enemy's commanding officer, to collect together forty of his men, to regain the house from whence he had been driven; and to add to the strength of his intrenchments. It now became necessary for D'Aubigne to rally his men, in order to retake the house he had thus left; but the soldiers were so eagerly engaged in pillaging those they had taken, that it was not possible for him to gather twenty of them to join him. In this extremity, that his small number might not be discerned, he made his attack on the house which La Grange had fortified, by breaking through the wall of the adjacent house, and set it on fire.

During two hours which this fight had continued in the town, some persons who had fled, acquainted La Motte with what was going forward; whereupon quitting Contre with two hundred and sixty musketeers, he marched to St. Mande. On his approach, St. Gelais, perceiving his own men were in too great disorder to be of much service, sent to advertise D'Aubigné that it was necessary he should retire immediately from the town; but his advice could not be followed; D'Aubigné having taken by capitulation the house to which Le Grange had retired, was then bringing out the captain and soldiers from the burning house; and his men were so dispersed, and so eagerly employed in plundering, that they could not either with ease or speed be collected together. All therefore that he could do was to send Le Grange, and two thirds of those who had surrendered with him, to St. Gelais; who endeavoured to rally such as in a disorderly manner came out of the town. La Motte being arrived, gave so vigorous a charge. that he drove D'Aubigné, with eighteen of his companions, into the house which was in flames, where there remained thirteen of the Catholics, who had not had time to get out of it. In this desperate situation some advised the putting to death the thirteen Catholics, as dangerous companions; but such a proceeding was so contrary to D'Aubigné's generous nature, that even danger could not reconcile him to it; he therefore, having first disarmed, then employed them in a garret, in using all the means in their power to extinguish the fire; placing two soldiers to guard them, with muskets ready charged, to fire if they attempted to give any assistance to the enemy without. The great house being in flames, those who from assailants were now become the assailed, had no place from whence they could make any defence but an adjoining shed, the door of which was burnt down, and in its place lay two dead bodies, burning one on the other; where they were attacked by La Motte, after he had thrown up some intrenchments to defend the town from any attempts St. Gelais might make upon it. D'Aubigné had employed that time in the like manner, in order to render the shed more defensible; but seeing the enemy advance, he turned to his companions, and crying out, "Die we must; but let us die nobly;" he took a halbert in his hand, and some of the others doing the same, they received La Motte's charge, and killed nine of his men. At the second charge they slew seven: and when the enemy would have made a third, the soldiers not liking so desperate a service, would not come on, but cried out, "The fire will do the business; they will burn in their hole like foxes."

Another company more bold, attacked the opening where the door had been, which was stopped up by the two dead bodies, and there found only D'Aubigné and one more to defend it; but they having killed the two first that advanced, their additional bodies served as a rampart to the defendants, and discouraged any further assault: but they were still exposed to other dangers, for they had now to fight with fire and stones, which from the great house, where the fire was in good measure subdued, were thrown on them in such abundance, that they must have been suffocated,

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 430.

had there not been close to the shed a little court, where each went alternately to take breath.

La Motte, although he saw the street covered with the dead bodies of his men, had compassion on his brave enemies, and sent them bread and wine; beseeching them to experience his clemency; and informing them that St. Gelais had twice attacked the intrenchments; but having been followed by few of his men, had neither power nor hope to succour his friends: which was indeed so truly the case, that he remained in his post in expectation of some succours, not to assist, but to revenge his friends, who he supposed were reduced to ashes; till one of La Motte's soldiers informd him of the contrary, by calling out to an acquaintance in St. Gelais' troop, that the besieged could hold out no longer. St. Gelais understanding by this that his friends were still alive, encouraged his men so effectually to renew the assault, that a capitulation was agreed to by La Motte; whereby La Grange and his companions were to be exchanged for D'Aubigné and his party: but D'Aubigné, sensible that the enemy was reduced into a state far less formidable than at first, and having nothing more to fear from the fire which was extinguished, refused to consent to this agreement. The fight having continued eleven hours, and La Motte being as much tired of it as the rest of the combatants, consented to another kind of capitulation; whereby he agreed to go half a league from the town till D'Aubigné had carried off such of the dead as he chose; and then La Motte was to fetch those who had been slain on his side. In this fight were killed of the Huguenots, three gentlemen of rank, sixteen common men, and thirty wounded. Of the Catholics fell one hundred and sixty on the place; and thirty-five at St. Fresne the next day, where they were pursued by the Prince of Condé; who had come, though too late, from St. Jean's to the assistance of D'Aubigné.*

Ten days after this dangerous enterprise, D'Aubigné and St. Gelais arrived at Brion, the former with but fifteen horse musketeers, and the latter with only his usual train of attendants, all together amounting to twenty-eight, as three companies of foot of the leaguer's troops were beginning to fix their lodgments in that town, designing to proceed to Brouage. With his musketeers D'Aubigné forced two houses: and St. Gelais halting where the smallness of his numbers was concealed from the enemy's view by some trees, after beating a parley, summoned the Catholic captains to surrender, in terms so high, that not doubting his superior strength, they capitulated, and agreed to deliver up their arms, to ask pardon on their knees of God and the king, for having been traitors to his majesty and the state; to which St. Gelais made them add under their hands, that they renounced the detestable article of the council of Constance, which says that no faith is to be kept with heretics.

They were then suffered to leave the town in separate companies, forty unarmed, who went to Brouage; seventy with their swords on, who retired to their own houses; and about sixty, to whom their arms were restored, on condition that they should use them in the king's service.*

When D'Aubigné had completed his regiment, he repaired to the Prince of Condé, who was then at the head of a small body of troops in Poictou. The Duke de Mercœur commanded those of the league in the same province. Each was sensible of the weakness of his little army; though the duke's was superior in number to the prince's; and both were backward to engage: they continued encamped three days at no great distance from each other, but separated by the river Sevre, which neither dared venture to pass. D'Aubigné, who was then camp-master to the prince, could not reconcile himself to this state of inaction, and desired he might be suffered to make a feint of encamping near Coulonge les Reaux, where the duke had appointed, for the next day, a general rendezvous of his army; observing, that by this means the duke's courage and resolution would be tried, and they would better know what measures to pursue: that if the duke continued his purpose, undisturbed at so unexpected an obstruction, the party he should lead might retire without any disgrace to the prince; whose honour would not be engaged in it, as it would only pass for a small excursion; so usual to little parties in an army.

The Prince of Condé approving of his proposal, D'Aubigné posted the Prince de Genevois at St. Massire, with upwards of five hundred horse; and leaving quartermasters properly accompanied, at Coulonge, to carry on the feint, he set out with twenty-five chosen horse on the road to Fontenai, where the Duke de Mercœur was encamped; and meeting near Chassenon with forty of the enemy's horse, who had been sent to make observation while the army was preparing to decamp, D'Aubigné made his trumpet sound a charge at a considerable distance; and as the parts through which he marched were too woody for their numbers to be discerned, the enemy, ignorant of the strength that approached, turned back, and betook themselves to flight, till meeting with another troop, the addition gave them courage to halt. D'Aubigné having pursued them no further than the country afforded him the means of concealing the weak-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 432.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 433.

ness of his party, sent with all speed to the Prince de Genevois to advance to Coulonge; and at the same time dispatched intelligence to the Prince of Condé, who having held himself ready to march, came thither that night.

The prince sent the next morning to offer battle to the duke; who appointed for the place of engagement, the park of the Jacobins of Fontenai. The two armies drew up in view of each other, but the day passed away in bravadoes, and the prince marched in the evening to Coulonge; the enemies, counselled by their fears, took advantage of the night to quit their post, and retired with great precipitation and disorder towards Nantz: the prince not inclined to hazard the certain advantages accruing to him from the duke's leaving the province, did not attempt to pursue him; but two companies of soldiers following without orders, plundered all the baggage of the duke's little army, killed fifty of his men, and brought away many prisoners *

The Count de Brissac still remained at the head of a considerable body of the leaguer's troops in Poictou; but D'Aubigné having obtained permission to harass them with fifty horse under his command, he defeated some small parties; and receiving information that a strong corps, commanded by captain St. Catherine, was posted in a concealed place, convenient for the purpose, with a design of falling on his small band, and taking them by surprise; he applied to some of the neighbouring Huguenots for reinforcements; and thus strengthened, he and St. Gelais marching all night, took the enemy as it were in his own snare, surprising those in ambuscade, and surrounding them in such a manner that they could not escape; the quarter they asked was granted, on condition that they should renounce the league. St. Catherine and most of his men entered immediately into the Prince of Condé's service, and never after quitted it. Those who would not follow his example had their lives given them, but were disarmed. These successes, important in their consequences, gave so great an alarm to the count, that he used all speed to pass the Loire; considering that river as a good barrier between him and the prince's army.† Thus in fact, the prince owed to D'Aubigné the great advantage of remaining master of the province of Poictou; which an enemy far stronger than himself abandoned to him. The marriage of the Prince of Condé with Madem. de la Trimouille was newly agreed upon; and by that alliance the Duke de Thouars her brother was brought over to the reformed.

The Prince of Condé thus become master of the field, laid siege to Brouage; D'Aubigné was posted at St. Aignan; having under his command his own regiment, his company of light horse, and six companies of horse musketeers, to prevent any succours entering the town through the marshes between that post and the sea. All things bore a favourable appearance, and the operations were carried on with good success, when the prince received an account that the castle of Angers was taken by a few men of his party; who not sufficient to maintain it, desired to be immediately succoured. As the possession of so considerable a place was important to the party, the intelligence was not neglected: a council was called; and it was there determined to send D'Aubigné with all speed, at the head of near eleven hundred men, to secure the conquest; giving him in charge, at all hazards, to throw some succours into the castle. He set out accordingly at break of day, but was overtaken at Tonai-Charante, by a messenger from the Prince of Condé, who brought him counter orders.

The night after D'Aubigné's departure, as the Prince of Condé was undressing, attended by his servants, one of them, who had more influence than men of greater rank and wisdom, told him that he wondered his highness should give to another the honour of such an undertaking; that it was an enterprise worthy of the Prince of Condé; and promised too much glory to be committed to other hands than his own. The prince, equally unwilling to lose, or to give to another, an opportunity of acquiring honour, immediately determined, contrary to the resolution taken in council, to march himself to the succour of Angers; and in consequence remanded D'Aubigné. This change of measures occasioned a destructive delay; the prince spent eleven days in preparing for the expedition; and during that period, some places, which would have facilitated D'Aubigné's march, at the time he set out, fell into the hands of the Catholics; and the Marshal de Matignon was making advances to the relief of Brouage.

On the 8th of October the prince began his march at the head of about two thousand horse, leaving the rest of his army at the siege of Brouage. D'Aubigné led the van, and as they approached Chiché, meeting three regiments that were advancing to enter the castle of Chiché, he charged and defeated them; and the castle being then scaled, the Prince of Condé left a small garrison in it.* Five days after, arriving by break of day at the abbey of St. Maur, on the banks of the Loire, D'Aubigné drove out a guard of Angevin gentlemen who defended it; and having seized the place, the prince left one hundred and twenty

* De Thou, tom. vi. p. 523. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 435.

† Ibid. p. 436. De Thou, tom. vi. p. 524.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 443.

men to preserve the possession.* When they arrived at the town of Beaufort, D'Aubigné descried at a distance a regiment of the enemy's troops, commanded by Caravas, marching towards the town, with an intention of entering it; but D'Aubigné placing some of his men on an eminence, to retard the march of Caravas, he with the rest attacked the town, and reduced the inhabitants to deliver him up the keys; which on the Prince of Condé's approach he presented to him. He would have charged Caravas, but the prince forbade it, saying, he was one of his friends; but the event proved his mistake, as Caravas was very active in the siege of the castle of Angers. The day following the prince was joined by Monsieur de Clermont, with a reinforcement of near eight hundred men. After halting five days at Beaufort, the army proceeded on its march, and reaching Foudon, D'Aubigné defeated a regiment placed there to guard the passage; and on the 21st of October the army arrived at Angers; where they found the town possessed by six thousand of the enemy.†

The prince having appointed the place where his troops should encamp, D'Aubigné had a wide circuit to make in order to get to the post assigned him. As he advanced with part of his men, he was met by the Count de Brissac at the head of sixty horse; two hundred more were placed at a little distance to support him, who was come out of the town to meet a reinforcement which he expected under the command of D'Aubigné-D'Anjou, a captain in the Catholic army. Brissac on his approach, as usual in encountering a party where any doubt can be made whether they are friends or foes, called out, "Qui vive?" The soldiers who were foremost, replied, "Vive le Roi;" but as Brissac knew that since the enmity that had arisen between the king and the league, the Huguenots had made use of that term, he required the name of their commander; to which being answered, D'Aubigné, he halted till they came very near him; when thinking the soldiers had not the air of new levied troops, he desired their chief would advance, that he might speak to him; with which D'Aubigné having complied, Brissac discovered the mistake by the sound of his voice, for in person the two D'Aubignés bore great resemblance to each other, and retired with precipitation to the town; but so closely followed by D'Aubigné, and his little party, that they entered the suburbs together with the Catholics; forced two barricades, and some houses; but were stopped from further progress by the next barricade being set on fire; and two houses that flanked it being well filled with soldiers, to increase the obstruction by the additional fire of their muskets.*

The Prince of Condé having good reason to believe that the castle had been delivered up to the Catholic army, withdrew his forces to some distance; and sent orders to D'Aubigné to quit the post he had gained, and return to the rest of the army. D'Aubigné having experienced the great versatility of the counsels which then prevailed, and suspecting that the next day might produce a contrary opinion, returned for answer, that if his highness intended to withdraw the whole army, he approved his design, but if he had any intention of making a further attempt on Angers, he could not hope to regain the next day the post he was then in, even with the loss of a thousand men; and that he would not remove from the place he was entrenching, except he received the order by one of the camp-masters. Hereupon St. Gelais was sent to him with a repetition of the order; and he withdrew his men from the town, though not without a renewal of the fight; as he would carry off not only the wounded, but the bodies of such of his party as had been slain.

The following day, as D'Aubigné had foreseen, a resolution was taken to attack Angers, and he was ordered to regain the post he had quitted. After having declared the attempt to be most desperate, he made his captains join hands with him in token of a promise to perish with him in the attack, rather than give ground: above a hundred gentlemen of other regiments, seeing these so resolute, joined them; some actuated by affection for D'Aubigné, others by a mad desire to distinguish themselves: but as they were proceeding to almost certain destruction, the Duke de Rohan, moved by a noble frankness natural to him, reproached the prince so severely for the inconstancy of his resolutions, and for exposing so wantonly the lives of his brave soldiers, that he gave up his design, and a retreat was agreed upon; which Clermont and D'Aubigné were ordered to make good: an hazardous employment; and the reasons given for assigning it to them were, that if some must be exposed to so great a danger, the properest persons were Clermont, because he had acted injudiciously on the first taking the castle, in not giving timely assistance, as he might have done, to those who had seized it; and D'Aubigné, who was only a kind of an auxiliary in that army, belonging particularly to the King of Navarre.†

The difficult service required of these two officers, became the more hazardous, by the boldness with which the knowledge

* De Thou, tom. vi. p. 532.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5, p. 444. Davila, lib. 8. p. 418.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 445. De Thou, tom. vi. p. 533.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 446.

of the prince's retreat with the chief part of his army, had inspired those in Angers, who were not slow in endeavouring to harass troops thus exposed to their attacks. In this extremity, having examined the road they were to take, D'Aubigné desired Clermont to leave him a small party, and to conduct the rest to the army; hoping by by that means to perform the business with the loss of fewer lives; to which his companion readily agreed. D'Aubigné had observed a small town, named Sourgues, about half a league distant from Angers, to which he directed his march; harassed all the way by the enemy who followed him closely, and obliged him to call up all his skill and conduct to defend himself from them. By the advantageous disposition of his men, and in some measure by their being concealed under the clouds of smoke, occasioned by continual firing for that purpose, he reached Sourgues without suffering any loss, or his numbers being discovered. He made a feint of intrenching himself there, and permitted some peasants to go to the enemy's camp, who reported how he was employed. By causing all his drums to beat, and trumpets to sound, he made them imagine his force far greater than it was. They prepared every requisite for an attack on the place in the night, which they had little doubt of forcing by means of a good train of artillery; but D'Aubigné's opinion of the facility of the enterprise agreed too well with theirs to admit of his waiting for them; therefore, after driving all the inhabitants out of the town, in the close of the evening he led out his men through byways into the road to Mazai; where he arrived an hour before break of day, though not without being overtaken by a strong body of horse, which his disappointed enemies had detached in pursuit of him; but reached him only as he entered the town.*

When D'Aubigné joined the main army, he found the Prince of Condé, who had wasted some time at Beaufort in composing the quarrels of his officers, in the utmost consternation, the enemy having sent some troops to Saumur to intercept his retreat. Confusion reigned in his council; every person giving different, and frequently contrary advice, so that no determination could be formed. In this perplexity D'Aubigné declared, that if they would trust to him he would save both their honour and their baggage. His design was with five hundred chosen men to seize with the utmost expedition on St. Dié and le Sevre, small towns, but surrounded with good walls, towers, and in part with ditches, and well furnished with smiths and saddlers, whose assistance was then extremely necessary for the preservation of their horses. St. Dié was on the banks of the river Sez, and le Sevre on those of the Loire; whereby their passage on those rivers would be greatly facilitated. Their situation was too desperate to suffer them to hesitate on accepting any means offered for their safety; but as D'Aubigné well knew how variable the prince's counsels had been, he exacted an oath from him and his officers, that they would not fail in the execution of the plan he traced out for them; and that in the evening of the next day, they would send him the five hundred men, already mentioned, to the chapel of St. Martin; the prince and the rest of his army going the same night to St. Anne.

This being agreed upon, D'Aubigné with Bois-du-lis, Donciniere, and four others, embarked on the Loire, disguised as traders in wine; and having discovered certain means of seizing the two towns, they learnt that nine hundred Germans were arived at Nouan with intention to join the enemy. This made some alteration in their design; and he and Bois-du-lis determined that one of them should with one hundred and twenty of the five hundred men that were to meet them at St. Martin, seize St. Dié; and the other with the remainder attack the Germans; whom by the favour of a surprise they did not doubt but they should rout and disperse; and that during the consternation which the flying Germans would occasion, the prince's army might more easily pass the river, and penetrate into the province of Berri. Leaving therefore some soldiers to guard six great boats in which they had passed, they went to the chapel of St. Martin; but when they arrived there they found not the troops that had been promised them; nor did they learn the cause of their disappointment till the evening of the following day.*

As the prince of Condé was marching towards St. Anne, Mons. de Rosni, afterwards Duke de Sully, was brought him as a prisoner, having been taken as one of the Catholic party; for which he had passed, in order to travel with the greater security through provinces that belonged to the enemy: he gave the prince so terrible an account of the formidable armies of the league, with which all the adjacent provinces were filled, as, joined with the alarm he had conceived at being closely pursued by the troops from Angers, the information of a junction between the king and the leaguers, and a very severe edict published just then at Paris against the Huguenots in consequence of it, proved sufficient to deprive the prince and his army of all hope of escaping from their surrounding enemies; and the Duke de Rohan, who had not taken the oath to D'Aubigné, prevailed on the prince to retire privately from the army, with a few officers, who could guide him through the least frequented ways; and thus to provide for his own safety. In pursuance of this

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 448.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 448.

advice he escaped into Bretagne, from thence into the Isle of Guernsey, and then into England. The Duke de Rohan retired to his own house.*

St. Gelais, though solicited to accompany the prince, alleged the oath he had taken to his friend; and instead of seeking his private safety in conjunction with his highness, undertook to be the conductor of the distressed army, thus abandoned by its chiefs. But the delay occasioned by this change of measures, had given the enemy time to fill St. Dié with soldiers; and D'Aubigné and Bois-du-lis, having received information of what had passed, set out to meet St. Gelais, and came up with him, as he and his frighted troops had reached the forest of Marché-noire, where the greatest part of his soldiers had cast away their arms; having no other hope of preservation but from dispersing, each seeking separately his own safety. Bois-du-lis, by means of some acquaintance he had in that part of the country, conducted St. Gelais, and a party of officers into Berri, without meeting with any opposition. Thirty officers put themselves under the conduct of D'Aubigné; who having gathered together as many of the soldiers, who were all dispersed into different parts of the forest, as he could collect, advised them to pass the day there; at night to penetrate into La Beausse; and before break of day to seek for barns, or some other places of concealment, till the return of night should again set them at liberty; when their best course would be to enter privately, three or four only together, into the suburbs of Paris. They followed his instructions, and got unobserved into Paris without the loss of one man.†

D'Aubigné, who designed to repair to the army left at the siege of Brouage, among which was part of his regiment, had a much longer course before him, and every thing to discourage him from undertaking it; for all the circumjacent country was filled with Catholic troops; but thinking his duty called him to join his regiment, no dangers could deter him from the attempt. With his thirty companions he passed the forest; and took shelter in a barn near the village of Chezé, with an intention to conceal himself there till the close of day; but in less than two hours he saw four companies of Italian soldiers galloping towards his retreat; two of which soon surrounded it, while the others kept at some distance. His companions would have had recourse to barricading the barn; but D'Aubigné, crying out "that was no place for such measures," mounted his horse, and six of his friends doing the same, they attacked their besiegers, and broke their way through them. D'Aubigné's eyes being filled with dust, he pursued his course as far as Chezé, without seeing how he was accompanied; but having there recovered his sight, he perceived that only five of his companions were with him, one of those who had at first joined him having been taken, and no others following the example set them. Being informed that the rest of his friends were besieged in the barn by the Italians, he was preparing to go to their relief, when four Catholic soldiers entered the village conducting eighteen Huguenot prisoners, whom they had not deprived of their swords; these were easily delivered from their captors, and D'Aubigné making them draw their swords, and change the humble mortified countenances of prisoners into an air of more intrepidity, returned with this reinforcement to the assistance of his companions; and charging the Italians, delivered the besieged. As they were marching towards the forest, they met in a covert way a small party of the enemy, consisting of thirty horse; which having defeated, and taken the commander, D'Aubigné let him depart, on a promise that he would cause the gentleman who had been taken in the sally from the barn, to be restored to them. He told his friends, that had this officer been a person of greater power and consequence, the best thing they could have done would have been to constitute themselves his prisoners, in order to secure his protection; upon which the eighteen, whom he had rescued out of the hands of the Catholics, complained that when they had found such a protector he had taken them from him; and leaving this desperate troop, went in search of some person who would accept of them again in the like manner. D'Aubigné and his friends had the same point in view, and wandered about in Beausse and Vandomois, surrounded with dangers; during which time they defeated two other troops of the enemy, seeking only some person of sufficient rank and authority to secure their lives if they submitted to him. After having passed ten days, marching all night and concealing themselves in the day in forests and unfrequented places; yet often attacked by small parties of the enemy; they got to the banks of the Loire, over-against St. Dié, where D'Aubigné had some property, and some friends. This encouraged him to think he might be received into the town; but as he would not hazard the lives of his companions, he determined to make the experiment alone. He told them, that if when he was on the other side of the water he gave them a signal, they should come over to him on the return of the passage boat: and if he did not they should go to a fisherman to whom he directed them, and who had furnished him with the boats he had

* De Thou, tom. vi. p. 534. Œconomies Royales, &c., de Sully, tom. i. p. 215. Dav. lib. 8. p. 420. Cayet, tom. i. p. 11.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 449.

used in the beginning of his expedition; and by tying two boats together pass all over in the night, and proceed to Saumeri, where he was well assured they would find a safe retreat, for such time as was requisite to refresh them.

Having given these instructions, he left them concealed behind a causeway, (except one who stood on the higher ground to watch his success) and entered into the ferry boat with several other passengers. Before he had got half way over the river, inquiring the cause of the smoke he saw on the oppnsite shore, he was told it came from a post where the people of St. Dié were obliged to keep a guard of twenty men. This intelligence alarmed him; but to return was impossible; his only hope therefore was that he might find some friend of his among them. But before he landed, a quarrel having happened between two officers in the town, one of them was come at the head of about twenty men to join the guard, swearing the destruction of the first Huguenot he should meet. D'Aubigné, now quite hopeless, after having said a short prayer, and the second verse of the hundred and forty-second Psalm, "I poured out my complaints before him, and showed him all my trouble," landed in the midst of this troop; but having with him a Neapolitan courser, a spirited and furious beast, which had been sent him as a present, it no sooner set its two fore feet on land than it cut so many capers, and kicked with its hinder feet in such a manner, as quickly dispersed all the people who had gathered about the boat. D'Aubigné calling out to them to take care of themselves, vaulted into the saddle, and hearing some of them speak his name, he drew his sword, and breaking through them, rode away with his utmost speed; while they fired after him without doing him any damage; nor could they attempt to pursue him till they returned to the town for their horses; which gave him leisure to get beyond their reach.

His friends having seen what had passed, laid aside all thoughts of going the same road; but crossed the river by means of the boats he had indicated to them; and proceeding to Saumeri found him there, ready to receive them; and by a stroke of additional good fortune, met the officer who had been taken prisoner near Chezé, and having made his escape, passed the river with them. With little less danger they crossed Berri, le Limousin, Poicton, and Saintonge; being obliged by the depth of the rivers in their road to travel to their sources; and at length, without having disguised themselves by wearing the enemies colours, without being favoured by any safe places of retreat, but not without being obliged to fight several times, they arrived at Brouage, as the Huguenot army was raising the siege, on the approach of the Marshal de Matignon; which was not till the end of October.*

Then only were the Huguenots certainly informed of the union between the King of France and the leaguers. It was agreed in the month of July; an edict had passed whereby was annulled all that had been before published in favour of the reformed, and their ministers were commanded to leave the kingdom on pain of death. The laity were summoned to abjure their religion, and make an open profession of the Catholic faith within six months, or to depart out of his majesty's dominions.† All the proceedings of the leaguers were acknowledged as done for the king's service, on condition that they laid down their arms, and for the future relinquished all leagues and association whatsoever, whether within or without the kingdom. Though the king had entered into this agreement, yet he continued wavering; sensible that he was putting himself into the hands of the Guises, he could not resolve to publish this edict till the month of October, when the dispersion of the Prince of Condé's army had reduced the Reformed into so low a condition, that he saw no prospect of assistance from them; and then, to recompense the leaguers for his delay, he added to it another edict, wherein the fortunes of all who did not abjure within a fortnight were declared to be confiscate; with orders to prosecute those who continued in their heresy, as guilty of treason.

It may easily be imagined that during D'Aubigné's very tedious march from Angers to Brouage, he had no opportunity of informing Madame D'Aubigné of his situation. Common fame reported him to have been killed in the retreat; and for three weeks the melancholy intelligence was frequently confirmed to her; but though, from her knowlege of his great readiness to expose his person to every danger, the event was but too credible, yet he had been so often amazingly preserved through the most perilous enterprises, that she was not absolutely deprived of hope, till she saw part of his field equipage, fifteen horses, and seven of his baggage mules, on one of which was laid his hat and his sword, enter into the court-yard of her house. This appeared such a confirmation of the dreadful event, that she fainted away and was a considerable time before she could be restored to any sensation. She then learnt that she might still hope, and that the occasion of the return of his equipage, was his having ordered it to follow his regiment, when he retired from the suburbs of Angers, keeping only what was necessary for his immediate use. As soon as he had reached Brouage, and found himself at liberty to return home, he acquainted

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 452.
† Hist. du Connetable de Lesdiguieres, p. 104.

Madame D'Aubigné with his approach; and by letters despatched at different times while on his journey, endeavoured to prevent the bad effects which might arise from sudden and unexpected joy.*

Seeing himself once more in the bosom of his family, where he had not arrived but through an infinite number of dangers, he flattered himself that he should for some time be suffered to receive consolation for the depressed state of his party, from the calm and quiet enjoyment of the society of a wife and children whom he tenderly loved, but whose company he had had but little leisure to enjoy. The Reformed seemed reduced too low to make head against the enemy; being therefore useless to the public, he thought he was at liberty to indulge himself in the gratification of his private affections; and that he had now no other part to act than that of the husband and the father: but he was soon convinced of his error; and Madame D'Aubigné found that the peaceful pleasures of domestic society, were not to be possessed by a woman, married to one of the chiefs of a party. Few of her sex are of so heroic a disposition as to find in the general, or in their own private esteem and admiration of their husbands, a sufficient compensation for the continual fears, which in such situations must oppress their minds. Madame D'Aubigné seems to have been rather a tender, than an heroic wife; and better formed to render his domestic life happy, than to glory in his dangers, and appropriate to herself a share of the honour that he gained at the continual hazard of his life.

The Reformed were never in so desperate a situation as at that time. The King of Navarre was kept inactive, by the hopes the King of France had giving of uniting with him against the leaguers. In this expectation, and to avoid giving umbrage to that prince, the King of Navarre had fixed his residence at Bergerac, without any army under his command. That of the Prince of Condé, by the fatal step he had taken, was entirely dispersed; and most of those who composed it, seeing no standard erected by their own party to which they could repair, and frighted at the punishments denounced against them in the new edict, sought their safety by entering into the Catholic army. The bad success at that time of the Reformed in Holland and Germany, deprived the Huguenots of all hope of foreign succours; and to complete their distress, famine and pestilence were joined to their other evils. The Catholic generals put garrisons in all places adjacent to la Rochelle, and St. Jean d'Angeli, to prevent any provisions being brought to those towns, of which they began then to be in want; and meeting with no enemy there to oppose them, led their troops into Guyenne, where they hoped to get the person of the King of Navarre into their hands.

The prosecutions threatened by the edict began as soon as the term specified arrived;* and the courage of the Huguenots was so much depressed, that many gentlemen of the reformed persuasion in Poictou and Saintonge, entered into private capitulations with the governors of the provinces, to secure the possession of their houses and estates; on which condition, the greater number promised to renounce all connections with their party. But still there remained some who were not so easily intimidated. The Duke de Rohan, the Count de Laval, the Baron de St. Gelais, with a few others of equal rank, and the citizens of Rochelle, as the spring approached, entered into an agreement to recruit their regiments, and give the command of them to D'Aubigné; and by an invitation to accept of it, and to recruit his regiment, soon broke into the plan he had laid down to himself of enjoying a season of domestic peace; which not being willing so immediately to relinquish, he returned for answer, that he was not yet sufficiently recovered from the fatigue of the burden with which they had oppressed him at the retreat from Angers, to be able to support a new weight. But the affection he entertained for those who solicited him, joined to the exhortations of the ministers, who abjured him in the most solemn terms to rear his standard once more, and rouse the depressed spirits of their party, prevailed; and he gathered together the four companies he had under his command at the siege of Angers; the Rochelese having furnished him with arms, ammunition, and baggage mules, necessary for his regiment.*

He appointed Rochefort for the place of his first rendezvous; and in four days time collected eight hundred men. St. Luc had drawn the forces out of Saintonge, in order to charge these new-raised troops; but some reinforcements having increased D'Aubigné's numbers to near fourteen hundred, he marched into Poictou; where Laverdin and Malicorne were well prepared to receive him. Having taken Beauvais-fur-Nyort, and fixed his quarters there, he sought to gain advantage by stratagem, which he could not expect in the open field, against an enemy so much superior to him in strength: he therefore detached fifty men with colours flying, at two o'clock in the afternoon to St. Jean de Marigni, a small town about a league distant from the place where the Catholics were posted; and in the night selected two hundred more, which in separate companies of ten each were to enter privately into the town; having pre-

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 79.

* De Thou, tom. vi. p. 541.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 8.

viously marked out to the captains by heaps of stones the way they were to go, and where they were to post themselves. As he had foreseen, Laverdin, at the break of day, led some of his best troops to give a camisade to St. Jean de Marigni; but finding that those who began the attack met with a very rough reception, and having reason to suspect the stratagem, he suffered himself to be directed by the fears of his troops, and in great confusion hastened back to Nyort. D'Aubigné had at his return from St. Jean a favourable opportunity of surprising a battalion of the enemy at Coué, but his officers opposed his attempting it with so small a force, reproaching him with his rash attack on St. Mandé, and intimating that he would lead them into the like danger. He unwillingly gave up the point, and having led them to their quarters, he, with seven of his most experienced captains, actuated as he acknowledges more by pique than prudence, went privately to Coué, and attacking the principal barricade, forced the guard, and having killed about a dozen of the enemy, returned to his troop with sufficient proof how easily the enterprise might have been effected, had not their fears prevented. But they were still more severely mortified the next day, when they found that they had excited so great a terror in the battalion they had attacked, that it had fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving the baggage behind, and had not acquired courage enough to rally till it arrived at Mirebeau.

