

THE THREE MUSKETEERS



ALEXANDRE DUMAS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE spirit of adventure and the air of gaiety in *The Three Musketeers* would make it easy to suppose it one of the early romances of Alexandre Dumas. It first appeared in 1844-5, however, when he had been writing plays and stories for twenty years: and it belongs to the same period of his career as *Monte-Cristo*, which first gave his novels a world-wide fame and audience. This was, too, his most extraordinarily prolific season, for he is said to have produced some forty volumes in the year 1844 alone. He was assisted in their rapid production by various secretaries and transcribers, for the chief of whom, Maquet, not a little credit has been claimed. But Dumas had the power of dominating his scribes, and impressing his own narrative, forms, and colours upon their minds. They were his human pens: that was all. *Les Trois Mousquetaires* was followed by *Vingt Ans après* and *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne*: three books which form a trilogy unsurpassed in objective romance. Rossetti said that for pure pleasure there was no such story-telling as that of Dumas; and Robert Louis Stevenson, both by his own praise, and his own practice, avowed himself a disciple. Dumas emulated Scott in rearing a *château* out of his books; his Abbotsford was called Monte Cristo after his great novel. It cost nearly half a million francs, and was presently sold (to pay its builder's debts) for less than a tenth part of that sum. He was extravagant indeed to the end, and died poor in 1870, the year of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, at Puy, near Dieppe, and when the war was over his remains were carried to Villers-Cotterets, where he first saw the light in 1802. The following is the table of his published works:

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POETRY AND PLAYS.—*Élégie sur la Mort du Général Foy*, 1825; *La Chasse et l'Amour* (in collaboration), 1825; *Canaris* (dithyramb), 1826; *La Noce et l'Enterrement* (in collaboration), 1826; *Christine* (or *Stockholm, Fontainebleau et Rome*), 1828; *Henri III. et sa Cour*, 1829; *Antony*, 1831; *Napoléon Bonaparte, ou Trente Ans de l'Histoire de France*, 1831; *Charles VII. chez ses Grands Vassaux*, 1831; *Richard Darlington*, 1831; *Térèse*, 1832; *La Mari de la Veuve* (in collaboration), 1832; *La Tour de Nesle*, 1832; *Angèle* (in collaboration), 1833; *Catherine Howard*, 1834; *Don Juan de Marana, ou la Chute d'un Ange*, 1836; *Kean*, 1836; *Piquillo*, comic opera (in collaboration),

1837; *Caligula*, 1837; *Paul Jones*, 1838; *Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle*, 1839; *L'Alchimiste*, 1839; *Bathilde* (in collaboration), 1839; *Un Mariage sous Louis XV.* (in collaboration), 1841; *Lorenzino* (in collaboration), 1842; *Halifax*, 1842; *Les Demoiselles de Saint-Cyr* (in collaboration), 1843; *Louise Bernard* (in collaboration), 1843; *Le Laird de Dumbicky* (in collaboration), 1843; *Le Garde Forestier* (in collaboration), 1845; *L'Oreste*, 1856; *Le Verrou de la Reine*, 1856; *Le Meneur des Loups*, 1857; Collective Editions, *Théâtre*, 1834-6, 6 vols., 1863-74, 15 vols. Dumas also dramatized many of his novels.

TALES AND NOVELS, TRAVELS.—*Nouvelles Contemporaines*, 1826; *Impressions de Voyage*, 1833; *Souvenirs d'Antony* (tales), 1835; *La Salle d'Armes* (tales), 1838; *Le Capitaine Paul*, 1838; *Acté, Monseigneur Gaston de Phébus*, 1839; *Quinze Jours au Sinai*, 1839; *Aventures de John Davy*, 1840; *Le Capitaine Pamphile*, 1840; *Maitre Adam le Calabrais*, 1840; *Othon l'Archer*, 1840; *Une Année à Florence*, 1840; *Praxide*; *Don Martin de Freytas*; *Pierre le Cruel*, 1841; *Excursions sur les bords du Rhin*, 1841; *Nouvelles Impressions de Voyage*, 1841; *Le Speronare* (travels), 1842; *Aventures de Lyderic*, 1842; *Georges*; *Ascanio*; *Le Chevalier d'Harmental*, 1843; *Le Corricolo*; *La Villa Palmieri*, 1843; *Gabriel Lambert*; *Château d'Eppstein*; *Cécile*; *Sylvandire*; *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (The Three Musketeers, E.M.L. 81); *Amaury*; *Fernande*, 1844; *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, 1844-5; *Vingt Ans après*, 1845 (Twenty Years After, E.M.L. 175); *Les Frères Corses*; *Une Fille du Régent*; *La Reine Margot*, 1845 (Marguerite de Valois, E.M.L. 326); *La Guerre des Femmes*, 1845-6; *Le Chevalier de Maison-Rouge*, 1846 (E.M.L. 614); *La Dame de Monsoreau*, 1847 (Chicot the Jester, E.M.L. 421); *Le Bâtard de Mauléon*, 1846; *Mémoires d'un Médecin*, 1846-8; *Les Quarante-cinq*, 1848 (The Forty-Five, E.M.L. 420); *Dix Ans plus tard, ou le Vicomte de Bragelonne*, 1848-50 (E.M.L. 593-5); *De Paris à Cadix*, 1848; *Tanger, Alger, et Tunis*, 1848; *Les Mille et un Fantômes*, 1849; *La Tulipe Noire*, 1850 (The Black Tulip, E.M.L. 174); *La Femme au Collier de Velours*, 1851; *Olympe de Clèves*, 1852; *Un Gil Blas en Californie*, 1852; *Isaac Taquedem*, 1852; *La Comtesse de Charny*, 1853-5; *Ange Pitou*, *Le Pasteur d'Ashbourn*; *El Satéador*; *Conscience l'Innocent*, 1853; *Catherine Blum*; *Ingénue*, 1854; *Les Mohicans de Paris*, 1854-8; *Salvator*, 1855-9 (the two last with Paul Bocage); *L'Arabie Heureuse*, 1855; *Les Compagnons de Jéhu*, 1857; *Les Louves de Macheoul*, 1859; *Le Caucase*, 1859; *De Paris à Astrakan*, 1860.

OTHER WORKS.—*Souvenirs de 1830-42*, 1854; *Mémoires*, 1852-4; *Causeries*, 1860; *Bric-à-brac*, 1861; *Histoire de mes