D'Aubigné having removed his quarters to La Motte St. Herai, Malicorne apprehended he designed besieging St. Maixant; which determined him to put a strong garrison into it, in order to provide for its defence. As he was conducting them thither, D'Aubigné, who was going to mark out a lodgement for Monsieur de Draqueville's company, accompanied by ten chosen men, met in a small wood an advanced party of Malicorne's troop, consisting of thirty gentlemen of rank; and to their question of "Qui vive?" answered, "Chargé;" upon which the Catholics, believing their enemies much more numerous, fled back to their main body; who on the alarm given drew up in order of battle: but perceiving that they were not pursued, they began to suspect their error; and returning to seek those who had with so little reason excited their fears, found they had turned into another road; where being joined by Draqueville's and another company, they advanced towards Malicorne, who was by that time returning to Nyort; but such of the Reformed as were well mounted came within pistol shot of the enemy, with whom they had some slight skirmishes.

Some of the Reformed who had entered into the Catholic armies, finding that their party began to rise, came over to them; and by such addition D'Aubigné's forces being increased to two thousand men, he took Tors, and some other small places.*

About this time the return of the Prince of Condé to Rochelle gave new courage to his party; and the Rochelese, determining to make an effort towards opening a free access to their town for the communication of provisions, furnished the Count de Laval with artillery and ammunition, sufficient for the attack of the towns, whose garrisons blocked up the passage to Rochelle. They also gave him the command of one of their regiments; to which four hundred foot and some horse being added by Monsieur de Plassac, the count joined D'Aubigné, and they laid siege to Soubize; which being capable of but little resistance, the governor, imprudently, on the word of a relation of his in the Huguenot troops, came into their camp without any previous notice, or safe conduct; and knocking at the chamber door where the besiegers were sitting in council, desired to treat on the terms of a capitulation. His life would have paid the forfeit of his rashness, had not D'Aubigné, more generous than the rest, interested himself for him; but the only conditions he could obtain were, that the people's lives should be spared, and the officers remain prisoners of war. The garrison immediately abandoned the walls, no longer keeping guard; but to prevent any infringement of the terms granted them, D'Aubigné supplied their places, and guarded the town and its inhabitants from any injury from the soldiery. The rest of the places which annoyed Rochelle submitted without resistance.†

However useful these successes might be to the general cause, they did not preserve D'Aubigné from great distress. The expence of maintaining so many men was above his power; unassisted in that particular, he found himself reduced to extreme indigence; unable to provide even for his own support; and sensible that it would be difficult to preserve his authority over a starving soldiery, whom he had not the means of relieving. In this exigence he sought for more plentiful quarters, and determined either to take the Isle of Oleron, or to perish in the attempt. He communiceted his intention to the count de Laval, and Monsieur de Plassac; who considering that island as an useful acquisition to the party, and being strictly united by the bands of friendship with D'Aubigné, promised, if he succeeded, to succour him when the Catholics should endeavour to recover it; which it was to be imagined they would immediately attempt. The count engaged to bring to his aid all the ships of war that were at Rochelle; and Monsieur de Plas-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 10.
† Ibid. p. 11.

sac to send him two companies out of his regiment; on D'Aubigné's giving his word that if he got possession of the island, he would resist all attacks against it for twice twenty-four hours, to give them time to bring the promised succours.

Having procured five vessels, he put on board of them the cannon, the arms, and the ammunition which had been found in Soubise; and which belonged to him, as the artillery led by the Count de Laval had not been made use of; and selecting five hundred from his two thousand men, communicated to them the enterprise on which he was going, without endeavouring to conceal the dangers that attended it: choosing rather to have a few resolute men to assist him, than by increasing his number to hazard an impediment from the fears of any of his companions, he gave permission to such as did not wish to be of the party, to try their fortunes under the conduct of some young captains who came with the Prince of Condé to Rochelle, to whom he recommended them. Two hundred and fifty of them hamstrung their horses, as being then of no use, and refused to leave him, which increased his troop to seven hundred and fifty. Seven companies of those who did not choose to embark in so dangerous an enterprise, were three weeks after defeated by the Catholics.

The fears shown by so many of sharing in this undertaking, might in some measure occasion D'Aubigné's being guilty of a bravado which nearly proved fatal; though it must be allowed he was too much addicted to such sort of imprudences, without being stimulated by an apprehension of appearing too ready to lead others into danger. Expecting to meet with a vigorous opposition on entering the island, he forbade any persons setting foot on the ground before he landed; and embarked in a small boat, accompanied with only one officer, beside Captain du Brou, who rowed it. As he was going to board a vessel which he believed to belong only to fishermen, he discovered that it was a ship of war, commanded by captain Medelin, a brave officer, and in great reputation; who hoisting his sails, bore down on the future governor of Oleron. De Brou immediately cried out, "You are lost! the only chance left us is to pass by the ship's prow:" they accordingly rowed up to it directly; and as they approached very near it, Captain Medelin ordered his soldiers, who were sixty in number, to fire all at once into the boat; but the precipitation with which they executed the order, made them take their aim so ill, that De Brou was the only one wounded; and that so slightly, that having got a little beyond the vessel, he stood up, and called to them, "Go hang yourselves, you villains; you have missed the governor of Oleron:" which drew on them a discharge of cannon, but with as little effect as the first fire. This small party soon after reached the land, and were joined by a few of the troops, who had passed over in other boats; and their appearance proved sufficient to conquer the island; the people running away without attempting to make the least resistance.*

D'Aubigné's first care was to fortify the castle of Oleron, and to separate it from the town; as the extent of the two buildings required a greater number of men to defend them than he had under his command. He raised forty-six barricades, with trenches on each side the castle; and the enemy allowed him longer time for this business than he expected; St. Luc not attempting to recover the island till twelve days after it was taken, but he then landed with five thousand men. On the report of his preparations, Monsieur de Plassac, faithful to his promise, and even exceeding the terms of of it, sent three companies to D'Aubigné; but the plenty they found in the island afforded them a more agreeable employment than fighting, and rendered them of less use than he wished. On St. Luc's landing, D'Aubigné having drawn out his troops, these auxiliaries did not come to their post till three hours after the time appointed, and then in a confused, disorderly manner; nor would they have reached their post before it was seized by the enemy, had not D'Aubigné by skirmishes obstructed the march of the assailants. St. Luc disposed his men in such a manner as to attack D'Aubigné's intrenchments on all sides, at the same time, which his superior numbers rendered by no means difficult. By making their way through the cellars, they gained an entrance into the town near the post where the three new companies were placed; entering within twenty-four of the barricades, which were by this means become useless: D'Aubigné led fresh forces thither, and drove them again out of the town; but they being reinforced, returned; and regained the advantage first obtained, by the want of due order amongst those to whom the defence of that part had been intrusted. St. Luc caused two cannon to be brought from his ships; and the tide running high, his galleys entered the harbour, and assisted him with their fire; while several of D'Aubigné's soldiers walked into the water as high as their girdles, and did great execution among those who rowed the vessels. The fight continued the whole day, and the following night; a full moon affording sufficient light for that purpose.

The Prince of Condé was at that time besieging Dampiere, accompanied by the Count de Labal, and Monsieur de Plassac; who receiving intelligence of what was passing at Oleron, were greatly alarmed for

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 12.

their friend: and the count, to fulfil his promise, repaired with all speed to Rochelle, and in eight hours set sail with thirty ships to his relief; but having taken a large man of war before they reached the island, a dispute arose who should have the glory of carrying it to Rochelle. While they were thus engaged, a galley came up with them, and reported that all contention in Oleron was over, the fire having ceased. Some who were better informed insisted that the enemy's fleet was at their mercy, having none on board to defend it but cabin-boys; which was the real fact: but the multitude prevailed; and the ships all returned to Rochelle, to share the honour of their capture.

The Prince of Condé marched twelve leagues without halting, and arriving at midnight at Chapus, heard that his friends were still defending themselves; but at eight in the morning, St. Luc, worn down with fatigue, and strongly importuned by his officers, withdrew his troops and returned to his ships. Though his enemies were not less tired, they harassed him in his retreat, and took some prisoners, and part of his ammunition. Of the Catholics were killed near four hundred men; the killed and wounded on the other side fell short of fifty.*

St. Luc having divided his forces when he left the island, the Prince of Condé, with Mons. de la Trimouille and the Count de Laval, pursued one of his strongest detachments, wherein the count distinguished himself greatly, and defeated the corps with which he was engaged; but the joy that arose from it was momentary, for two of his brothers were mortally wounded in the fight,† and soon after died in his arms. He had a few days before lost another brother in the same manner. Such accumulated misfortunes overcame his constitution, and he died of grief.‡ Thus within the space of a few days perished the four sons of the brave D'Andelot; inheritors of their father's virtues, and worthy nephews of the noble Admiral de Coligni: an irreparable loss to their party, and a heavy affliction to their friends, among whom none were more sensibly affected than D'Aubigné; but the friendships of the soldier were at that period of short continuance; the sword did not leave to time an opportunity of trying the constancy of the attachment.

The greatest part of the Count de Laval's company entered into D'Aubigné's service, which strengthened his forces; and the people of the island having gathered together a great quantity of provisions to give to St. Luc, who they expected would drive out their conquerors, finding affairs take a contrary turn, brought them to D'Aubigné, telling him at the same time, "Sir, we shall not pretend to disguise the truth; this present was designed for him who should remain master of the island." To render the place more tenable, D'Aubigné erected a citadel, which within a fortnight was in a state of defence; and in three months time it was surrounded with two deep ditches, the one filled with sea water, the other with spring water; and both plentifully stocked with fish of every kind.*

During this time the Reformed took Aussonne, a frontier town of Burgundy, rather by stratagem than by force. The Marshal de Matignon having laid siege to the castle of Castets, which annoyed the people of Bourdeaux, the approach of the King of Navarre, though at the head of but a small force, determined him to raise the siege.† From thence Henry, in whose breast war never extinguished love, nor did love damp his martial ardour, made an excursion to Pau to see his mistress;‡ an imprudence which exposed him to much danger; for the marshal, and the Duke de Mayenne, took every measure to seize him in his return; but he eluded them all, and arrived safely at St. Foix; where being informed that the Baron de St. Gelais was engaged by the Rochelese in an attempt to ruin, or at least to damage the port of Brouage, which was better than their own, he went thither; and exposing his person in every skirmish between the Reformed troops and those of St. Luc, governor of Brouage, he was frequently in extreme danger, but always came off unhurt.§

D'Aubigné, though much molested by the frequent descents made on the island, by the garrison of Brouage, sent a considerable body of troops to the assistance of St. Gelais, which proved very conducive to the success he had in damaging the harbour of that town, and rendering it no longer an object of envy to the mercenary Rochelese, whose view was by that means to bring more trade to their own port.

From Rochelle the King of Navarre passed over into the Isle of Oleron, to visit the fortifications; but would not review the garrison, because the Count de la Rochefoucaut had told him, that he would see among them above two hundred soldiers with scarlet breeches and laced clothes; a token of opulence, which, added to the magnificent entertainments D'Aubigné gave the courtiers, being more inclined to enjoy his newly acquired plenty than to endeavour to provide against a return of indigence, drew upon him the envy of his master and his court; and occasioned him some mortifications; among which was the following.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 15. Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 151.
† Dav. lib. 8. p. 424. De Thou, tom. vi. p. 665.
‡ Cayet, tom. i. p. 26.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 82.
† De Thou, tom. iv. p. 662. Cayet, tom. i. p. 24.
‡ Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 151.
§ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 19.

A youth of a good family in Rochelle, who was a private soldier in Oleron, had refused to obey a corporal in the regiment, and treated him with contempt. The officers met in council, and the disobedience having been proved, as well as the youth's knowledge that the corporal was intitled by his office to command him, he was condemned to be shot; but D'Aubigné, mitigating the sentence, only cashiered him. An aunt of the young man's having got access to the King of Navarre, through the interest of a handsome cousin of her's, complained to him of the rigorous treatment her nephew had received; and the king, readily taking the opportunity this seemed to offer for mortifying D'Aubigné, sent for him by the door-keeper of the council. D'Aubigné, imagining he was summoned to the council to give his advice, on the measures to be taken in consequence of Marshal Biron's approach, of which they had received intelligence, was much surprised to see the youth in question, with the mayor of Rochelle, and twenty other relations, waiting at the door of the council chamber. As soon as D'Aubigné entered, the king began bowing, and in an ironical manner addressed him with, "God preserve you Sertorius, Manlius Torquatus, Cato the Censor; or, if antiquity will furnish you with the name of any other captain still more respectable, God preserve you also under that appellation."

D'Aubigné, piqued at this address, replied, "If any point of discipline is in question, permit me, Sire, to except against your being among my judges; as your dislike to military discipline renders you a party in this affair." The king submitted to the exception, and withdrew. D'Aubigné, as a person accused, refused to take his seat among them, and made his defence standing; in which he confined himself to a few words; saying only, that what he had done was on the young man's refusing obedience to his officer. M. de Voix, who presided in the council, having gathered the votes, began by returning thanks to D'Aubigné for maintaining discipline among his troops; and encouraging him to persevere in the same conduct, added, "One thing only have we to censure in your proceeding, which is, that after having so justly condemned to death a mutinous soldier, you took the liberty to commute his punishment; a privilege alone appertaining to the general." D'Aubigné, very well pleased to be censured only for too great clemency, represented to the council that the rank of governor of Oleron, commander on the sea with which it was environed, with the commission which gave him the power of founding artillery, and of giving battle, entitled him to grant that pardon. The council admitted the justice of his defence; and blamed the king for his averseness to the discipline and police so necessary for the good government of an army.*

D'Aubigné did not long enjoy the satisfaction and plenty which the Isle of Oleron afforded him. St. Luc being informed that the greatest part of the garrison of Oleron were gone to make an attempt on Saintes, contrived, by means of a secret intelligence with some of the inhabitants, to convey, unseen, four hundred men into the island, and conceal them in cellars, and gardens in the town; and then led a small party of forty, or fifty, to attack the village of Orte, where a few days before a little troop of his had been defeated. One of the boats in which he had passed his men could not, like the rest, be got off the sands; and by that means proved of great advantage to him; for D'Aubigné not suspecting any others had approached the shore, imagined he had no enemies to contend with but what that vessel had transported; therefore leaving only seven men in the fort, out of the fourscore which were all he had then in the island, he divided the rest into two bands; and sending one to oppose the enemy at Orte, led the other to a convenient place to cut off their retreat to their vessel; but he soon saw two strong corps between him and the fort. The fear of losing it, rendered him desperate; and determined either to save the place, or to perish in the attempt, he furiously charged those who intercepted his passage, though assisted only by sixteen of his soldiers. But neither death nor victory awaited him; he was overpowered and beaten to the ground; when rising again, and finding it impossible to make his way to the fort, he forced a passage towards the sea shore; but was there also intercepted by another troop, still more numerous. Being now grown entirely desperate, he fought only to sell his life as dearly as he could. His amazing intrepidity inspired his enemies with a desire of saving him; St. Luc, naturally brave, respected courage even in an enemy, and making his men surround him, took him prisoner. He treated him generously, assuring him his life was safe, except the king or queen mother should take him out of his hands †

A reciprocal friendship soon grew on the mutual esteem these two brave men had long entertained for each other; and some little time after D'Aubigné became his prisoner, St. Luc gave him leave on his parole to go to Rochelle, on condition that he should return to Brouage by five o'clock in the evening, on the following Sunday, if not prevented by death or imprisonment. On the Sunday morning a messenger came to Rochelle from St. Luc, to desire D'Aubigné not to return as he had promised; some ships of war from Bourdeaux being

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 85.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 21.

come for him, with letters from the king to St. Luc, denouncing ruin to him and his, if he did not deliver up his prisoner, whose death was determined.

A verbal message of such a nature would by most men have been deemed sufficient; but D'Aubigné did not think his honour disengaged, as his promise had not been remitted to him by the mouth, or hand, of the man to whom he had given it; and like another Regulus, he resolved to sacrifice his life to his honour. His friends at Rochelle would have imprisoned him, as a means of eluding the performance of his promise; but such subtleties, and artful evasions were repugnant to his nature, and he made his escape from them, stealing privately out of the town, and repaired to Brouage, where he saw the vessel waiting for him. St. Luc received him with tears. But his fidelity to his word was greatly rewarded; his regiment took prisoner that same night Monsieur de Guiteaux, the king's lieutenant-general of the isles; and before D'Aubigné went on board the ship which was to carry him to execution, they sent word to St. Luc, that they would regulate their treatment of their prisoner, on that which D'Aubigné should receive. St. Luc rejoiced at this event, made it a plea for not obeying the king's orders; dismissed the ships, and retained his prisoner; whom he in a short time after exchanged for Guiteaux.*

Though D'Aubigné so soon regained his liberty, and during his captivity enjoyed the friendship of St. Luc, yet his capture proved very unfortunate to him; for the King of Navarre, being in extreme want of money, had sold the isle of Oleron to the Catholics; a severe mortification to the man who had gained the possession of it at the great hazard of his life, and kept it by a long course of fatigue and danger. The season of the year not admitting of any military undertaking, D'Aubigné retired to his own house, filled with vexation and resentment; which had so much power over him, that it is probable he might have done the same, had the time of the year been favourable for the field. Though the ill treatment he frequently received from the King of Navarre excited his resentment, yet his anger always bore greater resemblance to a lover's pique, than to that generally conceived by an injured man. There was something so amiable in Henry's manners, that D'Aubigné, even in despite of himself, loved him in the midst of his anger; and while he fancied himself actuated by indignation, his real motive was a desire of gaining his master's esteem, and rendering himself regretted, by showing that he better deserved his favour than many who enjoyed it. In this situation was his mind at the time of which I am speaking; and so strongly did this lover-like pique prevail with him, that notwithstanding the natural love of life, and his tender attachment to his wife and family, he formed a design of taking a final adieu of his master; and then, after rendering him some great and signal service, seek for an honourable death; forcing him to love the memory of the man, whom living he frequently appeared to hate. But this intention was combated by his attachment to his religion; for reflection showed him that its interests were blended with those of the King of Navarre. This difficulty was not easy to overcome; he could not bring himself to a resolution to quit the defence of the religion he professed; his only resource therefore was to profess it no longer; but in one so sincere in his faith, this could not be the work of pique and vexation; they might induce him to wish himself a Catholic, but could not prevent his being a zealous Huguenot: the wish however made him think it possible that the prejudices of education might have influenced him too much; and induced him to examine the point carefully, and try whether he could find sufficient grounds to hope for his salvation in the Romish church. Having dropped some intimation of his design to study the controversial writers of the popish persuasion, Monsieur de St. Luc, and several other Catholic gentlemen of rank, who sincerely wished his conversion, sent him all the most esteemed books on that subject, to the perusal of which he applied very seriously; always preparing himself by an address to the fountain of truth, for light to discover on which side it lay; and endeavouring as much as possible to divest himself of all prejudices that might influence him. We may even suppose that he was not a very partial reader; for if the force of education gave weight on one side, anger, and the consequent desire of being converted, might nearly preponderate. The first he read was a work of Francis Panigarole bishop of Ast; but the stupidity of the performance soon disgusted him. He next perused a book of father Campian's, (the man who was executed in England for conspiring against the life of Queen Elizabeth) entitled Decem rationes; and admired the eloquence of the writer: but as sound reasoning, not elegant language, was the object of his search, it did not answer his purpose; and all the notice he took of it was his changing the title to Decem declamationes. Bellarmin was his next author, and gave him great pleasure; he was charmed with the force and method he found in his writings; and more especially the seeming candour with which he inserted the arguments used by the Reformed pleased him; and he believed he had found the conviction he sought: but on a close examination, the speciousness which had at first startled him, only served to confirm

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 22.

him more strongly in his religion; and his faith was perfectly established by perusing the refutations of Bellarmine by Whiteacre and Lubert. Being asked by the gentlemen who lent him the books in defence of the Romish doctrine, what fruits he had reaped from them, he replied, that "serious application and close attention to the arguments they contained, had dispelled the effects of those false lights they held out, which at first dazzled and confounded him."*

During the time D'Aubigné was thus employed, the affairs of the Reformed were at a low ebb, and the King of France under great perplexity. Though he had entered into the strongest engagements, with the league, yet he could not bring himself to unite sincerely with a set of people, who he knew were not less implacable enemies to him than to the King of Navarre: he was sensible that his interests and Henry's coincided: but as a bigoted Catholic he hated the Huguenots; and was rendered still more averse to an union with them, by a consciousness that he should thereby incur the imputation of a favourer of heretics; and lose the reputation of piety and orthodoxy, which he had long been endeavouring to establish by all the puerile ceremonials and fopperies of religion his superstitious mind could invent. There were, no doubt, weighty objections against either side of the alternative before him, but the worst part he could act was to determine on neither, and to that his natural disposition inclined him. Irresolution was his great characteristic; always wavering between opposite opinions, he never came to any determination; he complied with the league just so far as to strengthen their hands, and increase their power to oppress him; while by doing no more he gave them cause to add contempt to hatred; and he damped the inclination of his friends to serve him, by frequent proofs of his want of either spirit or firmness to support them. The party of Catholic malecontents, at the head of whom was the Marshal Montmorenci, were attached to him more by hatred to the Guises, than affection for his person; but these he had not courage to avow; and they united their arms with those of the King of Navarre; with whom the marshal had made his peace, renewing an alliance which he wished he had never broken. The king had committed the command of an army to the Duke d'Epernon, one of his favourites, called in the language of the times his minions, to whom he gave orders to make war, but weakly, on the Huguenots, avoiding as much as possible to add strength to the leaguers; a plan of conduct which disgraced the duke, rendered the king's insincerity evident, put the kingdom to a vain expense, and harassed and consumed the soldiery.*

This wretched prince, seldom opposed his enemies with any other weapon than his pen, ever publishing justifications of himself against the invectives and abuses circulated through the kingdom by the leaguers; or commencing negotiations which he never brought to a conclusion: measures equally unavailing. The people were too strongly prejudiced against him to listen to the most specious arguments he could urge in defence of his conduct; and the arts of negotiating, so long practised by the queen mother, who guided his proceedings on these occasions, were two well known to deceive any longer. On this hackneyed plan she proposed a conference to the king of Navarre, which he accepted; and part of the winter passed in this employment.

The queen brought with her her usual auxiliaries, the handsomest women in her court; but did not find them of so much service as they had proved at other times. One day, vexed that the King of Navarre refused the terms she offered from the king her son, she cried out, "But what would you have?" Henry, looking at the ladies who accompanied her, replied, "Nothing that I see here."† She pressed him strongly to a change of religion, urging that his succession to the throne depended upon it; and that it was the only means of restoring peace to the kingdom, by taking away the very foundation of the league; but, as usual, Henry referred that affair to a general and free council. She then endeavoured to make him distrust his adherents, insinuating every kind of suspicion of the sincerity of their attachment; and represented the desperate state of his affairs; upon which the Duke de Nevers told him it would better become him to make his court to the king, than to the mayor of Rochelle, where in his greatest necessities he could not impose the smallest tax to supply them. Henry replied, "You are mistaken, sir, I can do every thing I choose at Rochelle; because I choose to do only what I ought."‡ A prince who can say the same with equal sincerity, may indeed boast of uncontrolled authority in his kingdom.

This conference produced no change in the measures of either of the kings; and Catherine returned to her son, to pass the remainder of the winter in feasts and balls; which were also the employment of the King of Navarre's court at that season; Henry endeavouring to conceal his distressed situation, under the mask of mirth and gayety: and so habitual was become the spirit of amusement and dissipation,

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 87.

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 150.
† L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. ii. liv. 5. p. 279.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 23. L'Esprit de Henri IV. 14.

that the melancholy condition of the kingdom could not suppress it; even some of the Huguenot gentlemen caught the contagion, though in general their conduct was more grave and regular. But the pleasures of the court engaged Henry no longer than the season of the year obliged him to a state of inaction, nor did they prevent his calling to mind the long and faithful services of D'Aubigné, with some compunction. His six months absence had given time for the little animosities between him and the king to subside; and that prince, to bring him again to his court, offered to commit to his care a child his mistress had just then borne him; but D'Aubigné returned thanks for the intended honour, without accepting it. He soon after received a proof of the king's regard more agreeable to his disposition.*

The citizens of Rochelle were ever averse to engage in any enterprise beyond the circuit of their own walls; but the garrison in Talmont annoying them, and the King of Navarre being destitute of sufficient force to take the place without their assistance, they agreed to furnish him with artillery (the situation affording them convenient means of transporting it by water) if D'Aubigné, and Mons. de Fouquerolles, on reconnoitring the place, judged it practicable. Henry invited D'Aubigné to share this enterprise; he repaired to him directly, and after having viewed the place, he and his companions declared it might be taken in four days. As Henry made no secret of his intention to besiege it, the garrison was well prepared to receive him, but were reduced to capitulate the third day. He then took Chizé, the Castle of Safai, St. Maixant, Fontenai-le-comte, Maillezais, and Mauleon.†

The Duchess de Loudunois, to whom belonged the towns of Ganache and Beauvois, endeavoured by preserving an exact neutrality between both parties, to keep possession of what she was too weak to defend by force; but the Prince of Genevois, her son, seized on Ganache, and made an attempt on Beauvois, which proved so unsuccessful, that he was taken prisoner; but by the King of Navarre's intercession, the Dutchess restored her son's liberty, and put the town under Henry's protection; the increased strength of the Huguenots in that province then giving her courage to espouse that party, with whom she agreed in the articles of religion.‡

In the greatest part of these expeditions D'Aubigné had no share, having fallen sick soon after the taking of Talmont, and continuing dangerously ill for near four months.§

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 88.
† De Thou. tom. vi. p. 4.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 40.
§ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 88.

While Henry was thus employed, the King of France had been exhausting his treasury in the most pompous and expensive celebration of a marriage between the Duke de Joyeuse, one of his minions, and the Princess de Vaudemont, sister to the queen. Before the King of Navarre fled from the Court of his brother-in-law, D'Aubigné had composed a mask to which he gave the name of Circe; but the decorations it required were found so expensive, that it was not represented; yet the plan having been much liked by the king and queen mother, they sent to the author for the piece; and though the royal finances were never in a worse condition, caused it to be performed on the Duke de Joyeuse's nuptials; expending above three hundred thousand crowns on the music and decorations, necessary to the exhibition,*

Soon after this marriage was celebrated, the king levied as considerable a force as his exhausted treasury would permit, and gave the command to the Duke de Joyeuse, with orders to make head against the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, who were still in Poictou. The Duke's first action was the taking of La Motte St. Herai, the garrison being too weak to preserve it; but substituting excess of courage in the place of numbers, they made a longer defence than could have been expected; till reduced by famine, and encouraged by some specious promises, they surrendered, and were almost all, to the number of above two hundred, slain in cold blood by the besiegers: and so much can bigotry and flaming zeal deprave the mind, that cruelty was then the road to fame, and popular favour. Such was the Duke de Joyeuse's motive in this, and other actions too much resembling it; as appears by his answer to D'Aubigné; who being employed to transact with him some affairs relative to the parties, asked him his inducement for a proceeding so derogative to the honour of humanity? The Duke replied, "the aim of all of us who wish for some share in the division of a ruined state, it is to be extolled in the pulpits of Paris, and those of other great cities, from which the Duke of Guise has reaped so great advantage; now the actions you condemn, and which I confess were very painful to me, are much more applauded by our preachers, than a battle won with the greatest danger, wherein mercy is shown."†

The Duke then reduced St. Maixant, Tonnai-Charante and Maillezais; but the Prince of Condé recovered Tonnai-Charante at the head of the garrison which had surrendered it to the Catholics, and at the quitting it had fixed on the spot were the walls might with greatest ease be scaled; an at-

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 30. Journal du regne de Henry III. p. 47.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 44.

tempt so little expected by the new possessors, that they had left in it too few men for its defence; but the Duke retook it in a very short time after. These small conquests had employed the Duke between two and three months; but the heat of the season was more destructive to his army than he had proved to the enemy, causing such sickness among his men that every march he performed, might be traced by the dead bodies on the road.*

During this time D'Aubigné being in good measure recovered from his long and severe illness, and hearing that the armies of the Duke de Joyeuse, and King of Navarre were so near each other that a battle was soon expected, he determined to repair to his master; and gathering together twenty-three soldiers, with a considerable number of sutlers and camp footboys, of whom he composed a long file, he made them precede his small band, as a means of escaping any ambuscade that might be formed for him by the garrison of Saintes: an expedient which proved very useful to him, for three companies being laid in ambush in a thick wood, where the road was very narrow, the sight of this file of men tempted them from their concealment, and they surrounded them before D'Aubigné and his soldiers were come up; who being at liberty, charged the three companies, killed some, and wounded many, and rescued the men to whom they thus owed their lives, with the loss of only one man. Without further molestation he reached the King of Navarre's army, and resumed the post of his equerry. Twenty Scottish gentlemen had come into France to gather laurels in the dangerous enterprises so frequent at that time; and their captain being absent when D'Aubigné arrived at the King of Navarre's camp, they applied to that prince to give them a commander. No one was better suited to this office than D'Aubigné, whom he therefore sent to them; and under his conduct they performed many actions more hazardous than important, their number being too small to effect any thing considerable; though sufficient to raise their fame, and to give the public cause to say that the Albanois (the light horse) durst not have ventured to attempt the things they had performed. This exciting the jealousy of Mercure, captain of the Albanois, he sent them a challange to fight an equal number of his men; which being accepted by them, and allowed by the chiefs on both sides, the Duke de Joyeuse on that of the Albanois, and the King of Navarre on the side of the Scots, every thing was prepared, and the ceremonials, after much contest, adjusted: when Captain Mercure, finding his men unequal to the combat, privately obtained leave of the Duke to prevent the engagement by absenting himself. It was during this transaction that D'Aubigné held with the Duke de Joyeuse the conversation already mentioned, concerning the cruelty he had permitted at La Motte, and other places.*

By this intercourse with the enemy, D'Aubigné learnt the true state of the Catholic army; he saw it much weakened by sickness; and learnt that the Duke de Joyeuse, having received information that his absence had diminished the king's favour towards him, was determined to return to court to renew his interest with his master; intending to commit the care of his troops to Monsieur de Laverdin. With this intelligence D'Aubigné hastened to the King of Navarre, who was not of a disposition to neglect the advantages it offered him. He formed a flying camp, and pursuing the Catholic army in its retreat, as far as La Haye in Touraine, slew three companies of horse, and took a great number of prisoners. He besieged Monsieur de Laverdin in La Haye; but having no cannon, was obliged to relinquish the enterprise; yet employed himself very advantageously in causing a fort to be raised at Monsoreau, and a bridge of boats to be constructed, in readiness to convey over the Loire the troops he expected from several provinces on the other side of that river. He waited only for those recruits, and the arrival of the count de Soissons, who at length, piqued at the superiority the Guises assumed over the princes of the blood, and allured by hopes given him of a marriage with Catherine, Henry's sister, had determined to join the King of Navarre, who was ready to begin his march towards the frontiers, in order to meet the German army which was coming to his aid, when he was prevented from executing his purpose, by the return of the Duke de Joyeuse to his army.†

The Duke finding that he did indeed decline in the king's favour, ardently sought to distinguish himself in such a manner, as might secure to him by fear an influence over his master, equal to that which affection had before given him; or enable him to rival the Guises in the favour of the clergy and the people: he therefore, by the most importunate solicitations, obtained the king's permission to offer the King of Navarre battle, boasting that he would soon present his majesty with the heads of Henry of Navarre and the prince of Conde.‡

On the 18th of October the two armies met near the village of Coutras in Perigort. The Huguenots had been frequently scandalized at Henry's flagrant incontinence; and were sensible that even their

* De Thou, tom. vii. p. 6.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 44.
† Ibid. p. 46. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 6.
‡ Ibid. p. 9.

religion was disgraced, by the shameful neglect of its precepts, so visible in their chief; but none of his amours had given them greater offence than his seduction of the daughter of a gentleman of the long robe at Rochelle. They had in vain attempted to prevail on him to do public penance for the offence; a proceeding more agreeable to the severity of the rigid Rochelese, than to the inclinations of a dissolute prince; who was conscious that were the like penance to be required of him for every offence of the same nature, the garb of a penitent must become one of his common dresses. But though Henry might treat those affairs lightly, the Huguenots did not understand raillery on such subjects; and when the vicinity of the two armies showed that a battle between them must necessarily ensue, Du Plessis-Mornay represented so strongly to the King of Navarre the duty of making some reparation for the scandal he had brought on the Reformed religion; and the remorse he would feel if so many brave men as composed his army, should perish, as a judgment on the commander, for a sin not duly repented of; that Henry, either influenced by some religious apprehensions, or fearing that scruples in the consciences of his soldiers might damp their spirits, consented to make directly a public acknowledgment of his crime, in the church at Pons; and promised to perform the same at Rochelle the next time he went thither; an engagement he faithfully fulfilled. Some of his courtiers hinted to him, that the Huguenot ministers had treated him too hardly; but he replied, "A man cannot humble himself too much before God, nor preserve too much dignity towards men."*

The minds of the Huguenots being thus made easy, every one prepared with alacrity for the approaching engagement. The King of Navarre took D'Aubigné with him to reconnoitre the adjacent parts, and to fix on the field of battle, which they chose near Coutras, having first secured that village, and lodged their baggage therein.†

The Duke de Joyense, prompted by his natural vanity, and encouraged by his superiority in numbers, was so confident of success, that he caused it to be resolved in council, that no quarter should be given to any of the adverse army, not even to the King of Navarre and prince of Condé; and that whoever should attempt to save the life of one of the enemy, should suffer death.‡

The next morning the two armies were drawn up in order of battle; but before they engaged, the Reformed ministers read prayers to their army; which being observed by the enemy, many of them cried out, "The cowards tremble! they are at confession." But Monsieur de Vaux, lieutenant to Marshal Bellegarde, who was better acquainted with the dispositions and manners of the Reformed, by having more frequently engaged them, told the Duke, that "when the Huguenots prayed, it was a sure proof they were going to fight boldly."*

The King of Navarre dividing his cavalry into four companies, put himself at the head of one; gave another to the Prince of Condé, who was to command the right wing; the third, which was to form the left, to the Count de Soissons; and the fourth to the Viscount de Turenne, for a corps de reserve. The battle commenced at eight o'clock in the morning by a discharge of the artillery. The attack was begun by Messrs. de Laverdin and de Montigni at the head of the light horse of the Reformed; but less success attended the Catholics through the rest of the engagement. The fight was extremely obstinate, and at one time victory seemed to incline on the side of the Duke; but Henry by a short, but inspiriting harangue to his soldiers, accompanied by great intrepidity of conduct, gave a turn to the fortune of the day. St. Luc unhorsed the Prince of Condé; but perceiving that no hopes of conquest remained, he immediately presented the Prince his gauntlet, surrendering himself prisoner. D'Aubigné was wounded in the face by Monsieur de Vaux, the weakness still remaining from his long illness, rendering him unable to wear his helmet; but he in return killed de Vaux, by a blow which going through his right eye, pierced his head. Ten gentlemen of rank joined D'Aubigné, and desired to fight under his banner; he led them three leagues in pursuit of the enemy, whom they prevented from rallying.†

No victory could be more complete; the Duke de Joyeuse was killed, not indeed in the battle, but as soon as he was taken prisoner, by an officer in the Huguenot army, from mean revenge, or, to use his terms, as a punishment for the cruelties he had committed at La Motte. Above three thousand of the Catholics were slain, among whom were many of the first distinction; and great numbers taken prisoners; while on the side of the victorious there fell not two hundred. All the standards, the cannon, and the baggage of the enemy, fell into the hands of the conquerors.‡

The King of Navarre's magnanimity shone still more conspicuously in the moderation and equanimity with which he bore this victory, than in the courage which had so much contributed to obtain it. Being asked what terms he would require from

* Vie de Plessis Mornay, p. 108.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 88.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 48.

* Pere Dan. tom. vii. p. 177.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 89.
‡ Dav. lib. 8. p. 468. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 14. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 56. Cayet tom. i. p. 38.

the King of France after gaining such a battle, "Just the same, said he, that I would ask after losing one: a confirmation of the edict of Poictou." As some endeavoured to put a malicious construction on his moderation, he added, that "he took arms only upon the breach of that treaty, and therefore should bear them only till it was renewed."*

When the King of Navarre returned to his quarters to take some refreshment, he found them filled with wounded Catholics who had been taken prisoners. He then repaired to Du Plessis Mornay's, and the first object he beheld was the body of the Duke de Joyeuse which was laid there; he appointed a guard to watch it, lest the populace should offer any indignity to the body of the man who had excited their hatred; and was reduced to order refreshment to be brought him in a chamber above stairs; where his repast was continually interrupted by his officers and soldiers presenting him fresh prisoners, or ensigns they had taken,† which he received with courtesy, but without any tokens of exultation; and thereby gave occasion to Monsieur Chandieu (the minister who had received at Pons Henry's penitential acknowledgment of his criminal amour) to say in a whisper to a gentleman who stood near him, "Happy and truly favoured of heaven is that prince, who can see under his feet his enemies humbled by the hand of God, his table surrounded by the prisoners he has taken, his room hung with the ensigns of those he has vanquished; and who free from every emotion of insolence or vanity, can maintain in the midst of successes so glorious, the same firmness and moderation with which he supports the most cruel and unexpected reverses of fortune."‡

The consequences of this victory were by no means such as might have been expected, for the Huguenots reaped no other advantage from it than a present relief by the destruction of so formidable a body of the enemy; the increase of reputation: and the cure of a prejudice conceived against them as not being equal to a pitched battle, though successful in bold enterprises, and sudden onsets.§ But those writers who to Henry's quitting the army to visit the Countess de Guiche in Bearn, have entirely attributed the little of moment that was performed after the battle, have done injustice to that prince, for he was rendered unequal to any very considerable undertaking by the desertion of the greatest part of his army; and though it cannot be denied but he might with a few men have reaped some benefit from a victory which had given him an increase of reputation, of itself more powerful than some regiments of horse, yet no very important acquisition could be expected from a Prince abandoned by most of his men. Part of them had enlisted only for the term of three weeks; and though he had prevailed with them to stay two months, yet when the battle was over, the hope of which had detained them, they were determined to depart. Those under the command of the Prince of Condé were bent on going to meet the Germans, then arrived in France to their assistance, and escorte and guide them through provinces, with which the Germans being unacquainted, they could not march without great danger. The King of Navarre had with difficulty persuaded them to stay till the day of battle, after which it was impossible to detain them. The prospect of great conquests would, probably, have made prudence and ambition triumph over love; but a view of smaller advantages not having equal power, after obtaining a promise from such of his men as retired home to get in their harvest, to meet him again in the field on the twentieth of November, in order to join the German army, he left the rest of his troops under the command of Monsieur de Turenne, and went into Bearn to lay his laurels at the feet of the Countess de Guiche, who was then with the Princess Catherine, his sister, at Pau.*

But the engagement he had required from his men proved unnecessary; for the German troops) who had been joined by the Duke de Bouillon and the Sieur de Chatillon) being commanded by a person in whom they had little confidence, and who had not sufficient authority over them, such dissensions arose, and such uncertainty in regard to the road they were to take, that confusion reigned among them. The fatigues of their long march; want of proper conveniences for the men, and forage for their horses; the badness of the roads at that season of the year, which obliged them frequently to abandon their baggage; beside being continually harassed by flying squadrons of the Catholic troops, had destroyed great part of their men; and rendered the remainder so unfit for service, that their allies had little hope of assistance from them; nor had they any confidence in themselves. In this melancholy condition they arrived on the 6th of November at Lancy in Mâconnois; the Switzers had already forsaken them, and made their peace with the King of France, who was at the head of an army at no great distance from them, and offered a safe conduct to the German troops if they would return home, engaging never to serve again in France without the King's permission. Their strength

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 57.
† Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 111. Perefixe, p. 90.
‡ De Thou, tom. vii. p. 74.
§ Oecon. Royales & Polit. De Sully, tom. i. p. 241.

* Oecon. Royales & Polit. de Sully, tom. i. p 288. Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 111. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 1. p. 58.

broken, and their spirits dejected, they considered these terms as eligible, nor could all the Sieur de Chatillon's endeavours deter them from entering into this agreement. They soon found that the arguments he had made use of were very just; the King had promised more than he had power to perform; the Duke of Guise pursued them, and the greatest part of this ill-fated army perished.* De Chatillon, who throughout the march of the Germans had distinguished himself greatly to their advantage, and his own glory, finding them resolved to accept the king's offer, put himself at the head of such as were desirous to share his fate; and conducting his small corps through le Forez, fought his way over the neighbouring mountains, and notwithstanding the badness of the roads, and the frequent attacks of the enemy, led his men into the Vivarais with such conduct and courage, as rendered his retreat glorious, worthy of himself, and the race from which he sprang.†

The Duke de Bouillon, who commanded the French troops that had joined the Germans, retired to Geneva, spent with fatigue, and overwhelmed with vexation; which soon after put a period to his life. He bequeathed his possessions to his sister; appointing the Sieur de la Noue her guardian, and his executor.‡ So rich an inheritance was an irresistible allurement to the Duke of Lorraine, who sought to marry the heiress to his eldest son, and endeavoured by force of arms to get possession of her domains; but the King of France, to prevent so great an increase of power in the family of his most implacable enemies, summoned La Noue to take upon him the delegated trust. Of all men living La Noue the least wanted to be reminded of his duty, but in this case the point was delicate. After a long imprisonment in the Low Countries, he had been set at liberty, on a promise of never bearing arms against the King of Spain, or his allies, while the interests of the King of France, and the loyalty he owed him as his subject, did not require it. The King's commands therefore were necessary to discharge him from his promise.§

The Prince of Condé did not long survive the Duke de Bouillon; and his death was a severe blow to the Huguenot party, for he was a man of great probity; humane, generous, brave, and sincerely attached to the Reformed religion. A jealousy of power had prevented any good agreement between him and the King of Navarre; but Henry felt his loss, both as a kinsman whom he esteemed, and as a man who was of consequence to his party; and having great reason to believe he was poisoned, in which the princess his wife was suspected to be an accomplice, he carried on a prosecution with vigour; but in regard to the son, of which after her husband's decease she was delivered, the process against her was dropped.*

The King of France, in a short time after the departure of the German army, felt the fault he had committed in having joined forces with the league, against those troops which would readily have served him; and afforded him the only means of conquering enemies so dangerous. The Swiss, particularly, were invited into the kingdom by him and the King of Navarre jointly, at a time when a reconciliation was negotiating between those two princes. By taking the field against the Germans he hoped to recommend himself to the leaguers, and gain some degree of popularity in the kingdom; but the Duke of Guise, who had raised his ambitious views to the throne, frustrated all his endeavours, and rendered him more than ever the object of his people's contempt and detestation. At length the sedition in Paris rose to so great a height, that the people by barricading the streets, nearly besieged the king in his palace; a circumstance so alarming to that pusillanimous prince, that he fled privately from the city with a few guards and attendants, and retired to Chartres, leaving the Duke of Guise absolute master of the capital.†

The only measure the king took to resist so dangerous an enemy, was publishing declarations, and relating the treatment he had received; but to so little effect, that after much negotiation he agreed to bury all that was passed in oblivion; he also consented to make the Duke of Guise lieutenant general of the kingdom: bound himself by oath to prosecute the war with vigour, till the utter extirpation of heresy; desiring all his subjects to concur with him in an engagement, never to suffer any but a Catholic prince to ascend the throne of France; with many other articles tending to the destruction of the Huguenots.‡

The King of Navarre had not sufficient force to take the field after the destruction of the German army, but repaired to Rochelle. The first military action he engaged in was an attempt to succour the garrison in the isle of Marans, then besieged by Monsieur de Laverdin. The vicinity of this island to Rochelle rendered it important to that city; but the assailants were so numerous that all defence was hopeless: yet

* Davila, lib. 8. p. 473. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 46.
† Ibid p 48. Cayet, tom. i. p. 42.
‡ Vie de la Noue, p. 312. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 160.
§ Ibid. p. 169.

* De Thou, tom. vii. p. 179.
† Dav. lib. 9. p. 502. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 195. Journal du regne de Henri III. p. 113. Cayet, tom. i. p. 49.
‡ Ibid. p. 237. Mem. d'Etat, par Villeroy, tom. i. p. 60. Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 83.

Henry would not give up the attempt till he had himself reconnoitred the marshes on one side of the island; in doing which he walked up to the girdle in water, leaning on D'Aubigné and Fouquerolles, though the enemy's battery played very briskly upon them; nor would he be prevailed upon to retire, though his two companions offered if he would return to his vessel to advance as close to the island as he pleased: but at length the fear of exposing them too needlessly to danger, determined him to give up all further examination.* The garrison, after holding out to the last extremity, surrendered on a very honourable capitulation. But in a short time afterwards the King of Navarre retook the island.†

D'Aubigné had in the year 1570 imagined a means for getting possession of the mouth of the Loire, and securing it by strengthening the small town of St. Lazare, whereby he would have opened to his party an easy entrance into Bretagne. This, by some connexions he had in the adjacent towns, he could without difficulty have effected, and had proposed it to the King of Navarre, desiring him to commit the execution of it to La Noue. The Viscount de Turenne had afterwards solicited with the strongest importunity to be trusted with the conduct of the affair; but Henry refused to commit it to either of them; he did not choose to increase the reputation of La Noue, nor the power of the viscount; and therefore nothing was done in it till the time we are now speaking of, when the king took a resolution of putting it into execution, and of trusting the execution of it to Du Plessis Mornay; whose particular excellence lying in negotiation, and controversial writings, he gave Henry no umbrage by a rivalry in military fame. The preparations were carried on secretly at Rochelle; the king determined to lead the land forces, while Du Plessis conducted the little fleet destined to this expedition; and Beauvois-sur-Mer was appointed for the place of rendezvous.

As the king was on his march towards Nyort, he met D'Aubigné, who though his attachment to the cause, and his natural inclinations to a military life had brought him out of that retirement into which resentment had for a time thrown him, yet was still much out of humour that the Isle of Oleron, which he had conquered with so much toil and danger, should during his imprisonment have been sold to St. Luc: nor had any endeavours been used to soften his discontent, by making him a compensation for the loss. As soon as the king saw him he said to him, "You formerly importuned me to carry your great designs into effect; and wanted me to commit the execution of it to men, who atributing their success to their own abilities, would have assumed the honour, nor would one of the two have scrupled to appropriate to himself the advantage accruing from it. I have delayed it beyond the time you chose; and have trusted it to a person entirely devoted to me; who will give proof to the world that I can convert a man of letters into an able captain. I am much pleased with my choice, as he has facilitated the execution of your project by the invention of a very ingenious machine. I am now on my march to take my share in the enterprise; if you can prevail with yourself to sacrifice your resentment (though I confess in part just enough) to the necessities of your master, and to the cause to which you are so much attached, come with us. I know that being so lately returned from captivity you have no field equipage; take what you choose from my stables, and for other things use the best means you can."

"Sire," answered D'Aubigné, "I have nothing to say in regard to your choice of the person to whom you have commited this business, except, that this man of letters is also a brave soldier, and I have seen him acquit himself with honour in the military character. I am obliged to your majesty for the offer of mounting me; without which I was going to follow you on foot with my musket on my shoulder." The king then gave him a circumstantial account of the plan on which they were to act; of his intention to take Clisson with his land forces, as it lay in his road; and the orders given for his fleet to wait for him near the island of Noirmoutier, with directions to be regulated by his motions. D'Aubigné expressed some apprehensions lest inconveniences might arise from the fleet's being subjected to the motions of the land forces; and with reason, since even a short delay might occasion a long obstruction to the progress of those who were dependant on the winds; but this suggestion was imputed to envy, and consequently disregarded. The king finding Clisson too well manned and fortified, was obliged to raise the siege; and during the time lost in that attempt, the winds were become so contrary, that when he arrived at Beauvois, the fleet on which he was there to embark could not proceed. To compensate in some degree for this disappointment, he laid siege to Beauvois, a strong and well garrisoned castle.

The second day of the siege the King of Navarre, who made it his custom to be in every place, and as much as possible transacted every thing himself, walked out with thirty of his officers, followed by about a dozen of his guards, to reconnoitre the country as far as the port of Bouin. Villeserin, the commander of the garrison of Beauvois, observing them, and soon perceiving that the king made one of this small troop, took forty-five of his best men

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2, p. 110.
† Ibid. p. 15. De Thou. tom. vii. p. 245.

and concealed them in a small ditch, near which he knew the Huguenots must pass. When they came within thirty paces, the King of Navarre, walking carelessly foremost, with his hands behind him, talking with D'Aubigné, saw all these men rise at once, and level their pieces at him. D'Aubigné immediately threw himself between them and the king; who refusing to retire, his attendants seized him, and forcibly pushing him from one to the other, were half of them before him when the fire began; but the assailants were so hurried by their eager desire to destroy at once, the chief hope and resource of the Huguenot party, that they took no aim, and their shot flying at random, only one gentleman was killed, and two wounded. The rest, as soon as their care for the king who was the most interesting object of their thoughts, would permit, drew their swords, and rushing toward the enemy, obliged them to attend more to their own defence than to annoying of others; and seeing the king's guards advancing to sustain their opponents, they judged it advisable to make good their retreat.

The castle of Beauvois, though no considerable place, obliged the besiegers to exert all their art and diligence; to every regiment was assigned it's peculiar post in the works necessary to be carried on in the circumvallation. The King of Navarre took to himself that which was most dangerous, and most difficult; and committed the execution to D'Aubigné, who was still his equerry. When Villeferin found himself too closely besieged to hope for succour, he offered to capitulate, afraid of standing a general assault; lest should the castle be taken by storm, he might suffer for the evil design he had so evidently shown against the King of Navarre's life; but Henry was of no revengeful disposition, and granted him a very honourable capitulation. He put a garrison into the place; and strengthened those of Montague, Ganache, Talmont, and Fontenai. The approach of the Duke de Nevers' army rendering the execution of the design on which he had set out impossible, he gave up the attempt, and returned to Rochelle.*

A short time after the king's return from this expedition, as he was walking with the Viscount de Turenne and D'Aubigné, he communicated to them the great perplexity and uneasiness of mind he was under, how best to effect a resolution he had formed of espousing the Countess de Guiche, to whom he had given a formal promise of marriage. He ordered them to consider well what he had said, and to prepare themselves to deliver him their opinions upon it the next day. The viscount felt so strongly the difficulty of acting in this delicate affair, in such a manner as should not either hurt his honour, or offend the king, that after having spent the night in a discussion very disagreeable to himself, he determined to elude the conference, by pretending an absolute necessity of going that day to Marans.

The post D'Aubigné held about the king would not have allowed him to take the same liberty; nor was he ever led by that timid caution which actuates the self-interested courtier, to neglect an opportunity of speaking useful truths. He too had passed the night in reflections on so critical a business, and the result was a determination to perform the duty of a faithful servant. At the time appointed, the king going out of the town, ordered the rest of his attendants to retire to a proper distance, and riding forward with D'Aubigné, made him a laboured harangue which lasted above two hours; alleging as examples more than thirty princes, who had found advantage from indulging their inclinations, in marrying women of rank inferior to their own. He then brought many instances to prove that the pursuit of great alliances had frequently been as destructive to the state, as to the happiness of the monarch; and concluded by blaming the injustice of those persons, who being born without passions, would regulate the actions of a man in love by the frigid plan of their own conduct. "In fine," continued he, "I now desire you to tell me your sentiments with your accustomed frankness and fidelity, and according to the precepts of your severe morality."

D'Aubigné, who had very maturely considered the point in question, being ordered by his master to speak with sincerity, began by blaming those bad servants who had sought out so many instances of unequal marriages; since they were inexcusable for cooly employing themselves in fomenting a blameable passion. "Such examples, Sire," said he, "are no doubt very excellent, but they are no models for you: all the princes you have mentioned enjoyed their dominions in peace: they were not environed with enemies and dangers; nor in any respect did their situation resemble yours. You preserve your life, and sustain your fortune only by your intrinsic virtue, and the esteem of others. You ought, Sire, to consider yourself under the four different characters, of Henry of Bourbon, King of Navarre, presumptive heir to the crown of France, and protector of the Reformed churches. In each of these characters you have a distinct set of adherents; whom you must gratify in the manner best suited to their views and intentions. The safety of your person should be committed to those who serve Henry of Bourbon; the

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 132. Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 119. Cayet, tom. i. p. 87.

care of your household to the servants of the King of Navarre; posts of dignity should be given the adherents to the presumptive heir of the crown of France, for they must be gratified by rewards or fed with flattering hopes, as self-interest is the foundation of their attachment to you; but those who serve you as protector of the churches, require no other payment from you than proofs of your zeal for the common cause, integrity of life, virtuous actions, and a fair example; for though in some respects you are their superior, in others they are your companions: on condition, however, that they leave to you as small a part as possible of the dangers of war, but yield to you the entire disposal of the honours and advantages accruing from it. I know too well your aversion to reading to suspect that you have sought out the precedents you have so circumstantially cited; it would be unworthy of you; and becomes only those mean and treacherous counsellors, whose interested views dispose them to flatter your passions. I have been too susceptible of tender impressions to support any thing I can say by my own example. You are now under the influence of excessive love; this is no time to consider of the means of eradicating the passion from your breast; but it can never be unseasonable to represent, that to secure the pleasures it offers, you must render yourself worthy of your mistress. Your passion should excite you to apply yourself seriously to the care of your affairs; this ought to be your principal aim, for upon it your whole success depends; to you it may truly be said, Aut Cæsar aut Nihil. Conquer your reluctance, your detestation, and become assiduous in council; employ more hours each day in your necessary affairs; give on all occasions the preference to actions of importance; endeavour to conquer those domestic weaknesses, those private partialities, which do not redound to your honour: and when you have captivated the heart of every true Frenchman, when you have dispelled all those dangers that now threaten your life, and have established your fortune, you may, if you continue to desire it, do, what those have done, whose examples you allege. The death of the Duke of Anjou has brought you within one step of the throne; if you are not in a situation that will enable you to ascend it, notwithstanding all opposition, the instant it is vacant, you may be excluded from it for ever. Pursue your grand point therefore with vigour; let no private respects, nor the fears of exciting the envy or jealousy of any one, retard your progress, or damp your ardour; success will render the completion of all your wishes safe and easy: but if in the present unfavourable conjuncture you marry your mistress, you will excite a general disgust, which will for ever deprive you of the crown of France."

With this prophetic menace D'Aubigné ceased speaking; and the king was so little offended with his frankness, that he thanked him very affectionately for the honest advice he had given him; and promised him on oath that he would not marry the countess de Guiche before the expiration of the two ensuing years. A delay which rendered vain all her ambitious hopes, and gave the king reason to reflect with joy and gratitude on the faithful counsel of his honest servant; for before those two years were expired, the countess de Guiche had given place in Henry's affections to the countess de Guiercheville.*

Some time after this conversation, the king had a stronger instance of D'Aubigné's freedom of speech, contrary to the design of the speaker, who lying with the Sieur de la Force in the king's garde robe, whispered in his companion's ear, "Certainly our master is the most covetous, and most ungrateful mortal upon earth." Receiving no answer he repeated the accusation; but La Force being scarcely awake, did not hear him distinctly, and asked, "What do you say, D'Aubigné?" "Cannot you hear him?" said the king; "he tells you I am the most covetous and most ungrateful mortal on earth." D'Aubigné was somewhat confounded at being so unluckly overheard; however the king showed not the least symptom of displeasure; nor did he endeavour to disprove the accusation by becoming more bountiful; possibly he thought, with some reason, that he gave a strong proof of generosity in not resenting the ill-timed liberty: and indeed his generosity appeared less in giving than in forgiving; the branch of that virtue which may more properly be ranked under the denomination of bounty, made no part of his character.†

Henry had a very uncommon quickness of hearing, which was not thoroughly convenient to so incautious a man as D'Aubigné; who not taking sufficient warning by the circumstance just related, was a second time guilty of a like imprudence. When Henry was flattering the Count de Soissons, and many others, with the hopes of giving them his sister Catherine in marriage, a hope with which he allured them into his service, D'Aubigné being in bed with Frontenac whispered him, "How many brothers our master makes out of one sister!" As it was his fate to be heard only by the person he did not intend should hear him, he spoke too low to be understood by Frontenac, who asked him what he said. Henry did not leave him time to answer, but called out, "Are you deaf, Frontenac? he says I

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 94. Hist. des amours du Grand Alcandre, p. 224.

† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 95.

make many brothers out of one sister." D'Aubigné, without being disconcerted, replied, "Go to sleep, Sire, we have a great deal more to say."*

The estates of the kingdom (the King of France having in his treaty with the leaguers consented to assemble them) met together in October; where the king had the mortification of being obliged to ratify the treaty, and confirm the grants obtained from him by the Duke of Guise, from which he hoped they would have relieved him.†

The King of Navarre had also called together an assembly of Huguenots; or as they at that time expressed it, of the churches; which met accordingly at Rochelle on the 12th day of November; nor did their deliberations fail of giving him some mortification. They reproached him with his liberality to his Catholic dependants, while he suffered his servants of the Reformed religion to be exposed to the extremest indigence; that he was prodigal in his amours; but suffered several officers who had been wounded in fighting under him to die of want. They reproached him with the sale of the Isle of Oleron to St. Luc, during the Governor's captivity; together with several other charges less just. He bore all their accusations and complaints with great patience; and some of his servants, to disprove the charge of prodigality in his amours, related the miserable deaths of two of his mistresses, and two of his natural children who perished for want:‡ a defence little to his honour; since however distressed his circumstances, he yet had it in his power to bestow the necessaries of life on those whom he had deprived of all that can render existence valuable: though he had exposed them to infamy, he might have preserved them from famine; but in all probability the allegation was little to the purpose, and we may believe that his ignorance of the facts, till too late to prevent the evil, made them as improperly the subjects of praise, as of censure. The truth is, his intrigues were so scandalously numerous, that to remember the names of all his transient mistresses required a strong memory, and it was scarcely possible he should be acquainted with all the occasional situations of each of them.

Henry and the Assembly were too necessary to each other, to remain long at variance; he gained over by caresses those who had shown most enmity to him; and they parted in seeming good humour, after having sent a deputation to the estates at Blois, requesting them to assemble a general council.§

The season of the year did not put an end to hostilities. The Duke de Nevers, after having taken Mauleon and Montagu, laid siege to la Ganache. The King of Navarre, in expectation of that event, had sent D'Aubigné to reconnoitre the place; who had reported that if the garrison was reinforced by a certain number of men, which he specified, it was capable of holding out long enough to ruin a good army. Henry sent D'Aubigné and the Sieur de Robieres, at the head of two companies, with a supply of ammunition; but being driven by contrary winds to the island of Rhé, and exposed to much danger, several of their men deserted, and themselves did not arrive at la Ganache without great difficulty. In the division of the posts one of the bastions was committed to their care; and the place was in general so well defended, that the Duke de Nevers could make but very small advances in his undertaking.*

As it was evident the siege would be drawn out to a considerable length, D'Aubigné left the Sieur de Robieres to their joint command, in order to fulfil a promise made to his friend St. Gelais. The Sieur de St. Gelais had made several enterprises on the town of Nyort, and though they had proved unsuccessful, he was not discouraged, but determined on another attempt, still less promising than any of the rest; which was to scale a wall forty feet high; and in a part of it within eight paces of the post of a sentinel. As he was much out of the King of Navarre's favour, it was with great difficulty that he obtained from him three hundred men; he was besides joined by about an hundred of his friends, of whom D'Aubigné was one. As D'Aubigné was setting out at the head of some gentlemen who had put themselves under his conduct, he received news that the King of France had caused the Duke of Guise, and the Cardinal of Lorraine his brother to be assassinated at Blois.† He immediately sent to the King of Navarre, in whose measures it was possible such an event might make some alteration, to inquire if his majesty had any particular commands for him; but the king returned for answer, they might persecute their design on Nyort; of which however he expected no good issue. D'Aubigné accordingly led his friends to the place of rendezvous; and the whole corps approached the town in the middle of the night; but the moon shining too bright for the business they were upon, they were obliged to lie down in some stone quarries, as the best means of being concealed till the moon was down. The extreme coldness of the weather rendered this inaction a very suffering part of the enterprise. They had brought with them two petards and two lad-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 285.
† Journal du Regne de Henry III. p. 116. Cayet, tom. i. p. 86.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 133.
§ Ibid. p. 134.

* De Thou, tom. vii. p. 315.
† Dav. lib. 9. p. 535. Journal du Regne, &c. p. 116. Cayet, tom. ii. p. 106.

ders, each of which was composed of six pieces of seven feet long, made to fit in each other with joints. When the moon had entirely withdrawn her light, the enterprisers began their operations, and planted their ladders at six paces from each other, and within eight of the sentinel; but he, not having been able to endure the bleak wind which blew full into the bastion, had placed himself close to the wall, leaning his head against it; and had not heard the carriages on which the petards and ladders had been brought; their wheels having been bound round with felts, to prevent their making any noise. The Sieur D'Arambure, and seventeen more, had mounted by one of the ladders, unperceived by the sentinel, who first learnt their approach by being run through the body. But the alarm was soon taken in the town; lights were placed in every window; and four hundred men opposed the eighteen who had scaled the walls; but the petards being played off, and making sufficient breaches to admit the rest, D'Aubigné first entered, and arrived with his company, where the Sieur D'Arambure had just driven some of the garrison from behind a barricade of trunks and boxes, which they had made at the end of one of the streets; and mistaking D'Aubigné for another party of the enemy, he took his stand behind the barricade of trunks, where D'Aubigné, under the like error, attacked him, and met with so warm a reception, that before the mistake was discovered, two gentlemen on D'Aubigné's side were killed, one on D'Arambure's, and five wounded, besides himself, who was hurt in such a manner that it deprived him of one of his eyes. As many of the garrison as could effect it retired into the citadel; where the Sieur de Malicorne, the governor of the province, commanded; and no further resistance being made in the town, St. Gelais placed guards to prevent its being pillaged for three hours, during which time the inhabitants had leisure to carry off their most valuable effects. He then summoned the citadel to surrender, but Malicorne refused to treat with St. Gelais on account of some enmity which subsisted between them; and with Monsieur de Parambere, because he was a stranger to him; but desired to confer with D'Aubigné, to whom he had done some civilities during his imprisonment. As soon as they met, Malicorne told D'Aubigné he surrendered to him at discretion. D'Aubigné would not take advantage of the consternation this old and brave officer was in; but made such a capitulation for him as he durst not require; and taking four gentlemen as hostages for the surrender, agreed that the place should be delivered only to the King of Navarre; saying that "the governor of a province was a prisoner worthy of a king;" and by this means he secured the garrison from the insolence of the soldiers, to which they would have been exposed had they marched out directly, and gave his master the honour of the enterprise. In the taking of this town fourteen of the inhabitants only were killed, and but one of the assailants, and two more wounded, except those who suffered by the mistake between D'Arambure and D'Aubigné. The soldiers were permitted to take some plunder, but with great moderation, and no violence was done to the persons of any of the vanquished.*

From Nyort the Huguenot troops marched to Maillezais, to which they laid siege; and the Sieur de Pompoint, the commander, being summoned by D'Aubigné to surrender, he came to treat with him on his word given, without requiring any other security; and being his relation, chose to deliver up the place into D'Aubigné's hands (he being invested with full powers) rather than wait for the approach of the King of Navarre; who was accompanied by the Sieur de Bouillaie, whom Pompoint was conscious he had offended on another occasion.† D'Aubigné wished to be governor of Maillezais; and as he had taken it, the king could not well refuse it him; but endeavoured to persuade him to desist from his application; a vain endeavour; for D'Aubigné was desirous of some establishment, where he might rest a little from his labours, and enjoy the society of a beloved wife and family; being then thirty-seven years of age, and never having from his seventeenth year, passed four days successively, without being engaged in some military expedition, except when he was disabled from going abroad by wounds, or sickness.‡ This new employment prevented his returning to the siege of Ganache, which surrendered on honourable terms the fifteenth day of the following January; the King of Navarre's intentions of succouring it having been frustrated by a violent pleuritic fever, which seized him as he was on his march thither.§ The Duke de Nevers was glad to be master of the town on any conditions, the King of France's service requiring him for more important purposes. That prince seemed to imagine all his dangers and difficulties ended with the Duke of Guise's death. His indolence, which had been suspended long enough to enable him to do one act of violence, returned with increased power, as if his vigour was all spent by that sudden exertion. The duke had been the object of his fear; and having effectually removed him and the Cardinal of Lorrain, and put under safe custody the old Cardinal de Bourbon, the Prince de Joinville, and the Duke D'El-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 157. Cayet, tom. i. p. 116.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. p. 158.

‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 95.

§ Vie de du Plessis Mornay, p 126. De Thou tom. vii. p. 365.

beuf, he flattered himself that the party was entirely broken. To pacify the states he published a declaration, signifying his fixed purpose of adhering firmly to the holy league, in stronger terms than ever; and justifying the murder of the duke and cardinal by the criminal designs they had formed against him.*

But such measures were unavailing. The hatred of the leaguers was, if possible, increased; and though he had deprived them of their favourite chief, they had still an able commander left in the Duke de Mayenne. The consternation into which the party was at first thrown, soon wore off, and the king found their strength was undiminished, and their inveterate abhorrence to him more openly declared. Catherine de Medicis, the queen mother, was in a very bad state of health at the time the Duke of Guise was assassinated; a catastrophe which seemed to forebode the destruction of a family to which she had always been much attached by her alliance with them; and the reproaches of the Cardinal de Bourbon, who accused her of having drawn them into the snare by her deceitful caresses, overcame the little portion of strength which sickness had left her, and on the fifth of January she departed a world which she seemed born to trouble;† unregretted by a people whom she had involved in all the cruellest distresses of a civil war. Her restless ambition would not suffer her to be contented with that share of power, which she had obtained by corrupting the minds and morals of her sons, and of her subjects; leading them into the most destructive vices by every art and blandishment: but finding those vile methods insufficient to secure to her the sole government of the kingdom, she fomented that discord which ended in the ruin of her family. The duplicity of her conduct prevented her from gaining a friend; and her cruelty rendered every good man her enemy. Daring and presumptuous while unopposed, timorous and confounded when danger approached, her life was a series of alternate desperate undertakings, and mean and treacherous concessions: uniform in the malevolence of her designs, but inconsistent in her actions; steady in her aim, but variable in the means she used to attain it; by artifice and subterfuge she sought to ward off for the present hour, the dangers she had incurred by her rashness, without attending to the new distresses wherein the obliquity of her procedure must involve her. By nature she was endowed with some superiority of talents, which enabled her to become eminently wicked; and the massacre of St. Bartholomew will ever fix an indelible stain on the French nation, and render her name detestable to all posterity.

Happy had it been for the king her son if the evils she caused had perished with her, but the consequences of her boundless ambition and false policy survived, and grew daily more alarming. The king saw the greatest part of the kingdom in arms against him, while the number of his adherents decreased, and those who remained were cold and spiritless. He had not concerted measures for taking immediate advantage of the sudden consternation into which the death of the Duke of Guise had thrown the leaguers; who found sufficient leisure to recover from it while he was publishing proclamations; and employing his pen, when the sword was the only weapon that could have been of use to him. The defection became soon so general, that Saumur, Beaugency, Tours, and Amboise, were the only towns that acknowledged his authority. Seeing no longer a possibility of defending himself against his enemies, he grew at last sensible that his only resource was a strict union with the King of Navarre, from whom he had received frequent offers of service and assistance. Madame d'Angouleme, widow of marshal Francis de Montmorenci, began the negociation between the two kings; and Henry sent Du Plessis Mornay to the King of France to settle the articles; which being adjusted, under the form of a truce between them for a year, Henry ventured to Tours to complete the reconciliation; though by that action he put himself in the power of a prince, who had given frequent proofs of the little confidence that could justly be placed in his honour or probity. But the king's desperate situation proved Henry's best security; for his alliance promised greater advantages than treachery could yield; and after having settled measures for their future conduct, they parted with great show of affection; and Henry returned to his quarters at Maillé.* As the king could not easily reconcile himself to the imputation of favouring heretics, after having so long endeavoured to establish the reputation of his piety and orthodoxy, he required that their union should be kept secret as long as possible; but the Duke de Mayenne abridged the agreed term of concealment, by attacking the town of Tours; which the king not having sufficient force to defend, he found himself under a necessity of applying to Henry, who succoured him so effectually, that the Duke de Mayenne quitted the enterprise.

The duke had at his first attack taken the suburbs; in pillaging of which his soldiers committed the most cruel, and most infa-

* Davila. lib. 9. p. 537. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 354. Oeconomies royales, &c. de Sully, tom. i. p. 297.

† Ibid. p. 366. Dav. lib. 9. p. 541. Journal du Regne, &c. p. 118.

* Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 134. Dav. lib. 10. p. 565. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 430. Cayet, tom. i. p. 187.

mous excesses: and marching from thence into the province of Maine, they continued the same conduct, exciting horror in every breast that retained any sentiments of humanity.* Those who used the zealous profession of the Catholic faith as a cloak to their ambition, were as much offended as the really pious, by their plundering a very rich church at Arquenai, which even the Huguenots had spared; treating with the most infamous brutality the women who had fled thither for refuge; and afterwards distributing the consecrated ornaments among the harlots in their camp.† The Duke de Mayenne had not sufficient authority to restrain them; and had the additional mortification of hearing that the King of Navarre's troops, under the command of the Duke de Longueville, and the excellent La Noue, had defeated the Duke d'Aumale's army near the town of Senlis, which he was besieging; it having been‡ a short time before seized by the king's party; and that in the Chartrain the troops of the league had been equally unfortunate in an engagement with De Chatillon.§

These successive events determined the King of France to unite his forces with those of the King of Navarre, who had not till then been able to prevail on him to leave Tours. They led their united troops against Gergeau, which made no long resistance; then took Etampes, (where D'Aubigné commanded the forlorn hope) Pontoise, and other small towns in the neighbourhood of Paris; with a view in thus environing it to reduce the city, by preventing the supply of provisions necessary for the support of so great a number as it contained. Though none of these places were capable of making a very desperate resistance, yet the King of Navarre was never exposed to greater danger than at Gergeau, and Pontoise. At the former, the Duke d'Epernon meeting him as he was viewing the approaches to the town, conducted him through his quarter; and to show his own courage, led him on so slowly, and so openly, that the enemy fired very briskly upon them, and killed four of their attendants, one of them a relation of the duke's, and his camp-master. As soon as they were got under cover, D'Aubigné and Frontenac, who had accompanied the king, desirous of retorting on the duke by a bravado, the danger to which he had exposed their master, invited him to return, and to walk there a little longer with them; with which he was going to comply, when the King of Navarre prevented it, by holding him by the collar ‖

At the siege of Pontoise Sieur de Charbonnieres received a mortal wound, as the King of Navarre was leaning upon him, the cannon ball breaking both Charbonniere's arms, of which he soon after died.*

From the distressed situation in which the King of France had so lately been, he now found himself in the most prosperous state; from the time he joined the King of Navarre success had attended every undertaking; and the two kings being at the head of thirty thousand good and effective men, well armed, and animated with their good fortune, determined to lay siege to Paris; a measure which even in the attempt would give courage to their party, and if successful would be a great step to the reduction of the whole kingdom.†

At this siege the King of Navarre having given leave to a few of his officers to advance beyond the entrenchments, to engage in single combat with the enemy, or perform any thing of the like nature whereby they might gain intelligence, or make useful observations; D'Aubigné, being of the number, took advantage of the permission, and advancing to the pres-aux-Clercs, called to an officer on guard to carry a challenge from him to Monsieur de Sagonne, camp-marshal to the Catholic army in Paris; but he being absent, the officer to whom he applied, defied D'Aubigné in his own name, in the most insolent and abusive terms; believing that a wide and deep ditch which separated them, must render it impossible for D'Aubigné to get to him; D'Aubigné provoked by insult, allured by the richness of the officer's arms, which were in good measure of silver, and knowing the excellence of the horse whereon he was mounted, leaped over the ditch. As soon as he reached the further side of it, his enemy fired at him; but missing his aim, and perceiving that D'Aubigné was ready to return the fire, he begged his life, and surrendered himself; though ten gentlemen were advancing to his assistance. D'Aubigné carried off his prisoner to the Prince of Conti's quarters; and this affair being much talked of in the camp, the King of France, who had that morning been mortally wounded, desired to see the prisoner; but D'Aubigné, though commanded by his master to comply with the king's desire, would not subject the officer to that mortification; finding, beside, in himself little inclination to gratify a prince towards whom he felt a strong resentment on account of the share he had in the massacre of St. Bartholomew.‡

The King of France had fixed his tent at St. Cloud; and would have felt complete satisfaction at the promising aspect of his affairs, had he not been troubled with fre-

* L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 74.
† De Thou, tom. vii. p. 468.
‡ Vie de la Noue, p. 345. Dav. lib. 3. p. 573.
§ De Thou, tom. vii. p. 467. Hist. des derniers troubles de France, liv. 5. p. 4.
‖ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 177.

* Hist Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv 2. p. 180. Cayet, tom. i. p. 216. Oecon. roy. & pol. de Sully, tom. i. p. 312.
† Ibid. Hist. du duc de Bouill, liv. 3. p. 146.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 96.

quent notices of several persons who had determined to assassinate him: but these warnings were of no effect; for his strange and foolish bigotry, secured access to any monk who wished to approach him; and Jacques Clement, a Jacobin monk, found no difficulty in gaining admission at an early hour in the morning; and stabbed the unsuspecting prince, whilst he was reading a letter he delivered to him.*

The king himself drew the dagger from the wound, and struck the monk in the face with it; his attendants immediately fell on the assassin, and killed him. The wound was not at first thought dangerous, but towards night his pains became very violent, and his dissolution visibly approached. An express was sent to the King of Navarre (who, on his first visit, seeing the wounded king to appearance in no danger, had returned to his quarters at Meudon) informing him, that if he wished to see that prince alive, he must repair to him directly.†

Henry immediately called to him eight of the persons in whom he most confided, of whom D'Aubigné was one; and commanding them to put on armour under their clothes, he set out with them, and about twenty-five attendants, to the dying king; who expired as they arrived; having first declared the King of Navarre his heir and successor.‡

No situation could be more critical than that of the King of Navarre. Fortune had but just begun to smile upon him, when he was by this fatal stroke involved in new difficulties. As he entered the king's chamber, he heard amidst the general confusion, protestations from all parts never to acknowledge a Huguenot for their king. Marshal Biron, alone, offered him his best services. Confounded and distressed, Henry retired into an adjacent chamber, taking La Force in one hand, and D'Aubigné in the other, and bade them give him their advice in that perplexing exigence. La Force excused himself from hazarding his opinion on so difficult a point; but D'Aubigné, whose presence of mind never forsook him, and whose zeal and sincerity were heightened, rather than depressed, by danger, obeyed to the following effect:

"Sire, You stand in greater want of advice than consolation. The actions of the ensuing hour must give the colour to the remainder of your life, and make you either a king, or nothing. You are surrounded by men who tremble in the midst of their menaces; and conceal their private fears under general pretences. If you are influenced by the terrors of some of your pusillanimous adherents, who will fear *you?* Whom will not you *fear?* If you think to conquer by submission, those who from meanness are averse to you, who will not tyrannize over you? I overheard many who threatened, that if you did not change your religion they would withdraw, and make a separate party to revenge the murder of their king: how will they dare to attempt it without you, when they have not courage to undertake it even with your assistance? Beware of mistaking those slaves to royalty for the bulwarks of the kingdom. If your conscience does not dictate to you the answer you ought to make them, yet respect the good opinion of those who have dedicated their lives to the preservation of yours; and, after God, rest your cause on their firm support, and not on those trembling reeds which bend with every wind. Preserve your steadfast friends; and do not regret the loss of men you cannot keep without dishonouring yourself; but draw from among them such as are less attached to the Pope than to their king; for the rest would be no more hurtful to you near, than at a distance. At this moment Marshal Biron and the commanders of your best troops have no thoughts of leaving you; the share they had in the murder of the Guises secures them to you, by making you necessary to them; they even rejoice in this opportunity of obliging you; and of reaping the honour of establishing you on the throne. Compose your countenance; employ the understanding and courage which God has given you: this is an occasion worthy of your abilities; lose no time; and while the malecontents and their confessors are balancing the account between their hatred to your religion on one side, and their fear of the leaguers on the other, begin by Marshal Biron; acquaint him with the want you have of his assistance, in as pressing terms as you can use without meanness; ask him, as a proof of his inclination to your service, and of his power, to prevail with the Swiss troops to take the oath of allegiance to you: let him draw them up in order of battle, and make them cry, Long live King Henry the IVth. Dispatch Givri to such of the nobles of the Isle of France and Berri, as are in the army; Humieres to those of Picardy; and employ in this manner to those of different provinces, such of your servants as are most proper for that purpose; who they are your Majesty knows better than we do; and on the first intelligence you shall receive from them of the good will of the soldiery, ask the same service from those of whose inclinations you are doubtful. As for the duke d'Epernon, whom I consider as the most powerful man in your army; I am inclined to believe him too prudent to neglect his duty or his interest; treat him with distinction; he acknowledges your authority by

* Journal du regne de Henri III. p. 134. Dav. lib. 10. p. 586. Cayet, p. 221.

† Oecon. roy. and pol. de Sully, tom. i. p. 314.

‡ De Thou, tom. vii. p. 491. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 183. Cayet, tom. i. p. 223.

not opposing it; he can expect no favour from your enemies, therefore will not choose to violate the agreement already made between you. Be assured you have the superiority of power in this place. Look into that garden, and you will see two hundred of your officers, whose chief pride is to defend their prince. If your accustomed humanity, so becoming royal dignity, and your real interest, did not forbid it, at the smallest glance of your eye they would throw out of the window every man who should refuse to acknowledge you for his king."

Henry approved the greatest part of D'Aubigné's advice; and calling Marshal Biron to him, said, "The time is now come, my cousin, when your hand must help to place the crown on my head. It would ill suit your disposition or mine, to endeavour to animate you by solicitations; reflect on the properest measures for us to pursue: but without loss of time prevail on the Switzers to take the oath of allegiance to me; and then come, and act the part of my father and friend, against these people who love neither you nor me."

"Sire," replied the marshal, "on this occasion you will discover which of your servants deserve your esteem: we will talk of your affairs at leisure; I now go, not merely to endeavour, but to perform what you command."

During these short conferences, the party most averse to Henry had come to some sort of resolution, and Monsieur D'O. was chosen to speak their general sentiments; who addressing the king in their name, told him they were ready to acknowledge him their sovereign, if he would embrace the Catholic religion; allowing him but a few days to get properly instructed in it: intimating, that they preferred death to accepting an Huguenot for their king; and that his right to the kingdom depended on his professing the faith established therein. They added, that he could not fear alienating the Huguenots, if he recollected how easy it had always been to satisfy them, by allowing them the exercise of their religion, for which they had ever been ready to forego any advantages that the success of their arms might have procured them; as on the other hand, the greatest dangers, even impending ruin, could not induce them to forbear attempting to obtain it.

There could not be a more honourable testimony of the integrity of the Huguenots; the truth of which all their past conduct had strongly evinced; and it was not a likely means to prevail on Henry to abandon them: but he had probably a stronger motive for treating such a proposal with indignation. So mean a compliance, evidently proceeding only from fear, was incompatible with his noble mind; he had great spirit, though little piety; he might sacrifice his religion to his ambition, but would not purchase a crown at the expense of honour, the soldier's deity; and in this, as in every other point, Henry was a soldier.

After reproaching those who had thus addressed him, with the little sorrow they showed for their deceased prince, their disregard for his dying words, and their want of ardour to revenge his death, which they could not effect but in conjunction with him; he told them, it was strange they should imagine that, by taking advantage of the critical conjuncture, their menaces would have greater influence over him than over many simple persons, who had despised their power, because they knew how to die. "Is it possible," continued the king, "that you can expect so sudden a conversion from any but a man who has no religion? Would you wish such an one for your king? Could you put confidence in an atheist? or choose to fight under the banners of a perjured and apostate prince? I have, as you observe, suffered great distresses; but if my spirit was never depressed by them, shall I lay aside my courage and magnanimity on succeeding to the throne of France? But that you may not call my steadiness obstinacy, nor my discretion pusillanimity, I appeal to your own calmer judgments, when united with a greater number of peers and great officers, than I see here at present. As to those who will not give themselves time for mature deliberation, whom the ill fortune of France, and their fears, induce to relinquish my cause, attracted by the fallacious and unstable prosperity of the kingdom's enemies, I freely consent to their departure; and shall not object to their seeking their advantage under insolent masters. I have no doubt but I shall have on my side all those Catholics who love their country, or respect their honour."

As the king concluded the sentence, Monsieur Givri entered; and with a frankness and vivacity natural to him, went up to the king, and kissing his hand, said, "Sire, I am this moment come from the flower of your brave nobles, who postpone their lamentations for the loss of their prince, till they have revenged his death; they wait with impatience for the commands of their new king. You are the sovereign of the brave, and will be abandoned only by cowards." This sudden interruption, followed by notice of the approach of the Switzers, and the arrival of several of the Huguenot chiefs, very opportunely put an end to the conference between the king and the Catholic lords.*

The fury and virulence of the leaguers appeared in the strongest colours on the death of King Henry III. They filled Paris with rejoicings; some proposed to erect a

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 2. p. 187. Vie de la Noue, p. 352. Abregé Chron. de Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 1213.

statue to the assassin, in the church of Nostre Dame; and to take from thence, as profane things, those pictures wherein the kings of France were represented. In the pulpits, and in printed libels, Clement was styled a saint and a martyr; his effigies were exposed on the altars, as objects of public veneration; and when the king of Navarre led his army from the environs of Paris, some of the Parisians went to St. Cloud to dig up the earth which continued stained with his blood, not being able to get any part of his body to preserve as relics, because it had been burnt to ashes. With this earth they loaded a boat, in order to raise a trophy to the assassin in Paris; but the vessel, with all on board it, perished in the river. Nor was this indecent rage and hatred confined to the Parisians; the pope, (Sixtus V.) on the first account he received of the assassination of the king, in a studied discourse made the most elaborate panegyric on Clement; treated his action as surprising and admirable beyond the work of man; observing that so glorious an act could not have been performed but by the immediate direction of God, and the especial assistance of his providence; and declared the deceased king unworthy of the funeral honours usually paid to princes.*

But whatever might be the opinion at Rome, the new king's sentiments were very different; for he determined, fearing any insult should be offered to the corpse of the deceased, to conduct it to Compeigne, and assist at the interment. There might be some policy in this resolution; for, notwithstanding Henry had endeavoured by secret promises to the principal persons in his army to prevent it, yet several of the Catholics left him; which occasioned such a reduction of his forces, that he could not prudently maintain his post; but wished to conceal the real cause of his removal. He divided his troops into three bodies; one of them he gave to the Duke de Longueville, to lead into Picardy, of which province he was governor; the other he sent into Champagne under the command of Marshal D'Aumont; and the third, which was the most considerable, after having performed the funeral honours to the deceased king at Compeigne, he conducted towards Normandy; that he might not be at too great a distance from the towns in his possession near the capital; and yet secure himself a seaport town, if the war should turn out much in his disfavour.†

Soon after he entered the province of Normandy, Monsieur de Chattes, governor of Dieppe, invited him to take possession of that city, which perfectly answered his views; and he continued De Chattes in the government of it. Caen also submitted to him in the like manner, and he took some other towns of less consideration; but was obstructed in his progress by the arrival of the Duke de Mayenne, at head of twenty thousand men; a force to which the king's bore no proportion; but to avoid his powerful enemy neither suited his courage nor his prudence; he therefore pitched his camp at Arques, a small unfortified town, about a league and a half from Dieppe. The duke fixed his at a small distance, and kept within his intrenchments for three days; though the royal army endeavoured by every kind of bravado to draw him out of it. After that term the two armies engaged in frequent skirmishes, always to the disadvantage of the duke's; and on the 21st of September they came to a general engagement, wherein the royalists, though much less than half in number, had so greatly the advantage, that the Duke de Mayenne thought proper to decamp, and march into Picardy; to preserve the towns of that province faithful to the League.*

The king having no longer that powerful army to restrain him; and hearing that the Parisians spoke with great contempt of his small force, determined to show them it was more formidable than they apprehended; and having received a recruit of four thousand English, he marched towards Paris, forced the suburbs, plundered them, and threw the city into great consternation.† He then took Vendome, Sablé, Chateau-Gontier, Mayenne, Laval, Alençon, and Falaise; but could not succour Bois-de-Vincennes, and Pontoise, besieged by the Duke de Mayenne; which were reduced to capitulate.‡ Henry soon after obliged the Duke de Mayenne to raise the siege of Meulan; but having himself laid siege to Dreux, the duke's approach determined him to draw off his troops from that enterprise, in order to give the duke battle, though his army was greatly inferior, not having much more than half the number of the enemy, and being particularly deficient in cavalry.

The two armies drew up in order of battle near Ivri. After prayers had been said at the head of the battalions, the king taking in his hand his helmet, which was ornamented with a plume of white feathers, looked round on his army with a countenance expressive of cheerfulness and martial ardour, and said to them, "My fellow soldiers, God is on our side; behold his enemies and ours; your king is at your head, march on boldly; if you lose sight of your standard, let this plume of feathers be your guide; you shall find it in the road to hon-

* De Thou, tom. vii. p. 495.
† Ibid. p. 539. Cayet tom. i. p. 256. Hist. du duc de Bouill. liv. 3. p. 148.

* Hist. du duc de Bouill. liv. 3. p. 549. Dav. lib. 10. p. 512. Oecon. roy. de Sully, tom. i. p. 325. Cayet, tom. i. p. 268.
† Ibid. p. 328. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 552.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 226.

our and victory." The attack began by a general discharge of the king's artillery, before the duke was well prepared for the engagement; which occasioned some confusion in his troops, and the royalists allowed them no time to recover from it. Victory (though not till after a long and desperate contention) declared for Henry; and the Duke de Mayenne was reduced to fly to Mantes, after having in vain endeavoured to rally his scattered forces.* In the battle, and the pursuit, his loss was computed at eight hundred cavalry, and eighteen hundred infantry, beside his standards and his baggage. The latter circumstance gave occasion for a bon mot from one of his officers, which could not be very acceptable, as he was scarcely in a temper to take pleasure in a jest; the officer congratulated him on having at last got the thing for which he had so often wished, an army without baggage.† The loss was not inconsiderable on the king's side, several gentlemen of distinguished courage having fallen in the battle, or died of their wounds soon after it.

The duke not thinking himself safe in a town, the inhabitants of which were by the recent victory won over to his enemies, left Mantes the next day; and Henry was received into it with joy. He then determined on laying siege to Paris, and as a necessary prelude took Meulan, Corbeil, and Lagny; with other places requisite to prevent the conveyance of supplies of provisions into that city. He sat down before Paris with fourteen thousand foot and two thousand five hundred horse. The Duke de Nemours commanded in the town at the head of eight thousand regular troops, and fifty thousand citizens, above two-thirds of which were well armed and exercised; and animated with all the fury which fierce and bigoted preachers can inspire; supported by the pope's authority, and the sanction of the casuistical doctors of the Sorbonne.‡ So populous a city as Paris could ill subsist without a continual supply of provisions; and although Henry connived at the frequent sale of necessaries carried on in the night time between his men and the Parisians, yet they were soon reduced to the greatest extremities; the common people having nothing to feed on but what is most disgustful to human nature. The Duke de Nemours, indeed, took care that the preachers should have a sufficient support, lest hunger might dampen their zeal, which was highly necessary to animate the people under the pressure of such extreme distress. The like care was taken of those to whom the thirteen gates of the city were entrusted; persons chosen out from such as in the support of the cause had offended beyond the hope of pardon; or selected from the foreign troops in the garrison. To this precaution it may in great measure be attributed that the town held out, while the greatest part of its inhabitants perished with hunger, or by maladies arising from their unwholesome diet.* They expelled great numbers of women and children from their city as an useless burden, who were humanely received in Henry's camp, and supplied with necessaries; D'Aubigné mentions having at one time twenty-two of these distressed wretches in his tent.†

The king hoped to reconcile the Parisians to him by that humanity of conduct, which left them a power of resisting him, beyond what would otherwise have been possible; but the heart of the furious bigot is impenetrable: the Parisians took advantage of his generosity, without losing any of their hatred towards him; they were exasperated by the evils they suffered, and felt no gratitude that he did not inflict greater as his interest required; and which would have prevented the mortification he received by the necessity the Prince of Parma's approach laid him under of raising the siege. When the Prince of Parma and the Duke de Mayenne reached Meaux; the king withdrew his troops from the city to Claye, a place between Paris and Meaux: where the two armies were so near together, that frequent and obstinate skirmishes passed between them,‡ wherein D'Aubigné was generally engaged. Henry wished to give the enemy battle; but the Prince of Parma thought it his interest to avoid it, as his view was to relieve Paris without exposing his troops to so dangerous an encounter.

By the persuasion of the Marshal de Biron, the king fixed his camp at Chelles; and to prevent the Prince of Parma from taking possession of Lagni, which would open to him a road to Paris, he determined to send two regiments thither, and took the Marshal de Biron and D'Aubigné with him, to reconnoitre the place. A dispute arose concerning the measures that should be taken to preserve that post; D'Aubigné represented that the forces destined for that purpose were not sufficient to defend it; but his remonstrances were ineffectual, and Henry had the mortification to see Lagni taken by the enemy, and thereby a free passage to Paris opened to them.§ Nor was this the only vexation he suffered; the Catholics in his army grew mutinous and fearful; and

* De Thou, tom. vii. p. 618. Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 354 Hist. des derniers troubles de France, liv. 5. p. 19. Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 232. Cayet, tom. i. p. 333.

† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. p. 233.

‡ Ibid. p. 234. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 686.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 234. Cayet, tom. i. p. 371.

† Ibid. p. 236. Pere. Dan. tom vi. p. 371.

‡ Ibid. p. 376. Della Guerra di Fiandra, parte 2. lib. 5. p. 108. Dav lib. 11. p. 669.

§ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 240. Della Guerra di Fiandra, parte 2. p. 110.

he was reduced to so total a want of money that he had not sufficient to purchase himself a dinner; and from mere necessity went to dine with Monsieur D'O, his treasurer, whom he found at a well-covered table with his friends, while to distress his master he had pretended an inability to furnish him with the smallest supply.* Several of the Catholic nobility believing the king's affairs were declining, quitted his service; and to avoid a more general desertion, he found it necessary to retire further from Paris; and to keep up the ardour of his soldiers by action. Marshal de Biron, at the head of part of his troops, took Clermont en Bois-voisin; while Henry reinforced the garrisons of such places as were most exposed to the attacks of the enemy.† The Prince of Parma laid siege to Corbeil, which though ill fortified, resisted the force of the Spanish army for three weeks, being vigorously defended, till the commander, and almost all the garrison were slain.‡ The besiegers lost between seven and eight hundred men in the enterprise; which exasperated them so much, that they put to death all the inhabitants; many of them in cold blood, though they were partisans of the league.

The difficulty the prince found in taking this town discouraged him from any further attempts; and leaving a thousand men in garrison, he marched towards the frontiers. He had completed the purpose with which he entered France. By obliging Henry to raise the siege, he had at once removed the threatened danger from the capital, and given the inhabitants time to revictual the city, which was before reduced to the utmost miseries of famine. No insults could induce him to engage in battle with a prince whose only resource was in victory; and by thus disappointing Henry's endeavours, he did him as much harm as by a defeat; for the greatest part of his army were detained only by the hopes of plundering the capital, and when those were frustrated, and a battle was no longer to be expected, they withdrew. But the king's courage did not depend on the number of his men; he determined with a small body to impede the retreat of the enemy, and not suffer the prince to perform so considerable a service to the leaguers with impunity. The prince had not proceeded far before the king's party recovered Corbeil by stratagem; and found upon the pavement in the streets the dead bodies of children, some of them in their cradles, that the Spaniards had thrown out of the windows: a spectacle which proved fatal to the garrison, for the enraged conquerors put them all to the sword.§

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 241.
† De Thou, tom. vii. p. 664.
‡ Dav. lib. 11. p. 688. Cayet, tom. i. p. 386. Della Guerra di Fiand. parte 2. p. 112.
§ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 242, 243. De Thou, tom. vii. p. 669 and 671.

The king drawing together a considerable body of horse, followed the prince in his retreat, harassing his army in such a manner, that it reached the frontiers in very bad condition;* and had it been under the conduct of a less able general, must have been entirely destroyed. In this march the king appeared to vulgar eyes to drive the Spaniards out of the kingdom, and they to fly before him; a point of view so glorious, that it brought a great number of towns over to his side; and having got possession of several in Normandy, he determined to besiege Rouen.

During the course of this year D'Aubigné divided his time between the king's army and the province of Poictou, where his affairs required his presence; though the desire of sharing in every action where honour might be obtained, tempted him to make frequent excursions to those places where his master was engaged in person. Soon after the death of Henry III. the king apprehending that the Cardinal of Bourbon was not sufficiently safe in the castle of Chinon, caused him to be removed into the lower Poictou, of which the Sieur de la Bouillaie was governor. Maillezais was judged at first the properest place for the cardinal's abode; Plessis Mornay objected to it, as it might be dangerous to trust him in the hands of D'Aubigné, who was governor of that town, and had received so many just causes of offence from the king; but Henry replied, he should require from him a promise of the faithful discharge of his trust, which would be a sufficient security.† A strong proof of the confidence he had in D'Aubigné's honour; as the safe guarding of the cardinal's person was of the highest importance to the king. Henry had a just sense of D'Aubigné's probity; he knew that his fidelity was not to be undermined by interest, shaken by mortifications or disappointments, nor even conquered by injuries; and to that perfect knowledge might in some measure, possibly, be attributed the little reward he received for his long services. His master knew that no disgust could induce him to quit the party; conscious at the same time that he was more strongly attached to it by the interest of his religion than by any private respects. D'Aubigné admired the hero; he loved the king for his affability and engaging manners; but his soul was devoted to him only as the champion of the Huguenots, for whom he was ever ready to sacrifice his fortune and his life. Thus he secured the king's confidence, without gaining his affection; but those who knew him less, flattered themselves his integrity might not be incorruptible.

He had no sooner the cardinal under his

* Davila, lib. 11. p. 693.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 103.

care, than an Italian gentleman brought him the following letter from the Duchess of Retz:

"I hope that expressions of the sincere friendship the Marshal de Retz, my husband, and myself, bear towards you, and the warm assurances of our ardent desire for your advancement and the welfare of of our young cousins your children, will not be unacceptable to you. Show the world, now you have a fair opportunity, that you have spirit to resent and revenge the injuries you have received; which will afford the means of proving to you, that,

I am, &c."

When D'Aubigné had read this letter, the bearer declared his commission; which was to offer him the immediate payment of two hundred thousand crowns; or the government of Belleisle, with fifty thousand crowns; on condition that he should connive at his prisoner's escape. D'Aubigné replied, "that the second proposition was the more eligible, as it seemed to offer him a means of eating in peace and safety the bread of treachery; but as his conscience would follow him closely into all places, it would embark with him when he should pass into that island, and be his perpetual tormenter; therefore the messenger had nothing to do but to return by the road he came, for that had he not granted him a safe conduct, he would send him bound hand and foot to the king his master."*

When the leaguers found they had nothing to hope from negociation and bribery, they attempted to surprise Maillezais; but being in this also disappointed, the governor's vigilance convinced them that the first and most necessary step, was to destroy him. With this view a Captain Dauphin, the chief of a band which had for some time lived by pillaging the lower Poictou, pretended an ardent desire to revenge himself on the Count de Brissac for some severe reprehensions he had received from him in regard to his male-practices; and proposed a conference with D'Aubigné: who at the same time received information from Poictiers and Rochelle, that Dauphin made this proposition only to obtain an opportunity of attempting his life, to which he was instigated by the Count de Brissac. D'Aubigné, in hopes of so managing the affair as to get the count into his hands, was not intimidated by the intelligence given him, but appointed Dauphin to meet him at break of day in an empty house, a little way out of the town. All preliminaries being agreed, D'Aubigné at the stated hour went alone out of Maillezais, causing the bridge to be drawn up as soon as he passed it; and finding Dauphin at the place, said to him, "I have been warned against giving thee this meeting, and assured that thy design in asking it was only to execute orders given thee to assassinate me. I would not credit the charge; but if thou hast any such intention, here are two swords, take thy choice of either, and on equal terms attempt to execute thy purpose; yonder lies a boat, which I have sent thither on purpose, that thou mayest escape beyond this marsh, if the event of the combat proves favourable to thee." Dauphin astonished at this proposition, and overcome by so frank and generous a procedure, threw down his sword, with all possible tokens of submission, and confessed his purpose. They entered then into a conference, which turned to no account: and if Dauphin was disappointed of his design, D'Aubigné was not less mortified at being frustrated of his hopes, by finding no means of executing his project against the Count de Brissac, or of reaping any other fruits from this meeting, than the reproaches of his own judgment, for having rashly and uselessly exposed himself to a danger which as a prudent governor, whose safety was of great importance to the town, he ought to have avoided.* Pontenai being put into proper order, the cardinal was removed thither, where he soon after died, and set D'Aubigné at liberty to bear a considerable share in the reduction of many towns in Poictou; where La Bouillaie, commander of the troop, owed much of his success to D'Aubigné's conduct and intrepidity, who, notwithstanding his avocations in that province, repaired frequently to the king's camp before Paris, and distinguished himself in the siege, or rather blockade of that city.†

The king had drawn together as great a part of his forces to besiege Rouen as could safely be collected from his best garrisoned towns; and from the several provinces of France, where they had successfully defended his cause. The Hollanders sent him near three thousand men, under the command of Count Philip of Nassau: queen Elizabeth four thousand, led by Roger Williams; a short time after the Earl of Essex brought him a reinforcement of English infantry; and the Prince of Anhalt a body of Germans; all together composed an army of thirty-five thousand men.‡

The Marquis de Villars commanded a strong garrison in the town, and had used every means to render it impregnable; as obstinately bent to defend the place as the king was to take it, who exerted all his skill and valour in the attempt, and even mounted guard every fourth night himself. On one of those nights he forced a trench which Villars had caused to be made on the outside of the castle, and when taken gave

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 104.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 106.
† Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. chap. 5, and 6.
‡ De Thou, tom. viii. p. 46. Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 415.

the defence of it to the English; but it did not remain long in their hands, for Villars regained it the next night. Henry, unaccustomed to relinquish an advantage once gained, determined two nights after on a second attempt; whereupon, Williams, eager to recover his and his soldier's honour, requested that the English might share the enterprise, and make the first attack; which being granted them, they forced their way into the trench with such fury that they drove out the enemy, though double the number that defended it when it was first taken*.

Attacks on the part of the besiegers, and sallies on that of the besieged, were frequent. In one of those which was led by Villars himself, the king himself being at some distance on horseback, with only Williams and D'Aubigné, perceiving that his men gave way, rode down a hill, which could not without difficulty be descended even on foot; and spurring his horse, forced it over the dam in the river Aubette, with such manifest danger to his life, that his companions, though two of the bravest men of the age, durst not follow him; but sought a passage more fordable. His presence soon made the enemy retire; but the brave Grillon, who preserved the party from a total defeat, had his arm broken by a musket ball.†

The besieged were much enouraged by the approach of the Prince of Parma, at the head of above twenty thousand men. Henry was very desirous of engaging him in battle, which the prince chose to avoid, epxecting to be joined in a short time by the Duke de Mayenne, and other reinforcements. In this resolution the king appointed D'Aubigné sergent de battaille; and leaving Marshal Biron to continue the siege, selected a corps of his best troops, and the bravest of the nobility, and led them to meet the Prince of Parma; who was marching in such excellent order, that the king was not only disappointed of his hopes of gaining some advantage over him, but being overpowered by numbers, with difficulty made good his retreat, after receiving a slight wound.‡

In this skirmish, D'Aubigné, being one of the last that retired, was in the heat of the engagement thrown off a causeway, and attacked by several of the enemy, who must in a very short time have put an end to his life, had not Mr. D'Arambure perceived his desperate situation, and calling three of his friends, instantly hastened to his rescue, which he happily effected; and gave him leisure to regain the causeway, and accompany the king to Aumale.*

Henry, not long after, revenged himself for this disappointment, by an unexpected attack on the quarters of the Dukes de Mayenne and D'Aumale, who had then joined the prince, where he made a considerable slaughter. But after many skirmishes with various fortune; several attacks made on the town, and many very vigorous sallies of the besieged repulsed, the Prince of Parma found means, by the negligence of the guard in Monsieur de Fervaques' quarters, to introduce succours into the city;† and in the latter end of March, Henry finding his views frustrated, and that it was to no purpose to continue the siege, withdrew his troops from the town, and closely followed the Prince of Parma; who having succeeded in what he had undertaken, the relief of the city of Rouen, had begun his march towards Paris. Henry seized every opportunity of harassing the prince's army, and after destroying great numbers in various skirmishes, and reducing the rest into great distress from scarcity of provisions, had planned a general attack to be begun the next morning; but was disappointed of his hopes, by the prince's having effected a retreat in the night, by ways imagined impracticable.‡

The prince made but a short stay at Paris; and then led his army back into the Low Countries; where, in the latter end of the year, a wound he had received in his march from Rouen to Paris,§ which had never been cured, joined with the vexation of seeing the arms of the malecontents so successful in Holland, put a period to his life.‖

The death of an enemy of such distinguished abilities was a fortunate circumstance for Henry; but could not compensate for the loss of some of his bravest captains, which had happened that year, particularly, the incomparable La Noue,¶ St. Gelais, the Marshal de Biron, and La Vallette (brother to the Duke D'Epernon) governor of Provence, who had shared with Lesdiguieres in the glory of a long series of successes against the Duke of Savoy, in Piedmont, Dauphiné, and Provence.**

The Prince of Parma's death delivered the Duke de Mayenne of a rival he both feared and hated; the great abilities of that general rendered the power of Spain formidable, even to those who had recourse to it for the support of their party. The duke was sensible that the King of Spain aimed only at aggrandizing himself, under the co-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 259.

† Ibid. p. 260.

‡ De Thou, tom. vii. p. 57. Oecon. Roy. &c. de Sully, tom. i. p. 423. Guerra di Fiandra, parte ii. lib. 6. p. 126.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 263.

† De Thou, tom. viii. p. 64. Dav. lib. 12. p. 758.

‡ Ibid. p. 71.

§ Oecon. &c. de Sully, tom. i. p. 435. Cayet. tom. ii. liv. 4. p. 32.

‖ Guerra di Fiandra, de Ren. parte ii. lib. 6. p. 134.

¶ Vie de La Noue, p. 366.

** Hist. du Connetable de Lesdiguieres, p. 244.

lour of defending the cause of religion; and that he would use every art to dispossess him of the sovereign power which he had so long exercised: this jealousy had given rise to frequent dissensions between him and the Prince of Parma; whose views and operations the duke had for some time opposed and counteracted on every occasion, from which Henry reaped considerable advantages. The Spanish monarch at length growing weary of incurring a certain expense for a precarious interest, determined to fix the point; and supported by the influence of the Pope, insisted on an assembly of the states, in order to elect a Catholic sovereign; asserting that no heretic could ascend the throne of France *

This step was not more alarming to the king than to the Duke de Mayenne; who, conscious of being hated by the Spaniards, well knew he had no chance of being elected to that power which he then enjoyed, and could not consent to relinquish; and when he could no longer prevent the states from assembling, he sought every means to frustrate the views of those who had obliged him to convene them. The Spanish ambassadors offered great supplies of money and troops if the Infanta, Clara Eugenia, daughter to the King of Spain, were elected; treating the Salic law, which excludes females from the throne of France, as an idle objection: but finding the assembly would not consent to receive a woman for their sovereign, the ambassadors offered the same assistance, if a Catholic prince of France, or Lorrain, were elected jointly with the Infanta, to whom she could be given in marriage. After long and warm debate, the Duke of Guise was pitched upon as the properest person; but the Duke de Mayenne, not finding the exaltation of his nephew a sufficient compensation for the loss of his power, contrived to get the election of a king postponed.†

During the session of the assembly, which from the absence of many of the most considerable persons in the kingdom did not deserve the name of estates, a conference was carried on between a stipulated number of Catholic deputies from the king, and the most zealous of the leaguers, in order to treat of a peace, little desired by the Duke de Mayenne, whom the clamours of the Parisians, and some others of his party, grown tired of the war, and awakened to a due esteem for the king, had obliged, contrary to his inclination, to consent to the deputation; but as he would not acknowledge Henry as sovereign of France, nor treat with a heritic, he carried his compliance no further than to agree to a conference with some of the Catholics on the subject;* not without hopes, by means of this condescension, to draw them off from their party; and also to prevent hostilities till the arrival of the foreign succours he expected.

The conference concluded without any other effect than a truce between the parties for three months; all possibility of a stable agreement being precluded by the deputies of the leaguers insisting on Henry's conversion, and reconciliation with the Pope, as the necessary preliminary to any treaty with him; refusing to acknowledge him for their king till he had received his holiness's absolution. This obstinacy, together with a party newly formed, under the title of Le Tiers parti,† composed of persons who denied equally the authority of an heretical prince, and of the league, very much alarmed Henry, and made him fear any longer to delay his renunciation of the reformed religion. All the Catholics about his court were ready to take advantage of his fears, and urged him in the strongest manner to hasten his conversion.

While this point was in agitation, D'Aubigné being in the room with the king, when only another person, and he a Huguenot, was present; seized the opportunity to represent to him the peculiar blessings he had received from above, and the curses which always follow ingratitude; urging that it was more eligible to reign over a corner of France, like the true and faithful servant of God, surrounded by subjects of tried affection and fidelity; than to hold a precarious sovereignty, trampled upon by the Pope, insulted by the reconciled leaguers, and secretly despised by those who had intimidated him with menaces of dangers that did not exist; all equally rapacious to divide between them a kingdom, the spirit of whose king they had subdued. "The very dregs of the people," said D'Aubigné, "become formidable to a prince reduced into such a state of weakness; fear prevents rebellion, contempt excites it. I acknowledge," continued he, "that the path of virtue is more rugged, and more intricate; and will lead you a wider circuit before it will conduct you to the quiet possession of the crown; but by the other road you can never arrive at an effectual sovereignty. Rome trembles with the apprehension of seeing you established on the throne by a series of victories; conscious that a King of France who shall shake off the yoke of papal power, who can convert useless expenses to his own support and security, dedicating the stipends of monks to the pay of a brave soldiery, may on a

* De Thou, tom. viii. p. 199. Cayet, tom. ii. liv. 4. p 108.

† Ibid. p. 291. L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 241. Memoires d'Etat de Villeroy, tom. i. p. 339.

* L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 215. Vie de du Plessis Morn. p. 194. Memoires d'Etat de Vill. tom. i. p. 332. Dav. lib. 13. p. 858.

† L'Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 153.

reasonable calculation maintain three armies of an hundred thousand men each, strengthen them with an hundred cannon, keep his garrisons well supplied, his officers well paid, relieve his subjects of a third part of the taxes which oppress them, and put annually a considerable sum into his treasury. The absurd attempt to form a third party, and the more than ordinary importunity with which the Catholics press your conversion, arise only from the confusion which reigns among your enemies, and the difficulties which occur in the choice of a king. There is not one of the pretenders to the crown, who has not signified by his emissaries, that if the choice does not fall on him, he will immediately fight under your banners; thus in a war with the Infanta's husband, all his rivals will fight on your side. It is well known that, except a few who have offended beyond the hope of pardon, the Parisians listen with pleasure to no discourse that does not turn on your generous placability; nor have they any wish at heart but to throw themselves on your mercy, and obtain your pardon by submission. The ridiculous conduct of their clergy has at length rendered them the objects of their derision. It is true, that when the people declare their desire of submitting to you, they accompany it with a supposition of your conversion, but with the modest restriction of, *if that may be;* having no such hopes, but what are instilled into them by the Catholics who are about your person. The other day as the Duke de Nemours came from council, where the Duke of Lorrain's eldest son had been recommended as a proper person to be raised to the throne, he said to one of the most factious citizens who spake of you under the appellation of the King of Navarre, *There are no longer any but fools who do not see that title must be changed.* Monsieur Vitri in coming out of the same council, cursing their folly and nonsense said, *It is much more eligible to enter into the service of the brave Huguenot.* He, and his uncle la Chatre, are ready to acknowledge you as their sovereign. Have patience, Sire, and wait the effects of their confusion. Suffer them to elect their king of straw; that act will bring great numbers over to you; let them thus collect all the venom of the party into one head, that at one blow you may destroy all your enemies; and use the excellent understanding, and quick discernment which God has given you, to distinguish the difference between a king who has won a crown by wisdom and valour, and one who has obtained it by submission."*

This spirited advice had some effect on the king, who for some days showed an increased reluctance to a change of religion; but this only stimulated to greater urgency those who had undertaken to persuade him; among whom none had so much influence as the Duchess of Beaufort. She had been a friend to the Reformed; but having conceived hopes of the king's marrying her, to which he was then much disposed, she considered as a necessary step towards it, his conversion to a religion in which alone he could obtain a regular and indisputable dispensation from his marriage with Margaret the deceased king's sister. The long series of years passed by Henry in unremitted fatigue and danger, the probability of a tedious continuance of the same labours, before he could ascend the throne if he remained a Huguenot, with the uncertainty of even attaining to it at all without professing the Catholic faith, were powerful arguments for his conversion; the more easily listened to, as he had never been strongly attached to his religion; and had often found the rigid piety of the Reformed clergy very troublesome, who did not scruple interrupting his licentious pleasures by severe remonstrances; boldly reprehending him for his favourite vices. The natural humanity of his temper added weight to the arguments of the Catholics, inspiring him with a desire of restoring peace to a nation long torn with civil commotions, and of changing the dreadful ravages, and cruel havock of a civil war, into a state of ease and plenty. As the lives of thousands of his countrymen depended on his conversion, it is not to be wondered at that humanity, aided by ambition, and the love of pleasure, triumphed over other important considerations, determining him to make a public recantation of his former tenets, and seek reconciliation with the Romish church; accordingly on the 25th of July he went to mass in the church of St. Denis.*

This event, though not unexpected, threw the truly pious among the Huguenots into the utmost consternation. They had flattered themselves with hopes of seeing the exercise of their religion secured, if not universally established under the reign of a Huguenot prince; and little doubted but in time they should have been able to seat him on the throne, without his being reduced to make any concessions. They now saw themselves brought into a more dangerous situation than they had ever yet been. Henry had suffered too much control while he was the chief of their party to love them sincerely, even at the time when he owed his successes to their valour: but now that he was conscious he had disappointed their hopes, they could not believe but he would behold them with suspicion and disgust. From the time that the Catholics began to

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 3. p. 292.

* Dav. lib. 13. p. 881. De Thou, tom. viii. p. 309. Oeconomies roy. &c. de Sully, tom. ii. p. 62. Cayet, liv. 5. p. 223.

adhere to him, they had entirely engrossed all the favours he had to bestow; he had even privately given them his word that the Huguenots should not share with them any posts of trust or profit; a promise industriously divulged by those to whom it was made; and there was little probability they should ever suffer him to break it; or to grant any considerable indulgences to the professors of that religion he had abjured; which he could not even tolerate, without exciting suspicions of the sincerity of his conversion. The Huguenots had therefore little to expect from his gratitude; and after having spent their youth and fortunes in his service, were not only disappointed of their hopes, but left without a leader and protector who could render them formidable, and enable them to obtain by their strength and importance what they could not gain by favour. Till now they had always had a prince of the blood at their head; and fought under the banners of men of the greatest consequence in the kingdom; but by this event they were deprived both of countenance and protection. Henry, indeed, endeavoured to quiet their fears by private assurances of his favour and affection; attributing his submission to the church to his desire of sparing the blood of his subjects, of rescuing them from the influence of foreign power, and saving the kingdom from the yoke of Spain, with which it was threatened; intimating that although dire necessity obliged him to go to mass, his heart would still be with the Huguenots:* but they gave little faith to these professions; yet still continued in his service, till Paris, and most of the principal towns in the kingdom, withdrawing from the league, submitted to him.

But neither the generosity with which the king treated all such as came over to his service, nor the joy of the people for their newly acquired peace and safety, could preserve Henry from private malice, and the rage of bigotry. He had not been converted above a month, when, from information received, one Peter Barriere was seized, and convicted of a design to assassinate the king;† and in little more than a year after, the same crime was attempted by Jean Chatel; but Henry happening fortunately to stoop, as the villain gave the blow, it only wounded him in the lip, and broke one of his teeth.‡

These enterprises gave some interruption to the pleasure Henry enjoyed in receiving overtures from the commanders in the principal towns, and the chief nobility among the leaguers; though their loyalty did not operate till they had made some fruitless endeavours to obtain from Spain sufficient support to enable them to continue the war.* Nor would they lay down their arms without first obtaining such honours, governments, or other emoluments, as they thought proper to demand. But the lower ranks of people were so desirous of enjoying once more the blessings of peace, that it would have been difficult for those who were averse to it, to have kept up an army of their own countrymen. The defection of the most upright and zealous Huguenots also gave some mortification to the king. A great many of the officers of that persuasion had followed their prince's example: more attached to their worldly interests than to their religion, they could not resolve to sacrifice all their hopes of reward for the long services they had rendered him, to a doctrine which they well knew would deprive those who professed it of all the emoluments of government; for the pope had made the king's fulfilling the private engagement he had entered into with the Catholics, of giving no preferments to the Reformed, one of the conditions on which he granted him absolution for his former heresy. Others among the Huguenots, more careful of their honour, though equally attentive to their interests, by artfully temporizing, in some measure saved the one, without relinquishing the other, continuing to adhere to the Reformed church, while they approved their master's abjuration of its tenets.† Nor were they deficient in plausible arguments in justification of his apostasy. To sheathe the sword of civil discord, and restore peace to a ruined kingdom, depopulated by intestine divisions and foreign invaders, was a motive which must plead strongly in every humane breast in favour of the king's conduct; but was not sufficient to justify it to men who had joyfully sacrificed ease and fortune, and dedicated even their lives, to the defence of the religion he abjured. The Huguenots found the king so little inclined to take any steps in their favour, that they judged it necessary to concert measures for their own safety.

Before his conversion he had ordered the churches to convene a synod at St. Maixant, in order to elect a certain number of deputies from among them to attend him at Mantes, and receive directions for their future conduct; but after he entered the Romish church he revoked that order, and thereby increased their apprehensions.‡ But the assembly being met at the time appointed, D'Aubigné, who was one of the most incorruptible of the party, and not to be biassed by any view to the rewards he might justly have expected for the signal services he had done the king, determined

* Hist Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 4. p. 364. Vie de du Plessis Mornay, p. 207.
† De Thou. tom. viii. p. 321.
‡ Cayet, liv. 6. p. 432.

* De Thou, tom. viii. p. 362.
† Hist. de Henry duc de Bouill. liv. 4. p. 172.
‡ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. liv. 4. p. 363. Vie Du Plessis Mornay, p. 200.

not to forsake his distressed friends; though they had so little prospect of any resources as scarcely allowed a probability that his attachment could prove of any advantage to them, to opppose to the absolute certainty of its being hurtful to his private interests. As he was travelling to Maixant, in great despondency of mind, with one of the Huguenot ministers, the conversation between them naturally fell on the ruin of their party, and the difficulty of preventing the evils which threatened it; till growing warm with the cause, they agreed not to suffer despair so far to prevail over them, as to prevent their making some effort, however fruitless it might prove, to obtain redress. Thus resolved, they selected six of the most able and zealous from among those who composed the synod; and D'Aubigné having invited them to supper, laid before them the distressed state of the church; the little good they had to expect; and the great evil they had to fear from the king's change of religion; which not only deprived them of a chief and protector, but likewise of the indulgences they might have hoped from many Catholic princes, as he would fear bringing the sincerity of his conversion into question, were he to show them any degree of favour: and being sensible that the Catholics were not truly attached to him, he would be under continual appehensions of disgusting them. Having sufficiently awakened in his auditors a sense of the dangers which threatened them and their brethren, D'Aubigné proposed that they should consider what remedies could be applied to the impending evils, and determine on some useful course to prevent their entire destruction.

Before they entered on this deliberation, one of their ministers read prayers to them, according to the usual practice of the Huguenots before they commenced any thing of importance, whether in action or council; but as soon as they had performed their devotions, three of their number withdrew, after representing to their friends the dangers to which they would expose themselves by the attempt they meditated, and the little probability that so small a number of men, should be able either to rouse their own party out of the lethargy of despair, or prevail with the king to show them that favour they deserved from him. The justness of these observations could not be denied, but they were not of sufficient force to damp the ardour of those to whom they were addressed. The difficulty of obtaining redress rendered their state the more desperate, and thereby animated them to exert the more vigorously their utmost powers to raise the spirit of their desponding party, and engage them in an attempt to obtain the free exercise of their religion, and the security of their persons.

Warm with this resolution they entered the Synod; where D'Aubigné made so full, and so strong a representation of the melancholy situation of the Huguenot church, laid so plainly before them all the evils they had to apprehend, and urged so forcibly how much they were bound by duty to their religion, themselves, and their posterity, to get their present uncertain state changed into some firm establishment, that he prevailed on them to send from among them some of the most able, to the Huguenots of all the other provinces of the kingdom, to persuade them to appoint deputies from each, to attend the king at a time agreed upon; notwithstanding the revocation of his order to that effect; with a petition to his majesty to direct in what manner he would have them conduct themselves for the future; to entreat that he would be pleased to order a general assembly of the Huguenots, that they might all receive his directions at the same time; and also that he would change the truce, now the only foundation for the quiet state of the kingdom, into a settled peace.*

This plan was so successful, that all the deputies met at Mantes on the 12th of December, where the king then was, and presented their petition. He promised to cause the edict of Poictiers, given in the year 1577, to be republished; and answered, in such general and vague terms their request for an assembly of the churches, that explaining it in their favour, they appointed the month of May in the following year for a general assembly, to be held at St. Foix.† According to the king's promise, the edict of Poictiers was republished in the Parliament of Paris, but with little effect, as the provincial parliaments refused to register it; and it was also very much restrained by concessions made in opposition to it, in the private treaties between the king and such Catholic nobles as came over to his service.

When the assembly met at St. Foix, D'Aubigné drew up a petition to the king, wherein was specified all that the Huguenots desired from him. This was presented to him, but it contained more articles than he chose to answer, and higher demands than he thought proper to grant, if he were secretly inclined to comply with their request, which is by no means certain; though the Huguenots believed, or affected to believe it, perhaps as an apology for the warmth and frequency of their solicitations: but if they judged him rightly, he was checked by the fear of disobliging the Pope, and his Catholic subjects; so that all they gained was promises that were not observed, and permission to hold an assembly at Saumur in the December following, where D'Aubigné distinguished himself with his usual spirit. Even his own private afflic-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. loc. cit.
† Ibid. p. 366. Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 210.

tions could not render him insensible to the common cause. He had at this time the misfortune to lose his wife, whom he loved with uncommon tenderness, but whose society he had seldom enjoyed; seeing her only for short intervals, snatched from the dangers and fatigues of war, when the expectation of a speedy departure poisoned the pleasure of meeting. The time was now come when he might with little interruption have indulged his affection, and in the bosom of his beloved family enjoyed social and domestic happiness; but all those flattering hopes were fatally destroyed by her death. His house became the scene of affliction; the sight of his friends reminded him of his misfortune; the military life alone promised him a new train of thought, and some suspension of his sorrows.

The war the king had declared against Spain, offered D'Aubigné some opportunities for the exertion of that martial spirit which had actuated him from his earliest years. Henry was then besieging La Fere;* in his camp D'Aubigné was sensible he might find the relief which was become so necessary to him; but his conduct in the assemblies of the Reformed Church had so much offended Henry, that he was said to have declared in the presence of many persons, that if ever D'Aubigné fell into his hands he would put him to death. This menace would have deterred many from presenting themselves before him, but it had a different effect on D'Aubigné. His pride was piqued when he found that his retirement from court, and his obstinate refusal to return thither, were attributed to vexation for having lost the king's favour since he ascended the throne of France; and that the courage and zeal with which he laboured to raise the drooping cause of religion, was considered as the consequence of despair and resentment. He was not conscious of deserving so ill at the king's hands for his steady attachment to a party to whom that prince owed his crown, though policy had induced him to quit it, and to neglect its interests, as that it should endanger his life. But even should the king prove unjust, he rather chose to be the victim of his injustice than to be suspected of fear. Nor was this the strongest proof he ever gave of his courage. Life has few charms for the afflicted; a coward, when reduced to a state of misery, will boldly face death; even cowardice may lead him to seek it. Many of the most celebrated heroes of antiquity lose all just claim to the reputation of courage by having been fatalists, and some in all ages have had as little right to pretend to it since they have been tired of the life they so freely exposed. He who believes the hour of his death is so certainly decreed that no action of his can hasten or retard it, and he who feels life a burden of which he would gladly be delivered, is equally disqualified for making any pretensions to courage. D'Aubigné may perhaps be considered at this time under the latter predicament; but be that as it may, he determined to have some share in the siege of La Fere.

The king being then quartered at Chaulny, D'Aubigné repaired thither, and went directly to the Duchess of Beaufort's house, where he learnt that his majesty was expected. Two gentlemen of high rank, and who were old friends to D'Aubigné, as soon as they saw him, pressed his immediate departure in the most earnest and affectionate manner; intreating that he would not appear before the king, who was exasperated against him to the most violent degree. Their advice was strengthened by his hearing a consultation among the officers of the household, whether he ought to be delivered up to the captain of the guards, or to the civil magistrate; but his resolution was unalterable; and as night drew on, he placed himself among the people, who were waiting with flambeaux in their hands, to light the king on his arrival. In this situation he remained till his majesty appeared; and as the coach drove by, heard him say to those who were with him, There's Monseigneur D'Aubigné. The epithet of monseigneur, according to Henry's usual method of speaking, seemed to portend no very favourable reception; but not discouraged by it, he advanced to the side of the coach as the king got out of it, who not only embraced him, but bade him hand the duchess; and made her unmask to salute him; while the courtiers, with smiles, asked each other "Is this the treatment we expected him to receive, and does the fair Gabriella sign his condemnation with a kiss?"

When the king entered his own apartment he ordered every one to leave the room except the Duchess of Beaufort, Juliette d'Etrées, her sister, and D'Aubigné, between whom, and the duchess, he walked above two hours. During their conversation the king showed the scar made in his lip by the wound he received from Jean Castel; on which D'Aubigné said, "Sire, you have yet renounced God only with your lips, he has therefore suffered only your lip to be pierced; but if ever your heart renounces him, he will direct the wound to your heart." The king did not appear offended at a prediction so rough and shocking; but the duchess cried out, "A thought finely expressed! but ill applied." "True, madam," replied D'Aubigné, "because it will have no effect."

The Duchess of Beaufort had always held the Huguenots in such high esteem, that she suffered no servants about her who were not of that persuasion, and now showed a strong inclination to attach D'Aubigné to

* Cayet, tom. iii. liv. 7. p. 529.

her service; possibly from a conviction that if she could gain him, she should secure to herself a steady, bold, and sincere friend; a blessing no where so necessary, and yet no where so hard to acquire as in a court; where those who profess the strongest attachment, are least to be depended upon. Henry, from a desire to gratify her, or with design of attaching the Huguenots more strongly to him by a mark of confidence, and of giving them a dependance which would not be dangerous to him, on account of the extreme youth, and nearness of blood in their future chief, proposed to commit his son Cæsar, afterwards Duke de Vendome, to D'Aubigné's care and tuition; and causing him to be taken out of bed, and brought naked to them, and put into D'Aubigné's arms, and charged him to fetch the child when it had completed the third year of its age, in order to conduct it into Saintonge, and breed it up among the Huguenots, that it's connexion with them might be as intimate as possible. A scheme which never took effect, and possibly was never really formed, but only pretended, to make D'Aubigné believe, and consequently report him, to be very favourably inclined towards the Reformed party.

The effects of the deep affliction which D'Aubigné had suffered for the loss of his wife, appeared during the time he was at the siege of La Fere. For three months he had passed most of his nights in tears; to stop the violence of weeping, he had made it a custom to press with his hands very hard against that part of his side where the spleen lies; by which means bursting a blood vessel, a mass of blood was collected, and lay so long coagulated as brought his life into danger.*

The operations of the siege were a good deal retarded by a very severe illness with which the king was attacked, for it proved of so dangerous a nature as left his servants little power to attend to any thing else.† When his disorder was at the height, he was much disturbed by some religious scruples, conscious that his course of life had not been consonant to the Christian doctrine: in this perplexity he sent to D'Aubigné, as one whose conscience was a rigid judge, and whose frankness of nature would not suffer him to deceive even his prince, from a dangerous desire to set his mind at peace. He caused the door of his chamber to be locked, and after they had twice joined in prayers to the Almighty, he exhorted him to tell him plainly, and with that, sometimes unpleasing, but always useful sincerity, from which he had never deviated, whether he believed he had ever sinned against the Holy Ghost.

D'Aubigné, not taking himself for so deep a divine as the king thought him, endeavoured to substitute one of the Huguenot ministers to so delicate an office; but the king would not consent; nor indeed could he have done it without giving umbrage to the Catholics, and bringing the orthodoxy of his faith into suspicion. D'Aubigné was therefore obliged to assume the office of the casuist, and began by a discussion of the four marks by which only the sin against the Holy Ghost is described. He observed, that the first is, the commission of the sin during the consciousness of its sinfulness; the second, the wilful embracing of error, and repelling the spirit of truth; the third, to be without compunction and repentance, which, if real will inspire a hatred of sin, and of ourselves on account of our wickedness; and the fourth, a despair of finding mercy with God. Having thus described it, he recommended to the king an examination of his conscience, and the state of his own mind; in order to resolve the doubts which tormented him. From hence arose a conversation which continued above four hours, and was six times interrupted by fervent prayers. This casuistical office proved a fine cure after that conference, for his majesty's disorder abated the next day; and his scruples disappearing with the first amendment, he never choose to renew the conversation on that subject.*

The surrender of the town of La Fere,† determined D'Aubingé to return to his friends, and give his best services to his brethren in the assembly of the churches, which was at different times held at Vendome, Saumur, Loudun and Chartelleraud. He was on all occasions chosen with two or three more to defend boldly the interests of the Reformed, in discussions with the king's deputies; which necessarily exposed him to give new causes of offence to the king. Henry wished the Huguenots to resign the towns formerly assigned them as places of security, though not very formidable at that time to him; for as he maintained the garrisons placed in them, they were under his influence; yet being attached by their religion to the Huguenots, they appeared of some consequence to the party, who therefore refused to resign them. In a dispute on this subject, Monsieur de Fresne Canaye, one of the king's deputies, though a Huguenot, having spoken of the sovereign power with all the pomp of language he was master of, and with some contempt of the Huguenots; D'Aubigné, perceiving that his associates who spoke before him, were awed into lowering their tone, assumed more than common spirit, and expressed himself in higher and in stronger terms; which so much offended Monsieur de Fresne-Canaye, that

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 100.
† Oecon. Roy. & de Sully, tom. ii. p. 443.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 101.
† De Thou, tom. viii. liv. 116. p. 770. Cayet, tom. iii. liv. 8. p. 613.

he interrupted him in the midst of his discourse by exclaiming, "Is it thus you treat the good of the nation and his majesty's service?" D'Aubigné, provoked by the interruption, replied, "Who are you who profess teaching us our duty to the king? We were grown old in the practice before you applied yourself to the study of it. Do you want to advance your fortune by supposing a distinction between the king's service, and the service of God, and making them clash against each other? Learn to observe a proper silence, and do not interrupt those who have a right to speak in this assembly." A very warm altercation ensued; the Duke de Bouillon thinking D'Aubigné too warm, told him some respect ought to be shown to a magistrate of so much distinction as Monsieur de Fresne Canaye. "Yes," replied D'Aubigné, "the man no doubt deserves respect who will apostatise in three months." A prediction which was soon fulfilled by Du Fresne Canaye's conversion. This man, grievously offended with D'Aubigné, did him the worst offices in his power when he returned to court: where all the contention that had passed, and all the obstruction the king's desires met with in the assembly, were laid to the charge of D'Aubigné; who acquired thereby among his friends the name of the Scape Goat,* as being the iniquities of the whole party.†

During the course of these deliberations, the Spaniards surprised Amiens:‡ a place of so great importance, that the king was impatient to wrest it out of their hands: and as soon as he could gather his forces together laid siege to it; an enterprise for which he was but indifferently prepared. Some of the Huguenots advised that advantage should be taken of the difficulties he was under in prosecuting the siege, to obtain better terms than might be granted them when he did not stand in need of their assistance. They believed, or pretended to believe, that Henry was more disposed to gratify them than he chose should appear, and that by their pressing opportunities they should afford him an excuse for complying with their demands, which might serve to pacify the Catholics; and enable him to treat his old friends with the indulgence he wished, without offending the rest of his subjects.§ If this were their real opinion, they founded it rather on the consideration they thought due to them, than on any disposition he showed to favour them; but it is more probable, that according to a fallacy frequently made use of by subjects who are engaged in contentions with their prince, they endeavoured under the colour of that persuasion, to lessen the charge of disloyalty, which the Catholics, and such of the Huguenots as were more attached to their pecuniary interests than to their religion, brought against them.

Of all the party no one was more generally accused of disaffection to the king than D'Aubigné. The warmth of his zeal, his invincible spirit, the blunt sincerity with which he always spake, must necessarily lead him to offend a prince whose wishes he was vigorously opposing. He had a rough soldier-like eloquence, which flowed with too much rapidity to suffer him to weigh his expressions; nor possibly had he a wish to correct it: actuated solely by what he thought his first duty, a firm attachment to his religion, conscious integrity was his support; and superior to all the temptations of interest, he could neither be intimidated by danger, nor seduced by hopes of reward: he had therefore no desire to soften and polish his expressions by the model of court language; but thought that upright intentions were best expressed in plain words; and uttered his sentiments as frankly in a full assembly as in confidental discourse with a private friend. At a time when the party was sunk into the most depressed state of mind, by the disappointment of all their most flattering hopes, built on the expectation of seeing a Huguenot prince on the throne, the timorous, the desponding, and the mercenary were equally silent. Of those who had spirit and integrity, many had not the talent of speaking; it was not strange therefore that D'Aubigné should be constantly called upon, when those rights were disputed which he was as capable of asserting in council, as of defending in the field. In the execution of the office thus assigned him, he did not less aim at rousing the spirits of his associates, than at impressing forcibly on his adversaries the truths he uttered. He did not conceal his little confidence in the king's word; openly declaring he did not believe that the prince who had sacrificed his own religion to his ambition, would be very tender of forcing the consciences of others; nor that after submitting to so many disagreeable things to gain the good will of the Catholics, he would hazard losing of their favour by showing any great indulgence to the Huguenots. Expressions to this effect were reported to Henry; and it may be easily believed that so open an opposition, was the cause of laying to his charge every warm speech, or bold action, that escaped any of the party: if the person was not known, the fact was immediately imputed to D'Aubigné; if known, then he acted by the instigation of D'Aubigné; who, if the endeavours the Reformed used to obtain the toleration of their religion, and a fixed establishment, and the suspicions they showed of the king's backwardness to grant either, were criminal, had certainly

* Boue du Desert. † Ibid. p. 103.
‡ Dav. lib. 15. p. 1032. De Thou, tom. ix. p. 81. Cayet, tom. iii. liv. 9. p. 668. Hist. du Duc de Bouil. liv. 5. p. 214. § Ibid. p. 215.

guilt enough of his own to answer for; as it cannot be denied but he was one of the most active of the party. The friendship which subsisted between him and the Dukes de Bouillon, de Rohan, and more especially Claude de la Tremouille, Duke de Thouars, who were known to be disaffected, rendered him still more obnoxious.

The Duke de Thouars gave a strong proof of his fidelity to his party at one of the conferences held at Saumur, between the deputies of the churches and the king's deputies. Those of the churches were the Duke de Thouars, D'Aubigné, Le Plessis Mornay, and Chamier, one of their ministers. The king's were Messieurs de Schomberg, de Villeroi, de Calignon, and the President de Thou.* Messieurs de Schomberg and de Thou coming to the place appointed before their associates, invited the Duke de Thouars to take a walk with them, when Monsieur de Thou thus addressed him; "You have too much good sense not to perceive by the present state of affairs, and the concessions we have made you, that you can gain no greater advantages by delaying the agreement. Are we so very low in your esteem that you will put no confidence in us; nor believe the assurances we give you that nothing more will be granted you? Monsieur de Schomberg is a Lutheran, consequently not far from a good Huguenot. As for me, you have reason to know how affectionately I am disposed towards you; for these two hundred years the youth of your family have all had tutors out of mine. Receive what we are going to say to you as the words of a friend. The king has been informed that you have sent for your cousin the Duke de Bouillon to confirm the articles of agreement, and believes that your respect for the duke, and the gentleness of your nature, will induce you to permit him to appropriate the honourable fruits of your two years labour. We do not pretend to deny that the king is greatly offended with you both, but not in an equal degree; he therefore wishes to owe to you the obligation of extinguishing the present discontents of your party; but should the Duke de Bouillon take the lead, you must lose all claim to his majesty's gratitude. Let us conclude the affair on the terms now proposed; and we are empowered to offer, that you shall choose from among your most confidential adherents, ten camp masters, and two marshals of the camp; to each of the first the king will give a thousand crowns; to the others three thousand crowns yearly, to be paid by you; and to yourself the remainder of a hundred thousand francs, to which sum amounts the tax on the river Charente paid near your castle of Taillebourg; and to prevent your having the trouble of solicitation or demand, you shall have an assignment of that tax for thirty years. You may at once see the greatness of the offer, and the facility and security of the performance of it; and confess that, your own interest out of the question, this concession is of greater advantage to your party than ten strong cautionary towns."

The Duke replied, "When I consider, gentlemen, how deeply you have lately been engaged in negotiations with the chiefs of the league, where you found each man so entirely attached to his private interests, that by separately gratifying the avarice or ambition of the individuals, you have entirely extinguished the faction: when I consider this, I say, I cannot but forgive your mean opinion of me: but to show you our party is not actuated by such motives, permit me to tell you, that if you would give me half this kingdom, yet refuse to the poor people here assembled the necessary means of serving God with freedom and safety, it would be no temptation to me; but grant them privileges so just and necessary, and you may hang me up at the door of the assembly; nor would it create any disturbance; you would find every one quiet and submissive."—After the conversation was over, Monsieur de Thou related this conversation to D'Aubigné, and asked him if they had many such Huguenots in their party.*

The conferences continued during the siege of Amiens, and it was not till after that town was taken that the articles could be settled; which were at length signed by the king at Nantes, and the edict published, which took its name from that town.† The principal articles were, liberty of conscience for the Huguenots throughout the kingdom; but without the public exercise of their religion, except in such places as were specified, and not within the walls of any town, but those they called their towns of surety, most of them beyond the Loire, and in Dauphiné; and this on condition that the Catholic religion should be re-established in all those places where it had been abolished. The Huguenots were declared capable of employments and honours; and the courts of justice composed of an equal number of Huguenots and Catholics, formerly granted, were confirmed. The Huguenots obliged themselves to forbear all foreign alliances; to dissolve all their assemblies, to hold no others, except on such occasions as were specified in the edict, and to appear there unarmed. They were forbidden to publish or sell any books treating of their religion, except in those towns where the public exercise of it was permitted.

Messieurs Schomberg and de Thou, in the terms they had settled with the deputies of

* Hist. du duc de Bouill. liv. 5. p. 219.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 455.

† De Thou, tom. ix. p. 154. Hist. de Henry duc de Bouillon, p. 221. Cayet, tom. iii. p. 714. Esprit de la Ligue, tom. iii. p. 312.

the assembly before mentioned, had granted the Huguenots full liberty to convene assemblies whenever they thought proper; a concession which gave great offence to the Catholics, and exposed them to some reprehension from the king, who struck out that article, and substituted one to a contrary effect.* This edict differed little from those formerly given in favour of the Huguenots. The article which regarded their admission into posts of government was of little benefit, since it only declared them capable of receiving, but left the king power to refuse to give; and that such was his intention, appears by his speech to the parliament of Paris, who at first refused to register the edict: for, if we may believe Pere Daniel, he therein tells them, that while a Huguenot, he gave no places of public trust to any but Catholics, and intended to continue the same rule, therefore they had no cause to be offended at that article.†

But Monsieur de Thou, with more probability, mentions this determination as only declared in council. But wherever the declaration was made, it could not easily fail of coming to the knowledge of the Huguenots, whom it offended, not only as disappointing their hopes of preferment, but as it showed a duplicity in the king's proceedings, and lessened their confidence in his word.‡ The writers who have endeavoured to justify Louis XIV.'s revocation of the edict of Nantz, urge that the Huguenots acted unfairly, and gained it rather by force than justice; taking advantage of the distressed state of Henry's affairs; and extorting it from him when the difficulties attending the siege of Amiens rendered him unable to hazard the consequences of exasperating them by a refusal. But when they make this assertion they designedly confound times, and omit the evidence of the king's word, who would not sign the articles till he was possessed of Amiens, and had made peace with the Duke de Mercœur, the only one of the leaguers who had not before that time submitted to him. When Henry signed, he declared he had delayed coming to an agreement with the Huguenots till all his enemies were subdued, that they might know he granted their demands from favour, not from necessity; from gratitude for the benefits he had received, not from the fear of any harm they might hereafter do him.§ It is true, that the terms of agreement had been disputed during the siege of Amiens, and long before it began, but so far were they from being adjusted, that when they were presented to him at Nantz, he expunged some very important articles, and severely reproved Messieurs de Thou and de Schomberg for having permitted them to be inserted.* The peace with Spain was also then so far advanced, that the treaty was signed the second of May following;† which confirms the truth of the king's declaration, of having delayed to grant those concessions till they could not be attributed to fear, for in reality he was then certain of making peace with all his enemies. When this fact is so evident, it would be impossible not to wonder at Pere Daniel, and others, who exclaim against the edict as extorted from the king when under the greatest distress, and therefore deserving to be considered as a forced treaty, never justly binding, were it not for the recollection that they wrote in the time of the prince who revoked it.

Henry now began to enjoy the blessings of peace, and felt true pleasure in power, by employing it in quieting his kingdom, and restoring justice and order, which had so long been banished by faction. Few princes like him have found the throne an asylum from cares and fatigue, because few have passed the preceding part of life in so continued a series of labour, distress, and anxiety: but even to him it afforded only comparative rest; when the past and present were brought into the same point of view, his life, after he was generally acknowledged King of France, appeared easy and quiet; but he was not free from the evils which attend a crown. He well knew that some ambitious men had entered into cabals against him, and those men of great power, though few in number; even Marshal Biron, a man highly favoured and preferred by him, was at the head of them. The Dukes de Bouillon, de Tremouille, and the Count d'Auvergne, were concerned in those secret practices. The king had also some contention with the Duke of Savoy about the marquisate of Salusses; but the military operations were not great. In the course of the negotiation the Duke of Savoy came to Paris, in hopes of succeeding better in person than by the intervention of ambassadors.‡ But it was not till the year following that the treaty was ratified, whereby the marquisate of Salusses was ceded to the Duke of Savoy, who relinquished some other places in exchange.§ Before this affair was completed, the king had the satisfaction of getting his marriage with Margaret of Valois, daughter to Henry II. dissolved;‖ to which she could not be induced to consent till after the death of the Duchess of Beaufort, whom she had learnt the king designed for her successor; which her pride could ill brook.

Henry's grief for the loss of his mistress,

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 693. † Ibid. p. 698.
‡ De Thou, tom. ix. p 279.
§ Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 460.

* Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 693.
† De Thou, tom ix. p. 156. Dav. lib. 15. p. 1054. Cayt, tom. iii. p. 714.
‡ De Thou, tom. ix. p. 319.
§ Ibid. p. 325.
‖ Ibid. tom. vi. p. 318.

whose death was extremely sudden, had been immoderate for a few days, when the charms of Henriette d'Entragues, afterwards created Marchioness de Verneuil, administered speedy consolation, by exciting a new passion in his most susceptible heart;* and a little retarded the completion of his marriage with Mary de Medicis, niece to the Duke of Florence. Before his own nuptials were celebrated, he had married his sister Catherine, who had been sought by almost all the princes in Europe, and some of the first nobility in France, to the Duke of Bar.†

During the time that intervened between the marriage of the Duchess of Bar, and the celebration of the king's nuptials, Du Plessis Mornay was engaged in a dispute with the Bishop d'Evreux, concerning a treatise written by Du Plessis to expose the abuses of the mass. The controversy was at first carried on by the pen; but at length the king appointed a conference between them, at which his majesty, the court, and many others were present. The point in dispute was reduced to one article, the truth of the quotations made in the treatise from the fathers, which the bishop denied; for it was not judged prudent to allow a public discussion of the points of doctrine therein contained. The result of this conference is so differently represented by the Catholic and Huguenot writers, that it is difficult to give any certain account of it. The Catholics claimed the honour of the day; and there is reason to suppose that appearances, at least, were on their side, since their adversaries do not so much assert the contrary, as complain of the unfair treatmeat given to Du Plessis, as being taken unprovided,—allowed the use of but few of the authors quoted,—and not sufficient time even to seek out in them the passages objected to;—the arts used even by the king to that purpose,—and the warmth with which that prince took part with the bishop, and thereby prejudiced the courtiers in his favour. Thus far they all agree, that in the ensuing night, Du Plessis was taken so dangerously ill, that the conference could not be continued, nor was it ever after resumed. He and his friends attribute his sickness to the great shock he received at the king's unkind treatment, after the numerous and important services he had rendered him, and the faithful attachment which all the actions of his life had evinced.‡

Although D'Aubigné, during the transactions briefly related, had frequently been at court, and particularly was often present in parties of amusement with the king and the Duke of Savoy,* yet he was not there at the time of the controversy between Du Plessis and the Bishop D'Evreux; but coming to Paris a fortnight after it was over, the king insisted on his engaging the bishop. They disputed the controverted points during five hours in the presence of above four hundred persons of rank. The bishop endeavoured by long and laboured speeches to remove the difficulties which D'Aubigné proposed to him; after which D'Aubigné, who was not accustomed to speak in a style so diffuse and vague, drew up a regular demonstration in form, deducing the two first propositions from the very terms of the bishop's arguments. So concise a method embarrassed the prelate; and threw him into such violent agitation of spirits, that large drops of sweat fell on a manuscript St. Chrysostome which he held in his hand, and that in such abundance as to be observed by the whole assembly. The dispute was at last terminated by this syllogism, "Whoever is guilty of falsehood in the disquisition of any subject cannot be acknowledged a competent judge in a discussion of that subject; the fathers are often guilty of falsehood in their controversial writings, therefore they cannot be competent judges in controversy." The bishop allowed the major, but required the minor to be proved; and for that purpose D'Aubigné composed a treatise, entitled, "Dissidiis Patrum," of which the prelate did not choose to attempt a refutation, though the king had given his word that he should answer it.†

The following year produced more disagreeable interruptions to the king's peace than these polemical disputes: the suspicions for some time entertained of Marshal Biron's disloyalty daily increased, and were at length converted into certainty, by the depositions of the man employed in his negotiations with the King of Spain, the Duke of Savoy, and others, who were engaged to assist him in the design he had formed of seizing part of the kingdom, and erecting it into a separate royalty, under the protection of Spain.‡ The Dukes de Bouillon and de Tremouille were suspected of concurring in his views; the former appears, especially, to have been justly charged with some participation in the conspiracy. The marshal was desirous of gaining the Huguenots over to his party; and the Duke de Bouillon, either in concert with him, or weakly wrought on by the means he had used to alarm him with dangers that threatened the Reformed, secretly called together nine of the most considerable of the party; and after some polite apologies for the trouble he had given

* Memoires de Bassompiere, tom. i. p. 55.
† De Thou, tom. ix. p. 270. Hist. de H. D. de Bouill. p. 222.
‡ Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 273. De Thou, tom. ix. p. 329.

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 467.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 107.
‡ Hist. de Henry duc de Bouillon, p. 225.

them by his summons, and returning thanks for their compliance with it, he thus addressed them:

"The reason, gentlemen, of my desiring your presence, was to make known to you the means by which God preserves his people in the midst of so many dangers, and makes the swords of the wicked defend his cause. It is now six months since I was first solicited on a business to which for some time I would not listen; but on reflecting that not I alone was concerned, I would not determine from my private judgement on an affair of so extensive importance. Many causes of discontent, and the various interests of several men, have given rise to an union among some of the most powerful in the kingdom, in order to effect a change, and redress the grievances they complain of. These people, under pretence of negotiating a marriage, have applied to me several times, but within these few days have been more explicit, declaring themselves in the following terms:

"That the association they propose is not a weak one, but composed of sovereign powers;—princes of the blood royal of France;—of others of equal rank; officers of the crown;—governors of provinces;—many provincial parliaments; and some communities of the principal cities in the kingdom; in conjunction with whom it would be no disgrace to perish. That those princes who were members of the league, some of them animated by external causes, others by the king's ingratitude, behold with horror his neglect of the Reformed, to whom all attribute the honour of having saved the state; however harsh and unworthy the treatment which they received, even while they were sacrificing their fortunes, and exposing their lives, in support of those who refused them the blessings of peace.

"That the Reformed ought not to be ignorant that at the time peace was made with Savoy, before the departure of the legat, an engagement was formed and signed by the king,—the patriarch d'Arconas,—the ambassadors of Spain and the Empire,—and some officers of the crown of France,—whereby they united in an association in the form of a crusade, to exterminate the Huguenots; —— that the time for the execution of their enterprise, and the sums of money and number of men which each should furnish, were specified; and they bound themselves to continue this war till the Huguenots were totally extirpated.—That the legat took the oaths of all present, for the full performance of the engagement,—gave them the sacrament, and pronounced the severest anathema against any person who should violate this obligation.

"That if the Reformed wish to join in revenging such atrocious perfidy, and in defending themselves against the imminent dangers which threaten them, they are to understand, that as there were two original draughts of this association against them, with the signs manual of the pope, the emperor, the King of Spain, and the Duke of Savoy affixed thereto, on condition that one should be deposited in the king's hands, the other in those of the Duke of Savoy, his highness will deliver to them the authentic draught; that the Reformed, who always begin their deliberations by examining how far the things proposed are just, may be fully satisfied of the justice of their proceedings.

"That the confederates will leave to them the part of France west of the Loire, as far as Livron, and the rest of Dauphiné; from whence they may extend their conquests, without the Catholic associates having any pretensions to interfere; while the Reformed keep within those limits.

"That the Reformed may choose out two of the greatest and most important cities in their department, the government of which the Catholics will purchase; exclusive of two huudred thousand crowns, to be paid by them towards equipping the troops, and the like sum yearly for the expenses of the war during its continuance.

"And lest the Reformed should fear that in a future treaty their interests may be neglected, the Catholics will engage not to listen to any accommodation without the concurrence of the Reformed; and for their further security, the towns of Lion and Dijon shall be delivered into their hands, to be detained by them, if they are not perfectly satisfied with the terms of the peace."

"These, gentlemen, are the offers made to you, of which I cannot speak my opinion till I have heard yours."

The Duke de Bouillon then applied to D'Aubigné to declare his sentiments; which he would have declined till others had spoken, alleging that he was the youngest of the company; but being solicited by all present he obeyed, to the following effect:

"The proposal under consideration, gentlemen, obliges us to discuss these three points;—By whom it is made,—who we are,—and what is offered to us. Of those who apply to us, some are ambitious courtiers, some are strangers: among the first it would be difficult to name one whose ill will towards us has not been shown by flagrant injuries. The most violent solicitors of our ruin, would now preserve us from destruction out of an excess of charity, for which they know not, nor can we guess, the reason. The men who drove the king from our church, and forced him to go to mass, are those who have formed this confederacy; the chief of them is Marshal Biron, of whose motives you may judge from hence, that bred up by a mother of our religious persuasion, and by a father who was an enemy to bigotry, he approach-

ed much nearer the licentiousness of an atheist than the superstitions of a monk, till he entered into certain connections in Italy; since which time he has so signalized himself in what the papists term devotional exercises, that when he is travelling, if he sees at a considerable distance from his road a village-cross, however battered and broken, he alights from his horse, and creeps on his knees to kiss the very pedestal on which it is erected. From this man you may form some judgment of the whole set; and discern an association of enemies to our liberty, and of traitors to their country and their king, whose numerous favours they repay with the blackest ingratitude. It is unnecessary to enter into the characters of the other members of the confederacy, the strangers; for you will naturally feel a horror at the thoughts of joining interests with the Duke of Savoy and the King of Spain, who appear openly in the affair; and with the emperor and the pope, who are the secret abettors.

"We are a sect separated from such people not by inequality of birth, difference of complexion, nor any local distinctions, but by purity of faith, simplicity of manners, and such integrity of mind that we joyfully sacrifice our possessions, and even our lives to the service of God. How can such opposites be reconciled? how can such contrarieties be made to agree? The partition between us can be broken down only to our disadvantage, for on our part it is composed solely of difference in doctrine and manners; but on theirs it is fortified against our humility by worldly wealth, by power, by the first offices in the state, and by the splendour and authority which the court of Rome sheds on those it favours: were we therefore to embark on a tempestuous sea with such associates, our fate must prove like that of the earthen vessel in the fable, who chose one of iron for its companion.

"So much for the persons under consideration; proceed we now to the matter proposed to us. What is it, but that for fear disturbances should arise in the kingdom, we should begin to raise them? as if from an apprehension of being wetted by rain, it were advisable to jump into a river; and to those who may causelessly seek our destruction, we should give just cause to destroy us. They would have us fly from the hands of the king into the gripe of these petty tyrants; bring down upon us the curses of all our Catholic countrymen, and sow division, and total separation among ourselves; as few of our brethren would concur in such measures, formed on a supposed design to ruin us, of which we cannot ascertain either the truth or falsehood. But grant it true, there is nothing new to us in this evil intention, except the person of the king, whom none of us can suspect of entering willingly into so unjust and cruel a conspiracy. I acknowledge that he does not now tell us, as formerly, that he is contented to become Anathema for us, like Moses and St. Paul for their brethren; I confess also that he is become insensible to the shame of apostasy; but this arises from his sensibility to the danger of being assassinated, and of the unsettled state of his, yet but half established, authority, which he has said could not subsist if the malecontents were not awed by their fears of the Huguenots; an opinion which he does not appear to have relinquished. I will venture to affirm that if this conspiracy against us had been formed a month, he would not have suffered so long a time to have elapsed without transmitting to us some intimation of it. I dare equally assert, that were we to enter into this pernicious compact, it would not subsist a fortnight, before one of these traitors would discover it to the king, and for his private emolument betray his associates; thus would they, one by one, desert their party, and gain reward for their double treachery; while we should be oppressed by those with whom we had so lately allied ourselves, detested by our own party, and covered with ignominy by the general consent of the whole French nation. Besides, what certainty have you that they do not aim at seducing us into an iniquitous conspiracy, to render that just which they say is formed against us, by alleging in excuse for destroying us, those measures into which they seduce us. I am sensible that discord among our enemies is our best preservative; but let us enjoy the good effects as a mercy from heaven, without polluting our consciences with iniquitous and dangerous connexions. My advice therefore is, that we should leave them to work their own disgrace, without sharing it with them; and without involving ourselves in their crime, reap the advantage of their hopes in our assistance, while we keep clear of either written or verbal engagement, by alleging the slowness of proceeding in so large a body, as much time must necessarily be required to disperse the requisite instructions. It is also incumbent on us to consider how to act with honour in so critical conjuncture; and while we evade the idle curiosity of persons, who from some vague information of this confederacy may endeavour to gain a fuller knowledge of the affair, without any view of utility to the state; with equal care prevent the dangers of a silence which would render us criminal towards the king."

The company were unanimous in their approbation of what D'Aubigné had said on the subject; the Duke de Bouillon declared D'Aubigné had spoken his sentiments; and that the general concurrence therewith gave him a most sensible pleasure; but that the use to be made of his advice required some discussion, and it was necessary they should

carefully consider how to avoid the two dangers suggested by D'Aubigné at the conclusion of his discourse, that they might neither fail in decent regard to those who had applied to them, nor in the fidelity due to their sovereign; and the better to prevent either evil, it should seem proper to keep themselves prepared to obviate every ill effect that might arise from the conspiracy, without too readily taking fire at any offensive discourses.

The assembly then came to a resolution that one of them, named Odevous, should repair to Lyons, to communicate the general determination to a principal person of their party, who was then with the king; and to desire him to act according to the suggestions of his prudence, in such a manner as should at the same time best preserve their honour to the persons in question, and their fidelity to the state.*

If the Duke de Bouillon forbore to enter more deeply into the conspiracy formed by the Marshal de Biron, yet by listening to the proposals he had communicated to his friends he gave sufficient grounds to be suspected of a concurrence in the whole affair; and when the marshal was taken into custody on the deposition of La Fin, his principal agent, who discovered the whole to the king, the Duke de Bouillon was summoned to court.† The king, who had lavished his favours on the marshal, and pardoned his treasonable practices, on his confessing them, when he first entered into this conspiracy, again offered his forgiveness if he would frankly acknowledge his offence; but the marshal, believing there was no proof against him, and that the king proceeded only on suspicion, persisted in denying his having resumed the designs which on his majesty's former pardon he had laid aside, and treated as an injury his being urged to confession; till Henry's clemency, and regard for him, gave way to justice, and after a legal conviction he was beheaded.‡ The Duke de Bouillon, though possibly not deeply concerned in the affair, at least wanted the support of conscious innocence, and instead of repairing to court, retired to Geneva; and from thence to the court of the Elector Palatine, whose wife was sister of the Duchess de Bouillon, both being daughters to the Prince of Orange.§

Claude de la Tremouille Duke de Thouars had married a third daughter of that prince's, which forming a strict connexion between him and the Duke de Bouillon, rendered him suspected by the king, who was before greatly prejudiced against him, not only on account of his strict adherence to the Reformed religion, and the warmth with which he espoused the interests of those who professed it, but for a much slighter cause, though one which frequently gives rise to greater enmity than offences more important. He had the misfortune either to have wit, or to think he had it, without discretion to curb its sallies. He was unguarded in his expressions; and the things he uttered in mirth were frequently repeated to the king with the most malicious constructions, and produced in time a fixed hatred to the duke,* who found that a bon mot was more difficult to be forgiven than treason; a fact that many have experienced; though Henry ought to have had some indulgence for that kind of imprudence, being guilty of the same fault; which is in no one less excusable than in a king. In a subject it is a failure in the respect due to his sovereign when he makes him the object of his levity; but in a prince it is an offence against both humanity and prudence; ridicule from his mouth wounds deeply, and is often severely resented. Henry's interests suffered more than once by an ill-timed jest, and on some other occasions he afflicted worthy men, for the poor gratification of uttering a trifling witticism.

The king was at one time so exasperated against the Duke de la Tremouille that he he gave orders to have him invested in Thouars. The duke was not prepared for defence, but in this extremity wrote to D'Aubigné: "My friend, I invite you, according to your engagement, to come and die with your affectionate," &c.

D'Aubigné returned for answer:

"Your letter, sir, shall be punctually obeyed; yet I have some right to complain of your alleging my engagement to you, since my oath ought to be considered as too inviolable, to require that I should be reminded of it."

He repaired with all speed to Thouars; and they set out together to assemble their friends to their assistance. As they passed through a town where two days before some persons had been beheaded, and some assassins were then exposed on the wheel, D'Aubigné perceiving the Duke change colour, took him by the hand, and said, "Learn, sir, to behold these melancholy objects with equanimity; men who do what we are now doing ought to familiarize themselves with death."†

The king, however, did not carry matters to extremity; the storm which threatened the duke blew over; and death delivered Henry from a man he hated, and prevented the evils which might have sprung from that hatred. The duke died of the gout at thirty-four years of age, after having long been severely afflicted with it.

His death was a great affliction to D'Au-

* Hist. Univ. D'Aub. tom. iii. p. 491.
† Hist. de Henry duc de Bouillon, p. 229.
‡ De Thou, tom. ix. p. 546.
§ Hist. de H. duc de Bouillon, p. 232.

* De Thou, tom. ix. p. 688.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 61.

bigné, as in him he lost a sincere and powerful friend; one whose invariable attachment to the Reformed religion caused a close connexion between them, at a time when the greatest part of those who professed it, thought more of court favour than of the articles of their faith. But though deprived of so considerable an associate, D'Aubigné was still active in the cause.

By the edict of Nantes the Huguenots were permitted to have two deputies near the king's person, one chosen by the clergy, the other by the laity, whom they might change every three years. The time for the new election approaching, they petitioned the king to allow them to convene a general assembly for that purpose; to which he consented, on condition that he should name the place of meeting, prescribe the matter and form of their deliberations, and depute one of his servants to represent his person. Chatelleraut was the town he appointed; and he sent the Marquis de Rosni, afterwards Duc de Sully, as his representative. A man peculiarly adapted to the office, not only by his zeal for his master's service, and his extraordinary capacity and spirit, but as his connexions with the most tractable of the party, and his acquaintance with the particular dispositions of the rest, gained by intimate intercourse when they were all united in Henry's service, gave him great influence over many, and made him know how best to work on others; besides that being governor of Poictou, he had there a real power added to the authority attending his representation of the king's person. The thing wished for by him and the king was that he might be chosen president of the assembly; but herein he was disappointed.

A provincial synod was held in each province to choose the deputies of which the general assembly was to be composed. The synod of Poictou met at St. Maixant, and chose Messieurs D'Aubigné and La Noue, though both absent, for their representatives. D'Aubigné being informed of this nomination after the synod was broken up, went to Chatelleraut to excuse himself from the office, alleging that the usual forms in such nominations had not been observed, and that he was most unfit to transact the affairs thus committed to his care, since the unfavourable light in which he was beheld at court, would render all his proceedings so suspicious, that he should rather impede than advance the business of the assembly. But so little attention was paid to his remonstrances, that instead of acquiescing in his plea of disqualification, he was deputed by the assembly to the Marquis of Rosni, with their orders to him to forbear being present at their deliberations, except when he had some propositions to make to them from the king:* so very far were they from being disposed to choose him for their president, that he had but two voices for him in the whole assembly.

The time for which the cautionary towns were granted to the Protestants drawing towards an end, they requested a prolongation of the term. As this demand was expected, and the king did not choose to leave them a pretence for requiring another general assembly on that account, he had given De Rosni two brevets, one granting the towns for three, the other for four years longer; with liberty to use which he should find most proper. Of this the assembly was informed; but as De Rosni chose to treat them with imperious severity, he denied being possessed of them. Great disputes arose concerning the choice of the deputies to reside near the king, which the assembly asserted to belong wholly to them; but by much art, and more bribery, De Rosni prevailed so far, that they consented to nominate six persons, from whom the king should choose the two who should be invested with that office.

The disputes about the cautionary towns ran very high. Though the king's treasury furnished De Rosni with weapons which D'Aubigné had not, and of which by his own account he made most liberal use, yet D'Aubigné took his measures so judiciously, that he formed a very strong opposition; De Rosni commanded him in the king's name to concur with him in the proposals he made; but so little did he prevail, that he found himself obliged to retire, after having delivered the brevet from the king, granting the Reformed the possession of their towns for four years longer; though he had before denied being possessed of it.*

There was at that time great difficulties concerning the restoration of the town of Orange to the prince to whom it justly belonged. On the marriage of the prince of Orange with Eleanor de Bourbon, sister to the prince of Condé, the king had promised to restore it to him; but this was not easy to perform. That town having been conquered by the league, was put into the hands of an officer who was little disposed to part with it, yet could not attempt to detain it forcibly. The affair was intricate, and the discussion difficult; the Prince of Orange, Monsieur de Lesdiguieres, and the churches of Languedoc and Dauphiné, having separate interests in it. A proposition was made to give commission to some person to examine the whole affair minutely, and at leisure; and then to make an exact representation of it, that the various contrarieties might be adjusted; and D'Aubigné was fixed upon by the assembly for this employment. He desired three days for the examination; which being granted him, he

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 61.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 113. Vie de du Plessis M. p. 309.

retired instantly, and immediately began to sketch out a plan of accommodation, which he designed to draw up in proper form before he presented it; but reflecting that when he had given himself a great deal of trouble in reducing it into order, and writing it out with care, it most probably would not give satisfaction, he returned into the assembly, laid the rough draught before them, and received the satisfaction of having it on their examination entirely approved by them; the assembly altering only one syllable in the whole performance; and regulating the affair on his plan.*

D'Aubigné was conscious that his conduct in this assembly was not proper to restore him to the king's favour; on the contrary, he could not suppose but he was become more obnoxious than before; and the Duke de la Tremouille's death rendered the province of Poictou no longer a safe retreat for him; for the rest of the Huguenot nobility having become pensioners to the court, he saw no one left for whose assistance he could hope if he were attacked, and he knew himself to be hated by the Catholics. He therefore determined to leave the kingdom; and having prepared a vessel for his conveyance, he put on board his most valuable effects; but as he was packing up his last chest, intending to embark immediately, a courier arrived with letters from the king, in terms as kindly familiar as he had formerly been accustomed to use towards him, and written with his own hand; from the Duke de Bouillon, then restored to favour, and from the Sieur de la Varenne, he also received assurances that his presence was much desired at court; and that he might depend on a favourable reception there.

This invitation made him change his design, and repair to court; where under pretence of directing the preparations making for some tilts and tournaments, he remained two months, without the king's giving him any hint of past discontents; but one day as they were walking in a wood together, the king said to him, "I have not yet talked with you about those assemblies wherein you hoped to frustrate all my views; you proceeded openly and boldly; but I had gained over the most powerful among you to my interests; there were but few of you who laboured in the common cause; most of your party sought only their private advantage, and to gain my favour at your expense: this is so true that I can boast it cost me only five hundred crowns to prevail with one among you, a man of one of the greatest families in the kingdom, to serve me in the capacity of a spy, and to betray you. Oh! how often have I said to myself, on seeing that you would not conform to my inclinations, If my people would but have heard my voice, &c."

After much conversation on this subject, D'Aubigné replied, "Sire, I was deputed by the churches to those conferences, contrary to my inclination; while others in vain solicited the employment. I am little practised in speaking my own praises; nor do I know how to enter into explanations to my advantage. I was well apprized that all our most considerable Huguenots, except Monsieur de la Tremouille, were at your majesty's command; but as the churches chose me for their advocate, I thought myself obliged to serve them with the more zeal, on account of the depression they were under by having lost your protection; and I had rather relinquish my country, or even my life, than obtain your favour by betraying my brethren and friends: but whatever may befall me, I shall always address my ardent prayers to God for the continuance of his favour and protection to you."

The king, not displeased with his sincerity, said to him, "Are you acquainted with the president Jeannin?" (He was the person principally employed in all negotiations by the league.) "I would have you cultivate an intimacy with him; I can place more confidence in you and Jeannin, than in those who have acted a double part."

The king then embraced D'Aubigné, and dismissed him; but he, moved by his master's kindness and confidence, before he had gone far returned, and addressing him said, "Sire, when I see your majesty, I cannot forbear resuming my former freedom and boldness; open your heart, Sire, and condescend to tell me what could induce you to hate me." At this question the king turned pale, as he usually did when his affections were moved, and answered, "You were too much attached to La Tremouille; you knew I hated him, and yet you continued to love him." "Sire," replied D'Aubigné, "I was bred up at your majesty's feet; and there learnt in my early years not to abandon the unfortunate, who are oppressed by a superior power; forgive then the effects of that apprenticeship I served to virtue in my attendance on you." The king again embraced him, and and they parted with great cordiality.*

D'Aubigné continued some time longer at court, with the same appearance of favour; and without receiving any more essential proofs of it returned into Poictou, perfectly relieved from his former apprehensions. But after having passed about a year there he went to Paris; and having alighted at the house of Monsieur Dumoulin, where he found Messieurs Chamier and Durand, with three or four other ministers of the Reformed Church; as soon as the first ceremonies of

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 112.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 110.

a friendly reception were over, they told him that the chief conversation of the town was an union of the different religions in France; which was spoken of in such terms of certainty, as gave them the greatest reason to believe that some of their principal ministers were brought over by the court, in order by a fraudulent controversy to give up the tenets of their church. To prevent the success of so treacherous a scheme, they determined to settle immediately among themselves some certain points, without which no union could be effected. D'Aubigné then asked them if they would support him in an offer he had imagined, as the ground-work whereon to proceed towards an agreement with the Catholics, which was to reduce all the controversies between the different religions to the practice of the church, strictly observed, and regularly pursued, through the four first centuries, till the beginning of the fifth. They all readily agreed to this proposal.* With an intention to put this design in execution, D'Aubigné went to the king in his closet; who no sooner saw him, than without giving him time to speak, he ordered him to go to Cardinal Du Perron. D'Aubigné obeyed, and was received by the Cardinal with great marks of affection. His caresses were so new to D'Aubigné that they convinced him of a fixed design to delude him; and when the cardinal had oppressed him with compliments and flattery, he proceeded to lament the wretched state of Christianity, asking him if there was no means of restoring to it peace and harmony, and effecting a sincere agreement among Christians, by reconciling the unhappy divisions with which the minds and families, not only in France, but through all Europe, were torn and distracted. After he had urged this point some time, and D'Aubigné had brought him to press warmly for his answer, D'Aubigné replied, "As you desire me to speak my opinion plainly, permit me, sir, to say, that Guicciardin's maxim appears to me as just in regard to the affairs of the church, as to those of a state. He says that when a society, originally formed on good laws, and wise institutions, degenerates from its first order, there is no means of restoring it to its pristine perfection, but in reducing it at once to its first form. Let us therefore on each side acknowledge as inviolable laws, the constitutions established and observed in the church till the end of the fourth century; and in regard to those practices which are attacked as corruptions and innovations gradually introduced since that time, you who call yourselves the eldest born of the church shall begin with giving up the first article which we shall point out to you; we will next relinquish one on our side; and thus alternately let us sacrifice innovations, till we have restored our worship to its ancient form."

The cardinal cried out, "Your ministers will not consent to these terms." D'Aubigné replying that he would engage his life and honour to prevail with them to accept them; the cardinal, pressing his hand, said, "Give us however forty years beyond the four hundred." "I plainly perceive your view, sir," answered D'Aubigné; "you wish to have the council of Chalcedon allowed of; and let us but begin to work, in the manner I have proposed, and I will agree to your request." "You will be obliged then," said the cardinal, "to consent to the elevation of the cross; a practice then generally received." "For so great a blessing as peace," replied D'Aubigné, "we will agree to put it on the same footing it was then; but you dare not consent to reduce the pope's authority to what it was during the four first centuries; we might even afford to make you a present of two hundred years more in relation to that article." The cardinal, who had been very ill treated at Rome, and returned very much displeased with that court, raising his voice, said, "The affair must be settled at Paris, it cannot possibly be concluded at Rome." When this conference ended, D'Aubigné returned to the king, who as soon as he saw him, asked if he had seen cardinal du Perron, and what had passed between them. D'Aubigné recited the whole conversation, before a great number of persons present. "Why," said the king, "did you tell the cardinal you would willingly grant him the council of Chalcedon, when he should suffer the disquisition to commence; why did you not allow it unconditionally?" "Sire," replied D'Aubigné, "if besides the four hundred years specified, the doctors of the Romish church were to require forty more, it would be a tacit confession that the practice of the four first centuries was not on their side." This conclusion was too just not to give offence; some prelates and jesuits who were present, began to exclaim against him; and the Count de Soissons loudly cried out, that, "such things should not be said before the king." The general murmur of dissatisfaction obliged Henry to turn his back on D'Aubigné; and he retired into the queen's apartment.*

The bigoted Catholics in general, and D'Aubigné's enemies in particular, were very industrious in their endeavours to exasperate the king against him; and accusing him of having prevented an agreement between the churches, urged that he ought to be put to death, or at least prevented by imprisonment from doing the like for the future; and so far did they prevail, that the king told the Duke de Sully he must commit that sower of sedition to the Bastile;

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 113.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 116.

and it would not be difficult to find sufficient matter for his prosecution.

Madame de Chatillon being informed of this intention, sent for D'Aubigné, and having exacted a promise of secrecy, conjured him to leave the court that same night, or he might be assured his destruction was inevitable. Danger was become too habitual to D'Aubigné to excite any apprehensions in him; without the least emotion he told her, that he would go and say his prayers, and then act as God should suggest to him.

He always chose rather to face, than to fly danger; and had frequently experienced that to be the safest course. The reflections of the night suggested to him. that there remained no means for him to be useful to his country in public life, therefore a peaceful retirement was both lawful and eligible; and that by showing a desire to become more dependent on the king, he should lessen the suspicions his majesty had conceived of him, and at the same time render his own affairs more easy. He therefore went to the king very early in the morning, and after having made a brief recapitulation of his past services, asked him for a pension, which he had never done before. Henry, pleased to see so free a spirit stoop to mercenary views, embraced him, and granted his request, without hesitation or delay.*

D'Aubigné going the next day to visit the Duke de Sully at the arsenal, he carried him to see the Bastile, giving him his word that it was no longer a place of danger to him; but that his safety was only of twenty-four hours standing.

The Sunday following, meeting Madame de Chatillon at their place of worship, she carried him home with her to dinner, in company with Du Moulin their minister, and Mademoiselle de Ruvigny, wife to the lieutenant of the Bastile. While they sat at table, Madame de Chatillon, after expressing her surprise at D'Aubigné's having extricated himself so well out of the dangers that had threatened him, could not forbear lamenting his hard fate; which so sensibly touched Mademoiselle de Ruvigny, that, fixing her eyes upon him, she burst into tears; and being solicited to declare the cause of her emotion, she confessed that she had twice received orders to prepare a chamber for him; and that the second time she had expected him till midnight.†

The means D'Aubigne had taken to reconcile the king to him, proved so effectual, that Henry restoring him to his former favour, kept him at court, and conceived a design of sending him to Vienna, as his ambassador extraordinary, with orders to the envoys at the inferior Germanic courts to render him account twice in a year of their negociations; but he altered his intention on forming that great plan of operation which was to begin with an attack on the King of Spain's dominions in Italy; and D'Aubigné having been informed by the king of his whole design, could not think, as he was vice admiral of the coasts of Poictou and Xaintonge, of remaining inactive, when so large a field for the exercise of his military talents lay open before him. He therefore urged the king to direct a small body of his forces towards Spain to attack the Spanish monarch in the heart of his country, while the more distant parts were assaulted on every side. Henry objecting a maxim grown into a proverb, that the enemy who enters into Spain weakly accompanied is sure to be beaten, and he who leads a great army thither as sure to be starved; D'Aubigné engaged, by means of a few men of war, to provide provisions for a French army in Spain, at the same price they bore at that time in Paris.*

The Duke de Sully raised numerous objections to this proposal: but D'Aubigné removing them all, it was at length accepted; and he set out for the province of Xaintonge, to make the preparations requisite to enable him to fulfil his engagement. When he took leave of the king. Henry said to him, "D'Aubigné, do not deceive yourself any longer; I am persuaded that my temporal and spiritual life is in the hands of the Pope, whom I sincerely acknowledge as Christ's vicar on earth."

"This speech," says D'Aubigné, "made me instantly believe, that not only the great designs he had formed would vanish away in empty vapour, but that even his life was in great danger, since he trusted in a mortal man for its preservation." D'Aubigné communicated his apprehensions to his most intimate friends; and was so superstitiously persuaded of the truth of what he had, as it were prophetically, once told to the king; that when the melancholy account of the detestable assassination of that monarch was first brought him, with this circumstance of his being stabbed in the throat, D'Aubigné in the presence of many persons replied, that "he was sure the blow was not given in the throat, but in the heart."†

So fatal a catastrophe involved all who loved their country in the deepest affliction. Although Henry was guilty in a high degree of two vices very pernicious in a prince, incontinence and gaming, yet his virtues over-balanced them. He had restored peace to a distracted country; established the laws in their full vigour; enriched his subjects by the introduction of various manufactories; and won their hearts by his clemency, affability, and real attention to their happiness; having employed the few years he lived after he became quiet possessor of the throne, in a serious application to every

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 117. † Ibid.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 118. † Ibid. p. 119.

means that could render the kingdom flourishing, and his subjects happy. Trusting to the real greatness of his mind, which had shone with splendour in his actions under all the various trials to which he had been exposed, he sought not by the pageantries of royalty to dazzle his people into respect; his title to it was more solid and more lasting; and he conversed with those who approached him with all the familiarity of friendship, relying on his own spirit and dignity for power to assume, and enforce, the authority of a king, whenever he found it necessary. Manners so engaging, gained him the affections even of those who thought themselves ill treated by him, and who feared his being an enemy to their dearest interest. D'Aubigné was one of this number, and was a sincere mourner for the king's death. It is probable that he felt the loss more sensibly for being again restored to his favour; but independent of private views, there was sufficient cause for grief in the unavoidable anticipation of the evils that must arise from a long minority in his successor; which appeared the more lamentable, from the comparison the mind would naturally draw between them and the blessings of a reign so beneficial to France as that of Henry IV.

The war Henry was going to commence had been determined on political motives, but his preparations were hastened by his disappointment in that passion which had so often obscured his glory, and was always too strong for his reason. The object was Mademoiselle de Montmorenci; between whom and Monsieur de Basompierre a mutual affection subsisted; and Henry's consent to their union had been obtained; but becoming the rival of Basompierre, he prevailed with him, by the influence which a prince may always have over an ambitious courtier, to relinquish his pretensions; and Henry married her to the Prince of Condé; who being entirely given up to hunting, and conversant in nothing but dogs and horses, he thought unlikely to gain her affections, or to make very nice observations on her actions.* He considered her union with a man he believed she could not like as favourable to his designs; but if in this opinion he was not mistaken, he was greatly deceived in that which he had entertained of the prince, who showed so much resentment on discovering the king's passion for the princess, that his majesty, as a punishment for what he termed his insolence, withdrew the pension he allowed him, and refused to pay the money he had promised him on his marriage.† The prince, enraged to find that his just sense of one injury had provoked the king to injure him still further, carried the princess privately from court, and leaving the kingdom with all possible speed, took refuge in the dominions of the King of Spain.*

This may justly be considered as the most criminal, and most dishonourable action in Henry's life: the fire of youth, though it can never excuse a crime, may be urged as some palliation, but Henry had no longer this to plead, for he was fifty-seven years of age when he died;† and every circumstance through the whole proceeding was of so black a dye, that it must remain an indelible stain on his memory. Henry had delayed setting out on his expedition from complaisance to the queen, who was extremely urgent to be crowned; which was performed on the 12th day of May, and Sunday the 16th was appointed for her magnificent entry into Paris; but on the preceding Friday the king was stabbed in his coach by the detestable Ravillac, whose blow was so fatally aimed, that piercing the king's heart, he died on the spot ‡

The day after this fatal event the queen mother was declared regent during the minority of the young king her son, by the parliament of Paris, which arrogated on this occasion a power beyond what it could legally claim; but the universal apprehension of the troubles that might arise from an unsettled government, and the confusion which a contention for the regency would cause, if by an immediate stretch of authority it was not prevented, induced the nation to submit to the encroachment. The Count de Soissons, indeed, protested against it, and asserted his right to the regency, as being the first prince of the blood then in the kingdom; but as he was not at Paris when the act passed, his opposition came too late.§

In all the assemblies of the Reformed churches the queen's regency was acknowledged; in Poictou no one ventured to oppose this measure but D'Aubigné, who maintained that an election of that importance ought to be made in an assembly of the states general of the kingdom, and not in the parliament of Paris alone, in which no such power resided.‖ It could not be supposed that his opposition in a point so essential to the new regent could recommend him to her favour, yet he was deputed by the province of Poictou, to assure the queen of an entire obedience to her authority. When he arrived at Paris, finding the deputies from the other provinces were not come, he judged it proper to wait for some of them, that the deputation might receive dignity from numbers. When those of nine

* Mem. de Basomp. tom. i. p. 187.
† Mezeray, tom. iii. p. 1440.

* Oceon. roy. &c. de Sully, tom. x. p. 377. De Thou, tom. x. p. 281. Pere Dan. tom. vi. p. 862.
† Abregé de l'histoire de France, par Henault. tom. ii. p. 551.
‡ Account of Henry IV.'s death, by Pere Matthieu. De Thou, Tom. x. p. 288.
§ Hist. de la Mere & du Fils, tom. i. p. 58.
‖ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 119.

provinces arrived, they agreed to be presented to the queen by the Sieur de Villearnoul, who was then deputy general of the churches. A warm contest arose concerning the rank of the persons, and the terms wherein they should address the queen; but at length it was determined that D'Aubigné, as most respectable for age and experience of the whole deputation, should pay her the first compliment. The council was offended that none of them knelt down to her majesty, either in coming into her presence, or in taking their leave of her; and Monsieur de Villeroy, when the audience was over, asked D'Aubigné why he had not bent the knee to the queen; to which he replied, that the deputies consisted only of gentlemen and clergy, who owed reverence, but neither servility nor adoration to kings.*

Four months after this deputation, the queen, desirous of gaining over a man of so much authority in his party; or if that could not be, of lessening his influence by rendering him suspected of secret intelligence with her, wrote to D'Aubigné to repair to court, on pretence that she wanted to consult him on a private affair, wherein she believed he could give her some useful intelligence. His friends thought it dangerous for him to put himself into the queen's hands, but notwithstanding their remonstrances he obeyed, and was for two hours shut up with her in her cabinet, the Duchess of Mercœur keeping the door to prevent interruption. But this conference had no effect; neither serving the queen, nor proving of any detriment to D'Aubigné.†

The time for the election of new deputies general for the churches approaching, the Huguenots applied to the queen for permission to hold a general assembly for that purpose, as granted them by the late king. An apprehension lest the Huguenots should be encouraged by the weakness of a new assumed regency to attempt obtaining greater privileges, or to excite some disturbances in the kingdom, induced the queen to delay the assembly she could not refuse, and she fixed it to be held at Saumur the following year. The Duke de Bouillon had long been considered at court as the chief of the Reformed; to gain him over from their party appeared therefore to be the best means of preventing any disagreeable consequences from the approaching assembly. Nor was this a very difficult affair; the duke's ambition gave him hopes of great advantages in a new reign, and by flattering his views, he was easily brought to promise that nothing should pass at Saumur but what was perfectly agreeable to the court; assuring them, that as he should preside, it would be easy for him to direct their determinations. But herein he was disappointed, Du Plessis Mornay being elected president, to the duke's great mortification.* Messieurs de Boissieres and La Varenne were the king's commissioners at the assembly. De Boissieres endeavoured by magnificent promises to engage D'Aubigné to favour the interests of the court; but received from him no other answer than that he did not question the queen would grant all he desired of her, which was to believe him sincerely attached to his religion and his country. La Varenne employed himself very diligently in purchasing the concurrence of such of the deputies as he found venal; but was most especially assiduous in his applications to D'Aubigné, in order, if possible, to lesson his credit with his party, though he had no hope of weakening his attachment to it. So far he succeeded, that one of the men whom he had won by bribery, asked D'Aubigné, in the presence of the Duke de Bouillon, "What has la Varenne done at your house, where he has been twelve times since yesterday morning?" To which D'Aubigné replied, "What he did at your house the first time he was there, he could not do at mine in his twelfth visit."†

The transactions in this assembly at Saumur, broke the friendship which had subsisted thirty years between the Duke de Bouillon and D'Aubigné, who had been the principal agent in frustrating the duke's hopes of presiding therein, and warmly opposed many of the propositions he made to the assembly, exposing so evidently his motives and views, as deprived him of all credit among the Reformed party. In particular, the duke having made a very pathetic speech to persuade the assembly to resign all their cautionary towns, and to commit themselves entirely to the direction of the queen and her council, expatiating on the glory they would acquire by thus voluntarily exposing themselves to martyrdom; D'Aubigné replied, "True, sir, the glory of martyrdom cannot be too much extolled; inexpressibly happy are they who suffer for Christ. To endure martyrdom is performing the part of a true and good Christian; but to expose one's brethren to it, by opening the road to persecution, is acting the part of a traitor, or of an executioner:" and then proceeding to answer the rest of the duke's speech, he confuted all his arguments with a strength of reason that the duke could as little forgive as refute.

When the assembly broke up, D'Aubigné, whose custom it was to take leave only of those who seemed near death, or were going to forsake their faith and their party, bid adieu, before the whole company, to one of their ministers named du Ferrier, which gave great offence to him and his friends; but he, by abjuring the Reformed religion

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 121. † Ibid. p. 121.

* Hist. de la Mere & du Fils, tom. i. p. 139. Hist. du duc de Bouill. p. 263. Vie de Du Plessis Mornay, p. 348. Memoires du duc de Rohan, p. 10.

† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 122.

in two months after, justified D'Aubigné's proceeding, and gave an air of prophecy to the effects of his more than ordinary discernment.*

From this time the affairs of the Huguenots began to decline. Few of the principal persons of the party were proof against the liberality with which the court distributed bribes among them; and the influence of the court grew so great, even in the provincial synods, particularly in one held at Thouars, that D'Aubigné took his leave of it, alleging that "his advanced age ought to dispense him from an attendance on public assemblies, more especially as the society of prostitutes of any sex, was unfit for one of his years."

The queen had offered him five thousand francs annual addition to the pension of seven thousand livres which Henry had granted him, but he refused to accept it; and thereby gave such offence to her majesty, that she stopped the payment of the first pension; and would not defray the expenses of the garrison of Maillezais; which had always been done, in consequence of one of the articles in the edict of Nantes, whereby the king engaged to pay the garrisons in all the towns left in the hands of the Reformed. D'Aubigné endeavoured to make reprisals for this abridgment of his finances by some depredations on the river de Sevre, which runs near Maillezais; and thereby gave the court a pretence to threaten him with a siege. Having in this expedition on the river, observed the situation of the little isle of Le Doignon, he judged that it offered him a favourable retreat, if any such design was put in execution; and accordingly purchasing it, built thereon a house, which the queen sent the Sieur de Parabere to inspect. D'Aubigné received and entertained him with cordiality and complaisance, in the same manner as if he had come thither only on a friendly visit. The following year D'Aubigné having added some barns and cow-houses to the building, the Sieur de Parabere was sent on the like commission, and informing D'Aubigné of it, desired him to meet him there; but D'Aubigné returned for answer, that the affair was by no means worth the trouble. The answer gave offence to the court, and for a time occasioned him some disturbance.†

The Prince of Condé had returned to court soon after the death of Henry the IVth, in expectation of being admitted to that share of power in the state, which as prince of the blood he had a right to claim; but Conchiny, afterwards made marshal of France, and Marquis d'Ancre, who came into the kingdom with the queen on her marriage, was, through the influence of Galigay his wife, in the sole possession of her majesty's favour; and not only excluded the princes of the blood, and others of the first nobility from any participation in the government, but treated them with great insolence.* The Prince of Condé, and the Dukes de Bouillon and de Rohan, most openly resented it; and finding no regard had to their complaints, took up arms. The two dukes sent to D'Aubigné to declare what part he would take on the occasion; expecting his concurrence from the connexion which unity of faith had made between them. D'Aubigné returned for answer, that "he and his friends would readily bear the burden of their war, if they would preserve them from that with which they should be oppressed by the peace that would put an end to it:" sensible that if the chiefs could obtain gratuities from the court, they would leave their adherents to endure the consequences of the rebellion wherein they had engaged them. This disturbance was in a short time quieted by concessions from the court in favour of the dukes,† and a general amnesty was published for all concerned in it, except D'Aubigné; who alarmed at this exception, to prevent any fatal effects from it, fortified Maillezais, and put his newly acquired island of Doignon into a state of defence.‡

But this pacification was not of long continuance; the malecontents having still the same reason for dissatisfaction, were still actuated by the like resentment: the Marshal d'Ancre remained all powerful, and they continued to be neglected. From complaints they at length proceeded to action;§ and having taken arms, the Prince of Condé sent D'Aubigné the offer of being his marechal de camp; but he would not accept of it from a man whose authority he did not acknowledge; but when the assembly of the churches, wherein it had been agreed to give assistance to the prince, made him the same offer, he readily received it, as the servant of the churches.

The Duke de Sully, who had given his word to the queen that with twelve of the principal persons in the province on his side he would keep Poictou (of which he was governor) steady to its duty, was disturbed at finding the princes had gained over so considerable a person in that province as D'Aubigné, and repaired to Maillezais with a design of engaging him to join in his pacific views. He tried the effect of caresses; but they failing, proceeded to menaces, which were not likely to prove more availing with a man of so high a spirit as he had to deal with. He told D'Aubigné that all the great men in Poictou were united with him, and he should be able to

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 123. † Ibid. p. 124.

* Hist. du duc de Bouillon liv. 6. p. 288.

† Ibid. liv. 7. p. 8. Hist. de la Mere, &c. p. 264. Oecon. roy. &c. tom. xii. p. 323.

‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 125.

§ Hist. du duc de Bouill, liv. 7. p. 24. Oecon. roy. tom. xii. p. 334.

exact obedience from those who would not voluntarily pay it to him, though they must be sensible he had a right to claim it as governor of the province. D'Aubigné provoked by a threat which he thought bordered on insolence, with contemptuous irony replied, "You have forgot one great man, who you will find is not on your side, and will loudly declare his opinion to-morrow morning;" meaning the first drummer of a regiment he was raising for his son, who beat up for recruits very early the next morning. The ensuing day one of his captains, at the head of the garrison of Maillezais, took the town of Moureille; and D'Aubigné marching to besiege Lusignan, met the Duke de Bouillon, going on the same enterprise. They took this opportunity of renewing the long friendship which had subsisted between them, but had been much cooled by the contention they were engaged in at the assembly of Saumur.*

The forces were not considerable which the princes commanded; and, each having only some private interests of his own in view, their union was imperfect. They carried on a feeble war, designed solely to work on the weakness of the government, and by fear to induce the queen to grant their demands. To frighten, not to conquer, was their intention; and so far they succeeded, that a treaty was at length concluded at Loudun between them and the queen, whereby the chiefs obtained their demands, with a total neglect of all whom they had engaged in their party; and without redress of those grievances in the government for the removal of which they had professed to take arms.† As soon as this treaty, founded on treachery to the public, and perfidy to individuals, was signed, the Prince of Condé, seeing from a window D'Aubigné, whom in council he always termed his father, he called out to him, "Go to Doignon!" and "Go you," answered D'Aubigné, "to the Bastile!" a prediction which was fulfilled the September following, when he was sent thither by the queen, and kept prisoner above three years.‡ This event would have given pleasure to a man less generous than D'Aubigné, who might have found some gratification in being thus revenged for the loss of sixteen thousand crowns, which he had expended in this war under the prince's banners, and for other injuries received from him; who not contented with sacrificing the public interest which had engaged D'Aubigné in his party, as soon as he got to court represented him in council as a factious enemy to monarchy, and of himself able while he lived to prevent the king from enjoying absolute power.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 126.

† Hist. de la Mere, &c. tom. ii. p. 13. Oecon. roy. tom. xii. p. 343.

‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 126. Pere Dan. tom. vii. p. 5. Hist. de la Mere, &c. tom. ii. p. 83.

But though D'Aubigné forgave the prince's treachery, the prince never could forgive D'Aubigné, according to an old observation that the injurer never forgives the person he has injured. Of this the prince gave a strong proof in the measures he took to render the Duke d'Epernon an enemy to D'Aubigné by telling him that the character of a Gascon Braggard, under the name of the Baron de Fœneste, in a satire written by D'Aubigné, was drawn in ridicule of him. No one is humble enough to support ridicule very patiently, but nothing could have been invented that would equally have enraged so proud a man as the Duke; who in his wrath swore vengeance against the author; and in effect caused his life to be several times attempted; but D'Aubigné having had notice of those sinister intentions, was put so thoroughly on his guard, that he frustrated every scheme laid for that purpose.

While the Duke's anger was at the height, two gentlemen belonging to him came to dine with D'Aubigné, and the conversation turning on the hatred the Duke bore him, they told D'Aubigné that nobleman had made a public declaration before five hundred gentlemen, that if he could by no means procure his death, he should be reduced to send him a challenge, to measure swords with him in some place convenient for that purpose. To which D'Aubigné replied, "I am not so ignorant but I know the privileges of a duke and peer of France; and that one of those attached to his dignity is to refuse fighting with an inferior. I know also the respect I owe to the colonel general of the French infantry; but if an excess of anger or of courage, should incline the duke to lay his commands on me to measure swords with him, I would certainly obey him. He formerly showed me one, the hilt of which was set with dimonds, to the value of about thirty thousand crowns; if he would bring that with him, it would be more agreeable to me than any other."*

One of the gentleman said, the thing was impossible, for the duke could not so far sacrifice his dignity to his courage, as to engage in such a combat. "Sir," answered D'Aubigné, "we are in France, where those who are princes by birth, can no more divest themselves of their dignity than of

* In some of the preceding pages Mons. D'Aubigné has been censured for giving too readily into the then general practice of duelling; in justice to him it is therefore necessary to mention, that since the printing of the first part of this work the author has been favoured with the purusal of a manuscript account of D'Aubigné written by Mons. Misson, in the possession of Mr. Le Touche of Chelsea, by which it appears that in those single combats he never was the assailant, keeping only on the defensive part: and amongst the papers he left behind him, consisting of several copies of verses and treaties, many unfinished, on various subjects, one was against duelling, showing not only the sinfulness but the absurdity of the practice.

the skins in which they were born; but be assured that a man may lay aside acquired dignity without dishonouring himself. The Duke d'Epernon may therefore suspend his prerogatives, since he was born like me a private gentleman." The other replied, "But, sir, supposing that to be true, the duke is so surrounded by noblemen and friends, that were he determined to encounter you, they would prevent him from executing his design; and put it out of his power to secure to you a safe place for the combat." D'Aubigné answered, that he would undertake to deliver the duke from that impediment, and would engage to procure him a safe and convenient spot for that purpose, even in the duke's own government, in despite of all his grace's friends, and their best endeavours to prevent it. This conversation being repeated to the duke, he swore more bitterly than ever to be revenged on D'Aubigné.*

But the duke's hatred gave him little trouble, in comparison with a domestic vexation which wounded him in the tenderest part. Constant D'Aubigné, his eldest son, had been bred up by him with the greatest care, and at an expense disproportionate to his circumstances; he having sought out the most excellent preceptors, and withdrawn them from the greatest families in the kingdom by doubling their salaries; neglecting the convenience of his own affairs, in order to procure the young man every advantage instruction could give him. But he could only bestow the means; to secure success was beyond his power. That most destructive of vices, gaming, the sure road to meanness and treachery, was become very common in France. Henry the IVth was much addicted to it; from the court it soon spread itself over the kingdom. Constant was early infected with it, and not less inclined to drunkenness. He forsook his studies, and soon was immersed in every kind of vice. Without his father's knowledge, he married a woman unworthy of his rank, whom he afterwards inhumanly killed.

However criminal his son, D'Aubigné had still for him the affection of a father; and to withdraw him from the court, which was not a place wherein he could hope to effect a reformation, he raised a regiment for him on the Prince of Condé's taking arms, in hopes of turning his passions to a desire of military glory; and by giving him employment, to wear off some of the bad effects of idleness: but to no purpose. The war ended almost as soon as it began; and Constant returned to court; where he lost at play twenty times more than he was worth; and, as his only resource, abjured his religion and embraced the Romish faith, the king having promised to be a father to him. His wit, and great superiority of talents, both by nature, and by his early acquirements, before his vicious course of life had obstructed his improvement, rendered him a very desirable convert; and no doubt but he was the more acceptable, for being the son of the staunchest Huguenot in the kingdom, it seemed to the Catholics almost piety to rejoice.

Constant's change of religion was the heaviest affliction that could befall his father; who on hearing that he frequented the company of Jesuits, had sent him a prohibition of conversing with them for the future, on pain of incurring his malediction. The young man thinking it for his interest to dissemble, acknowledged he had some acquaintance with two of those fathers, but did not confess his conversion; which was not then made public; and having obtained, by their means, a permission from the Pope to join in all the offices of devotion in the reformed church, without impeaching his profession of the Catholic faith, he went to his father in Poicton, with a design of getting Maillezais and le Doignon into his possession; a design thought worthy of his holiness's indulgence to facilitate.

D'Aubigné, unsuspicious of his son's treachery, sought to detach him from the court by an easy establishment; and after making him his lieutenant in Maillezais, with the full power of governor, he withdrew to le Doignon. He had soon reason to know that such indulgence was fruitless, for in a short time Maillezais was converted into a gaming-house, a brothel, and a mint for coing of false money. But the young man ruined his schemes by too much confidence. He boasted in his letters to his friends at court, that the garrison was all in his interest against his father: who being informed of his views by a lady there, and by the ministers of Poictou, he caused some petards and ladders to be put into a boat, and under favour of the night approached Maillezais; when advancing alone, and in disguise, to the gate of the citadel, a sentinel perceiving him, attempted to obstruct his passage; but D'Aubigné seizing him by the collar, and threatening to stab him, the sentinel ceased his opposition, and D'Aubigné secured the gate; he then introduced the men he had brought with him; and turned out those whom his son believed he had corrupted to his purpose.

Constant, thus disappointed, retired to Nyort, with the Baron de Neuillant, who like him had revolted against his father, where we shall leave him; forming plans for the reprisal of Doignon.*

The imprisonment of the Prince of Condé made the former discontents break out again.† The princes more exasperated than

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 129.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 154.
† Pere Dan. tom. vii. p. 5.

ever against the marshal d'Ancre, on account of so insolent an abuse of his power, had once more recourse to arms; but laid them down on the young king's causing the marshal to be murdered,* and desiring the queen regent to retire to Blois, speciously intimating, that he would relieve her from the trouble of intermeddling any longer in affairs of government.†

D'Aubigné concerned himself little in these commotions; they offered him no prospect of gaining advantage for his reformed brethren; to whom he was become rather burdensome, by giving them advice for the management of the affairs of their community, which was too honest for the leading men amongst them to follow. He warned them of dangers which long experience made him foresee, or which he had learnt from a private memorial drawn up at Rome, concerning future designs against the Huguenots, which had fallen into his hands;‡ but the predictions founded on wisdom or knowledge, were represented by his enemies as nothing but the pretended prophecies of a dumb fortune-teller, whom he for some time kept in his house, having heard a very extraordinary account of his divinations; and it plainly appears that D'Aubigné was so infected with the superstitions of the age he lived in, that he firmly believed this dumb conjurer foretold the time and circumstances of Henry IV.'s death, and the principal events of his son's reign. For though he forbad his children and servants asking the man any questions concerning future events, yet he says they would not forbear; and from them he learnt these facts; never having made any inquiry himself on such subjects.§

Finding it so little in his power to be of use to his party, he wished to withdraw himself as much as possible from all affairs, and to be no longer charged with the keeping of Maillezais and Doignon. He applied to an assembly of the churches, at that time held at Rochelle, for leave to deliver up those two places into the hands of persons on whose fidelity the churches might depend. The assembly was divided; part were for granting his request; but the majority concluded to have both places razed to the ground; which occasioned him the following letter from Monsieur de Villeroy.

"What will you say to those good friends for whom you have lost a pension of seven thousand livres, and refused an augmentation of five thousand which was offered you; besides incurring for their sakes the anger of the king? They solicit us in the most urgent terms to destroy your house before your face; I use the words of these your excellent friends. If it were left to you, how would you answer them? I desire you will inform me."

D'Aubigné gave the following reply to this letter: "If you wish me to dictate an answer to the request of the Rochelese, it shall be in these terms, "Be it done as is desired, at the peril of those who shall undertake it." Monsieur de Villeroy having reported this short answer in council, the president Jeannin said he well understood the meaning of it; "which," added he, "is no other than that he fears neither them nor us." To know on what foundation this security was built, Vignoles, marechal de camp in the king's army, was sent to take a view of Maillezais and Doignon, under pretence of making a visit to D'Aubigné, which he could do with the less suspicion, as having lived in friendship with him, and been bred in the late king's family under D'Aubigné's direction. When Vignoles had carefully and accurately examined both places, he wrote to the court, that Rochelle (to which they were then forming a design to lay siege) could not be besieged till they had free passage by the river de Sevre, for the transportation of provisions for the king's army; which they could not have without first being in possession of Maillezais and Doignon, as they commanded the river; but that Maillezais would require a royal army to besiege it; and it would be more difficult to lay siege to le Doignon, than to take Rochelle. On this intelligence the court dispatched two commissioners to treat with D'Aubigné on a compensation for those places. The duke d'Epernon, and the bishop of Maillezais had long been endeavouring to purchase them; the duke had offered two hundred thousand livres; but D'Aubigné, who regarded money far less than the interests of his brethren, chose rather to sell them to the duke de Rohan* for one hundred thousand livres: the half only to be paid on the delivery of the places, and the remainder at a more distant period, than to suffer the enemies of the Huguenots to get them into their possession.†

A violent fever, by confining D'Aubigné to his bed, detained him at le Doignon after the sale of it. While he was in this state, a captain who followed Constant, and who if attracted by a similitude in some vices, had at least not lost all his virtue, but together with his attachment to the son, retained some gratitude for the benefits he had received from the father, brought him information that Constant was on his march at the head of fourscore men, supported by an-

* Hist. de la Mere. &c. tom. ii. p. 156. Hist du duc de Bouill. lib. 8. p. 68.
† Pere Dan. tom. vii. p. 6.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 130.
§ Ibid. p. 132.

* Mem. de duc de Rohan. p. 78.
† Ibid. p. 135.

other band which was advancing by water, in order to surprise Maillezais or le Doignon that night. D'Aubigné, who knew that the commander of the garrison was a man totally ignorant of every branch of the military art, unfit as his condition rendered him for exertion, rose from his bed, and having gathered together thirty-six soldiers, without one officer, determined to march to a place which his son could not avoid passing, and there wait for him. But the agitation of his mind and body having increased his fever, Monsieur D'Adets, his son-in-law, and two of Monsieur D'Adets' sons, fell at his feet to conjure him in the most urgent terms to return to his bed. He complied with their entreaties; and Monsieur D'Adets, being directed by him in the manner he should proceed, put himself at the head of the little troop his father-in-law had collected, and meeting Constance on his march to le Doignon, attacked and defeated him; though his corps consisted of above double the number D'Adets commanded.*

When D'Aubigné had recovered from his illness, rendered far more severe by the atrocious behaviour of his son, and those daggers which the ingratitude of one so near, and long so dear to him had planted in his breast, he removed to St. Jean d'Angeli, where he busied himself in seeing the impression of his works completed, particularly the two first volumes of his history, which being published the ensuing year, were ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, it being alleged that he had therein treated the characters of princes with too little respect, and reflected on the Catholic religion, and those who professed it.†

From the time the queen mother retired to Blois, she had lived in a kind of honourable imprisonment; and had the mortification of seeing all persons removed from about her who were in any degree attached to her interest. Galigay, marchioness d'Ancre, had been beheaded on frivolous accusations of witchcraft. Being asked what incantations she had used to gain so great a power over the queen, she replied, that "she had no power but what arose from the influence a strong mind naturally has over a weak one." A truth of which the judges were no doubt well convinced, but the Sieur de Luines, the king's favourite, wanted to get possession of the great riches she and her husband had accumulated, and her death was a necessary step to the attainment of his views.

The very ill treatment given the queen, and the intelligence she received of a design formed to confine her in a convent, or banish her the kingdom, determined her to make her escape from Blois, and put herself under the protection of the Dukes d'Epernon, de Bouillon, de Rohan, and other malcontents, who were still as much dissatisfied with the government as ever, no alteration having been made in their favour by the change of ministers. Pursuant to this resolution the queen got out of a window of the castle of Blois, and with only eight of her attendants made her escape, and was received by the Duke d'Epernon.*

The malecontents raised what forces they were able, and obtained some assistance from the Huguenots; who having suffered much ill-treatment from the government, hoped by this junction to gain some redress. The Duke De Rohan assembled some of his friends at St. Maixant, among whom was D'Aubigné, to consult with them on the operations of the war he had engaged in; and was so sanguine in his expectations of success, that he asked D'Aubigné what measures he ought to pursue, if the queen should with an army of sixty thousand men lay siege to Paris. Instead of giving the instructions required, D'Aubigné endeavoured to show him the madness of the supposition; represented the confusion which would necessarily dissipate in its very birth this formidable party, composed of persons who secretly hated each other; declaring for his part that he would not draw his sword on such an occasion. But taking leave of the duke, and the prince De Soubize his brother, he told them, that though he would not engage in the queen mother's cause, yet when they should be reduced to extremity he would serve them to the utmost of his power, and join them in their pressing necessity. Thus ready was he to sacrifice that life for his friends which he would not hazard for a woman who did not deserve his services. He returned to St. Jean d'Angeli; and remained there till he heard that these men, who had in imagination besieged Paris, were routed by the king's troops at Pont de Cé;† when receiving a letter from the Duke De Rohan, claiming the execution of his promise to join them in their extremity, he repaired to him and the Prince De Soubize, whom he found at the head of about fourteen hundred men, in the utmost perplexity, being utterly at a loss what course to take; but all advice was rendered unnecessary by the account which immediately after arrived of the peace concluded between the queen mother and the king, wherein all her adherents, who should choose to accept the terms, were comprehended.‡

The king having dispersed this ill-formed

* Mem. de duc de Rohan, p. 155.
† Ibid, p. 135.

* Hist. de la Mere & de Fils, tom. ii. p. 332. Mem. de duc de Rohan, p. 75. Mem. de Bassomp. tom. i. p. 456.
† Mem. de duc de Rohan, p. 82. Mem. de Bassomp. tom. i. p. 503.
‡ Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 136. Hist. du duc de Bouill. liv. 8. p. 80. Mem. de Bassompiere, tom. ii. p. 507. Mem. de duc de Rohan, p. 82.

party, filled Poictou with his victorious troops, which rendered that province a very dangerous abode for D'Aubigné, against whom the court was greatly exasperated on account of his history: nor was any other part of France much more secure; general orders being given to apprehend him; and his picture sent to the places where it was supposed his person might not be known. Geneva offered him the safest and most agreeable retreat, as he would there find not only civil liberty, but the free exercise of his religion, the reformed persuasion being there established: on this place therefore he determined, and, having concealed in his saddle, and those of his attendants, the money he had by him,* he set out from St. Jean d'Angeli, attended by twelve horsemen well armed; and though every pass was guarded, and orders given to each to seize him, yet by his perfect knowledge of the country, and all the byeways, he proceeded very successfully. The first night he lay in a place surrounded by three regiments, and three bodies of the guards; but kept clear of them; and advanced to Chateauroux, where he found no means of passing; till having the good fortune to meet with a peasant, better acquainted with those parts, he was shown by him a ford over the river not generally known. At Bourges he was reduced to the same difficulty, and relieved out of it in the same manner. In many places he was furnished with guides by gentlemen who knew him not.†

But this was not the case at Conforgieu; the baron of that place was acquainted with him, and appointed him a guide to conduct him on his way, to whom he was also known. This man gave notice to some of the neighbouring gentlemen of the person whom he was to have under his care, and agreed to lead him into an ambuscade they were to lay for him. Every thing was disposed in the manner concerted; but the next morning, as the guide was speaking to D'Aubigné, he was so violently affected with remorse for the treachery he had intended, that he was too ill to set out on the journey; another was substituted in his place, who conducted him by a different road from that the first guide had intended to go, he escaped the snare. This design against his life was afterwards confessed by one of the gentlemen engaged in it, who on his deathbed asked pardon for the intention.

As D'Aubigné passed through Maçon, that his numbers might not attract notice, he made his attendants divide, and ride only two abreast; but he was known by an old man, who wishing him too well to inform against him, whispered one of his men, "You do right to pass thus, only two together." At Gex the sight of so many armed men caused an alarm, as in that district it was not allowable to bear arms in time of peace; some of the garrison laid hold of one of D'Aubigné's retinue, and would have done the same by him, had he not made a vigorous resistance. He happily escaped from them without killing any of his opponents; though he could use little ceremony with them, as his life was at stake; for the Marquis de Cipiere, commander in those parts, was ordered to seize him, if he passed that way; and had his picture as a means to discover him.*

After this tedious and dangerous journey, D'Aubigné arrived at Geneva the first of September, 1620. He was received with every mark of honour and distinction by that republic; his firm attachment to his religion, his strict integrity, and his uncommon valour, having before gained him the esteem of that people; who thought themselves fortunate in acquiring so noble a a commander at a time when they were under apprehensions of being besieged by the Duke of Savoy. Besides the civilities usually shown there to strangers of rank, the first syndic waited upon him to conduct him to the church, and placed him in the seat of the late syndic, a seat till then given only to princes, and the ambassadors of kings. When church was over, the magistrates, in a body, gave him a public entertainment, to which some strangers were invited; and to such minute and trifling attentions did they extend their civility, that at this feast he was served with marchpanes, a kind of biscuits, on which his coat of arms was marked. One of the best houses in the town was provided for him at the public expense: all the magazines were shown him; the secrets of the government were entrusted to him; the garrison was made to pass in review before him; and a council of war was established, composed of seven persons, of which he was made president. In this office he acted till all the members were required to take an oath of fidelity to the republic, and of inviolable secrecy in regard to all its transactions; an engagement which he thought unfit for a man to enter into with any country but his own, lest in time some circumstances might arise to oblige him to break his oath, or to fail in the duty of a true patriot; but he had no such objection to the care of the fortifications of the city, which were committed to his charge, and repaired and increased by his direction.†

Six weeks after his arrival at Geneva, the war having again broken out in France, the general assembly of the churches of Rochelle sent him two messages, with au-

* Spond's Hist. of Geneva, book the 3d, p. 674.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 137.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 138.
† Ibid. p. 139. Spond's Hist. of Geneva, book the 3d, p. 174.

thentic testimonies of their repentance for having treated him with so much injustice, in regard to the town of Maillezais and the isle of Doignon; and also with a general procuration to engage the churches in a body, and the Rochelese in particular, in several treaties; giving him proper credentials to the Protestant Cantons in Switzerland, Geneva, the Hanse Towns, and several Protestant princes of Germany; they likewise sent him draughts of treaties with blanks to be filled up at discretion, and flying seals to be affixed when he should judge proper; accompanied with instructions; which all tended to engage the Swiss to furnish them with troops gratuitously; and to facilitate the passage of such levies as D'Aubigné could make by other means. To these was added a commission for him to command this army when raised. The alliance between Geneva and France rendering some care necessary in delivering these despatches to D'Aubigné; the bearer disguised himself in the dress of a peasant, and the conferences were held among some new built houses at a small distance from the city.

The Count de Mansfeldt, till then engaged in Bohemia, was seeking some more advantageous service for his troops, an opportunity of executing part of his commission which D'Aubigné would not lose, but treated with him and the duke de Weimar, who engaged jointly to bring twelve thousand foot, six thousand horse, and twelve cannon to the river of Saone, to join three regiments, of two thousand men each, which D'Aubigné promised to gather together; and agreed to execute in the army the post of camp master general. The whole expense of the march was to be defrayed by the assembly of Rochelle. The affair being entirely settled, and Mansfeldt having advanced as far as Alsace; while D'Aubigné was waiting for a remittance of money from Rochelle, he was informed that some of his enemies, having represented that this great army would appear more formidable under the command of the Duke de Bouillon, whose rank would increase its importance, they had brought the assembly over to their proposal; and Mansfeldt, in consequence of fresh orders from them, directed his march to Sedan;* thus the only consequence all these negotiations produced in respect to D'Aubigné was the loss of five hundred pistoles, which he had expended in carrying them on. Such were the effects of the repentance and gratitude of the Rochelese.†

At this time the citizens of Berne sent the son of their chief magistrate to request D'Aubigné to visit their city; with which he complied; and was received with firing of cannon, feasts, and every kind of honour they could bestow, which they carried to such excess, that though prejudiced no doubt in some degree, by their being done to honour him, yet he could not forbear disapproving. His visit then was short; but he repeated it some time after, and staid three or four months; having prevailed upon them to let him surround the city with a regular fortification; though to erect any was contrary to their laws, and the opinions of many persons of the canton. When the fortifications were completed, and he had been conducted by some of the magistrates to see the other places in the canton, they desired him to accept of the post of their captain general; but he excused himself on account of his ignorance in their language. They then urged him to recommend them a proper person for that office; he named three, the Vidame de Chartres, the Marquis de Montbrun, and the Count de la Suze: the last was the object of their choice.*

The citizens of Basle were also desirous of receiving his opinion and advice concerning the fortifications of their city, and sent to request his presence; but they never completed the plan which he traced out for them.

During the residence he made in Switzerland, Squaramel, ambassador from the republic of Venice, made a proposal to him from that republic, of conferring on him the rank of general of the French troops in their service; but when the treaty was on the point of conclusion, the Sieur de Miron, ambassador from France to the Swiss cantons, having received intelligence of it, informed the Venetian ambassador, that his republic would highly offend the most christian king, if it took into its service a man his majesty most particularly hated.

It was to no purpose that D'Aubigné's friends represented that the causes which excite the hatred of monarchs, should be considered as letters of recommendation to a commonwealth; fear prevailed over the desire the Venetians had felt to attach to themselves an able and faithful servant.

The Sieur de Miron did not on this success cease his ill offices to D'Aubigné; he was indefatigable in his endeavours to deprive him of the safe and honourable asylum granted him at Geneva. He first accused him to the magistracy of having spoken disrespectfully of the king; but the evil he designed was prevented by D'Aubigné's desiring a thorough examination might be made into the truth of the accusation; which proved to his advantage. De Miron then informed them he had received letters from the king of France, to the same effect, wherein D'Aubigné was described,

* Hist. du Duc de Bouill. liv. 8. p. 96.
† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 141.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 144.

but not named. The sovereign council of the city consulted him on what answer they should return, which was agreed upon in the following terms: "As to the rest of your letter, which relates to certain persons accused and convicted of atrocious crimes, of having formed treaties against France, and failed in the respect due to his most Christian majesty, who have taken refuge in this city, be assured that no private person ever brought before us just complaints against any man, without receiving as speedy, as severe, and as perfect justice here as in any place whatsoever; and if those who now complain, will send hither a man capable of making good the accusation, and properly provided with proofs of the charge, our respect for the King of France, and our regard to your remonstrances will render us particularly active in our endeavours to deserve the reputation for justice, which the conduct of our predecessors has given to our republic; but in what expressly regards his most Christian majesty we shall act in the most vigorous manner, and with all possible rigour, to show how profoundly we revere a name so glorious. Of this we gave a remarkable proof last year, in reference to a gentleman retired hither, against whom a complaint was made much of the same nature as the present; two of our council, who had borne the first place in the magistracy, were appointed to make a careful search into the merits of the cause, that the accused might be condemned or acquitted, as justice should require; and during the inquiry, which continued six months, this town was his prison; but nothing having appeared, &c."*

D'Aubigné, notwithstanding the perplexities into which it may be supposed these malicious attacks must involve him, bought at that time a piece of land called, la Terre du Crest, and built a house on it; which being with him a favourite amusement, and passing much of his time in seeing the work go forward, one day having mounted on a scaffold to the fifth story, as he was looking at the workmen, it fell down, but he saved himself by catching hold of a stone in the wall, which though small, and lately put in, supported him long enough to give him time to see two stakes under the place where he hung, which stood in such a manner as to impale him had he fallen upon them: but his people got to him before the stone gave way, or he was obliged to quit his hold; which must in a little longer time have been the case, as both his hands had been much hurt by the breaking of the scaffold.

This place served him for a peaceful retreat; and the pleasure and quiet he enjoyed there gave him some consolation under the continual persecutions he suffered from the court of France, which rendered his abode at Geneva often irksome to him, and would at length have determined him to quit that city entirely, if the Duke of Savoy's frequent menaces of besieging it, and the preparations he made for that purpose, had not detained him there; as it was never his practice to fly from danger, especially when it threatened his benefactors.

His friends at Geneva gave a proof of their regard for him not very well suited to his years; negotiating a marriage between him, and the widow of Monsieur Barbany, of the Bourlamachi family in Luca; a lady highly respected and beloved at Geneva, more on account of her virtue, her charity, and benevolence, than for her illustrious extraction, and fortune, which was very considerable. This being reported in France, awakened the malice of his enemies, who in hopes of lessening him in Madame Barbany's esteem, entered a process against him in France, where, without having been heard, or even summoned to make his defence, he was condemned to be beheaded, for having built some bastions with the materials of a church destroyed in the year 1572; which was the fourth time he had been sentenced to death on accusations of that nature.

D'Aubigné, desirous of knowing what impression this would make on his mistress's mind, carried her himself the first news of his condemnation; but though many might suppose that it would not be difficult to disgust her with a lover of about seventy-three years old, yet she without any emotion immediately made answer, "I shall think myself too happy in sharing with you any consequences that may arise from your attachment to the true religion; those whom God has joined, no man shall separate." Their marriage was celebrated very soon after, and the following lines addressed to D'Aubigné on the occasion:

> Paris te dresse un vain Tombeau,
> Geneve un certain Hymenée,
> A Paris tu meure en tableau,
> Vis ici au sein de Renée.*

A little before his marriage he dismissed four gentlemen from his train, delivered up the house provided for him by the republic on his first going thither, and reduced himself to the menage his wife had before established. To free himself from the envy and complaints of the German nobles, who murmured at the superior distinctions shown him in the city, he gave up the seat assigned him at church; but the republic appointed him another, not much less honourable, and far more convenient.

He was not suffered to enjoy his new establishment in peace; Monsieur de Miron

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 146.

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 148.

caused various falsehoods to be circulated, even in the town of Geneva, to blacken his character, and at the same time to make the citizens fear lest the King of France, whose protection was so necessary to them, should cause them to feel his resentment for the honours they paid to D'Aubigné. Ten men were also hired to assassinate him, who made no great secret of their purpose, and swore the execution of it; but whenever he went abroad, he was accompanied by so many friends, watchful for his safety, that the villains could find no opportunity to attack him. The Duke d'Epernon was suspected of being the employer of these assassins, which induced D'Aubigné to write to Monsieur de Candale, the duke's son, that he should advise his father to make a more judicious choice of his men, and to employ such as were more dextrous in the performance of their business.

The constable de Lesdiguieres, though at variance with him, having entered into a war with Genoa, and being under some difficulties, sent a councellor of state to propose to him an enterprise on Franche Comté with three regiments, and a certain number of gens-d'armes, of which he was to have the command; but this scheme came to nothing.* D'Aubigné's age required the quiet of domestic life; the generous attachment the republic had shown to him, and their vigilant care for his safety, at last discouraged his enemies from attempting any thing farther against him; the virtues of his wife, the easiness of his fortune, and the great esteem he was held in, afforded him all the comforts of an honourable old age; and he had no view beyond enjoying them in peace, when the Earl of Carlisle passed through Geneva in his return from an embassy to Constantinople, and by the most friendly caresses, by the excessive honours he paid him, and the warmth with which he solicited him to accompany him into England, prevailed so far that every thing was prepared for his voyage thither, but the design the Duke of Savoy appeared to have of laying immediate siege to Geneva, then destitute of all defence, induced him to lay aside his intention, that he might not be absent at a time when he could be of service to the republic.

But though he still remained in the bosom of his family, his peace was grievously disturbed by his son Constant, who having totally ruined himself by his vices, and incurred the contempt of every one, except of the most abandoned women, in the most infamous houses; sought a reconciliation with his father, who wrote him word, that "when he had made his peace with his heavenly father, his earthly father would grant him his pardon." Being reduced to extreme necessity, he came to Geneva as soon as he received this answer, presented himself to the ministers to be reconciled to their church, performed every thing they exacted from him, sent letters into Poictou, and to Paris, declaring that he was returned into the bosom of that church wherein he was bred; and even wrote both in prose and verse against the papal power; which so well satisfied his father, that he furnished him with money for his immediate necessities, and gave him as good an income as his circumstances would permit.

As Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, was then raising troops for the war in which he soon afterwards gained so much glory, Constant D'Aubigné was advised to repair to him, and assured he would there find employment; but the length of the voyage he must make deterred him from taking that course, and he determined on going into England. Though D'Aubigné flattered himself with the hopes of his reformation, yet the point was too doubtful for him to venture his honour upon it, therefore he durst not give him any letters of recommendation to the king, nor the Duke of Buckingham; but recommended him to some of his particular friends of inferior rank, though with many restrictions. But the young man boldly presented himself to the king and the duke, telling them that his father had forborne to write, fearing as the seas were then filled with French vessels, his letters might be taken. Rochelle was at that time besieged, and the king summoning his privy council, composed only of four persons beside the Duke of Buckingham, and an envoy from the Duke De Rohan, then commander of the Huguenot army, Constant D'Aubigné was invited to it. A resolution was there formed of declaring war against France; and as the first step, it was determined to send to invite D'Aubigné from Geneva. A gentleman was appointed for that purpose; but Constant, apprehensive lest his deceit should be brought to light, prevailed with the king to suffer him to be the messenger, by urging that he should be more able to persuade his father to undertake a voyage, which at his age might not appear very eligible.

He came accordingly to Geneva, and delivered the message with which he was entrusted. His father asked him several times if he had not passed through Paris; having exacted, as a principal condition of their reconciliation, that he should never enter that town; well convinced that the splendour of the court, the allurements of the brothel, and thirst for money, would seduce him from any good purposes he might have formed; Constant assured him in the most solemn manner that he had not been there. But during the preparations D'Aubigné was making for his voyage, he

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 152.

conceived suspicions of his son which deterred him from undertaking it; and he sent him back with a civil message and fair promises, but in general terms; not trusting him with his real intentions; a symptom of distrust of which the young man made some fruitless complaints.

D'Aubigné, on exact inquiry, found that his son in his way from England had been in Paris, and had a conference with Monsieur De Schomberg; that in returning to England he also passed through that city, where he saw the king and Monsieur De Schomberg, and discovered to them all he knew of the affairs of England, notwithstanding the oath of secrecy he had taken, and the unmerited honours he received there. So treacherous a proceeding affected his father most sensibly, and determined him to cast him off for ever. But still tender on the point of honour, he formed a resolution, notwithstanding his great age, of going into England, to exculpate himself from having had any participation in his son's treachery. He had prepared all things for his expedition, when he was again moved to relinquish it by the same cause which had before prevented his going thither, the dangers which threatened Geneva. The war of Mantoua had drawn troops together from all parts, which in a manner surrounded the town, and when thus beset with Italian, French, and German armies, the city was destitute of corn, of salt, and the most necessary provisions. His fears lest this circumstance should encourage some of the adjacent troops to besiege it in his absence, made him change his design, sacrificing every other consideration to his gratitude to that republic; desiring nothing more than to die in its defence, to show the sense he entertained of the numerous proofs they had given him of esteem, affection, and respect.*

D'Aubigné's apprehensions proved vain; the city was, possibly, preserved by the opposite interests of the several nations whose armies surrounded it, none of which would have borne to have seen Geneva in the possession of another; and he was left to end that life in peace which had been amazingly preserved through an incredible series of dangers. After having enjoyed the pleasing effects of the increasing esteem of that people, being called to all their important deliberations,† and applied to on every exigence, as one whose wisdom and integrity rendered him their best counsellor, he died at the age of fourscore years; regretted by the whole city, and more tenderly lamented by his wife.

He was interred in St. Peter's cloyster, having before made his own epitaph, designed as a kind of testamentary admonition to his children. It was engraven on a handsome monument, and conceived in these terms:*

D. O. M.

Testor Liberi quam vobis aptus sum
Solo favente Numine
Adversis ventis bonis Artibus
Irrequietus Quietem
Eam colere si Deum colitis
Si patrissatis contingat
Si secus secus accidat
Hâc Pater iterum Pater
Per quem non a quo verè vivere
Et bene datum vobis
Studiorum Hæredibus Monumento
Scripsit.
Theodorus Agrippa Albineus
Octuagenrius.
Obiit Anno 1630, April. Die 29.

To the glory of the most good and most high God. My children, and the children of my children, my last wish is, that you may enjoy the repose which I have acquired for you, through the gracious assistance of God alone, not without great labour, disappointment, and solicitude. If you serve God, and follow the instructions of your father, may you ever enjoy that repose! Troubles and vexations must be the inevitable consequences of a contrary conduct. Your father, doubly your father, by whom, and not of whom you have received your natural life, and have been instructed how to lead a good life, leaves this wish as a monument of honour to the inheritors of his studies, and as a monument of ignominy and reproach to those who shall degenerate.

D'Aubigné left three children, Constant, his son, and two daughters; the eldest daughter married the Seigneur D'Adets de Caumont, &c., the other the Seigneur de Villette de Mursey. Happy it was for D'Aubigné that he could not see so far into futurity as to know that his grand daughter, by his worthless son, would have so great a share in the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the subsequent destruction of the Reformed churches in France, for the preservation of which he so freely sacrificed his fortune, and would joyfully have laid down his life, could he therefore have purchased their prosperity. The interests of the religion he professed were through life his first object; he wished to extend its influence, and steadily practised the duties it recommended; from which even his passions, strong as they were by nature, could not seduce him. His integrity, his love of civil liberty, and every principle of virtue, were so founded on, or blended with his piety, that neither the sunshine of favour, nor the storms of fortune, could overcome them. Ambition could not tempt him to violate the natural probity of his mind, nor

* Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 158.
† Spond's Hist. of Gen. book 3. p. 174.

* D'Aubigne's manuscripts.

to forego his sincerity, though he knew that his fortune was at stake; that by courtly compliances he should rise to honours and dignities; without them had nothing but neglect, perhaps hatred, to expect; for princes seldom love the man who refuses their favours. The uncommon brightness of his understanding, and the liveliness of his wit, were such recommendations to him in a court, and especially to a sovereign who had so much himself, and allowed the greatest latitude in that way to all around him, as could not have failed of rendering him a general favourite, if his rigid manners, and blunt frankness, had not disgusted, because they reproached, those whom his conversation delighted. Had he not of himself told us the very early progress he made in letters, it would have been difficult to have reconciled his learning with his military life, which seems to have allowed no leisure for study. At seventeen years old he entered the army; was a captain fifty years, forty-four of which he was maitre de camp, and thirty-two also marechal de camp; continually engaged in the field, or some military operations; yet his writings are very numerous, and lasting monuments of his genius. Some of them, indeed, though admired at the season they were written, being relative only to the occurrences of those times, have now lost much of their merit, as the poignancy of the satire, and the play of wit to be found in them, are no longer felt, nor in many parts discerned, from our ignorance of the things designed to be ridiculed. Of these are les Confessions de Sancy, and les Avantures du Baron de Fæneste. The merit of his General History of his own time, did not depend on times and seasons; it will always be esteemed as one of the best during that period, though none ever produced a greater number of historians, the natural consequence of an uncommon series of interesting and shining events.

Henry the IVth had very early recommended to D'Aubigné to write his history; perhaps foreseeing in his own spirit that he should furnish him with noble materials; but D'Aubigné not having the same foresight, or not depending so much upon it, told him on his repeating the order, on a trifling incident, which arose in a hunting match during his detention at the court of his brother-in-law, "Do you begin to act, sire, and I will begin to write."* The king soon provided matter for the historian's pen, and D'Aubigné very diligently recorded it. About eight years after Henry's conversion to the Romish church, he was advised by a Jesuit to prohibit D'Aubigné from continuing to write his history; but Cardinal Du Perron, with a candour that does him honour, persuaded his majesty on the contrary, not only to permit, but expressly to command him to continue it; observing that he knew no other person so well qualified in every respect to perform it well. His advice prevailed so far, that the king even promised to defray the expense of his journey to the places where any memorable action had been performed, that for the better illustration of battles or sieges, he might give plans instead of descriptions, as affording more perfect explanation.* But the execution of this design being delayed, the king's untimely death prevented that illustration, as the expense was too great for a man who had gained little more than honour by his long services; but he sent into every province in France to collect materials, and appointed places to which they might transmit their intelligence; desirous of doing particular justice to every brave man, at the same time that he gave the general history of his nation, and indeed of the world in that period, for it extends to every part where the events were known in Europe. He concludes his second volume with a noble address to those, however mean by birth, who had a share in any considerable action; and to the descendants or relations of those who were deceased, to urge them by the strongest motives to communicate to him every incident that could render his history more complete, or record the honour which themselves, their ancestors, or relations, obtained in that great field of glory. When he had occasion to mention his own actions in his history, wherever it could well be done, he avoids his name, calling himself sometimes an equerry of the king's, at others a standard-bearer, a campmaster, a man, and other appellations, by which, did not his private memoirs serve as a key to his history in that respect, it would be impossible to know that he was the person meant.

Those memoirs were written only for the use of his children, never published by him, nor till very long after his death. He left but two copies of them, and desired they might never be published.† Herein he was disobeyed; and there seems so little reason for burying them in oblivion, that the disobedience is excusable.

His history was burnt by the common hangman;‡ the charge against it was his having spoken too freely of princes, and it may be added too freely also of the Jesuits, which was probably the greater crime. He said on the occasion, that he could not be offended at the treatment given to his book, after having seen the Holy Bible ignominiously hanged on a gibbet, (for thus had

* Preface à l'Hist. Univ. D'Aub. p. 6.

* Imprimeur au lecteur, before his Univ. Hist.

† Hist. Sec. D'Aub. p. 3.

‡ Recueil des statuts et reglemens des marchands libraires et imprimeurs de la ville de Paris, par M. L. Brouchel, avocat en parlement, p. 62. tit. 11. art. 74. Manuscript account of D'Aub.

some fiery zealots used the Bibles they had taken from the Huguenots, to show their *pious* hatred to all translations of that book into their native tongue,) and fourscore thousand innocent persons massacred without provocation.* The history written by Monsieur De Thou, a Catholic, though a moderate one, met with the same fate at Rome, that D'Aubigné's had at Paris; and it was even debated in council whether the like sentence should not pass against it in France; but D'Aubigné spoke strongly in its favour, affirming that no Frenchman had ever before given such evident proof of solid judgment and steady application, which were not generally allowed to be the characteristic of the nation, and therefore his work did it such honour as every Frenchman should wish to cherish, not to blast with the breath of faction and prejudice. The histories of De Thou and D'Aubigné have shown that injustice and malice cannot for any great length of time triumph over merit and truth; whatever sentences were pronounced against them, they are still esteemed, and read with pleasure. D'Aubigné was little mortified by the treatment his works received; his mind was superior to the injuries done him by a mean-spirited prince, and his venal court; he had borne with equanimity ill treatment from one whose actions could excite in him more acute sensations; from his king, to whom he was so strongly attached by duty and affection, that every appearance of neglect or ingratitude made the deepest impressions on his heart. But from his own words we may learn how he supported the injustice shown him. "Bred," says he, "at the feet of my king, from whom I never swerved in his most trying adversities, for some time I was cherished in his bosom, without an equal in his favour and confidence, though then full of my provincial frankness and severity; at other times I was removed from his favour and his court; but still so unskaken in my fidelity, that even while disgraced, he trusted me with his most important secrets and concerns. I received from him such benefits as sufficed to support, but not to exalt me; and when I have seen myself supplanted by my inferiors, and even by those who through my interest were received into his service, I have consoled myself by reflecting, that both they and I had served well, they to the satisfaction of their master, and I to my own."* They obtained wealth and titles, D'Aubigné his own approbation and the undisturbed felicity of a clear conscience. They sought the favour of the King of France, he of the King of kings.

* Manuscript account of D'Aubigne.

* Preface to his Universal History, p. 5.

THE END.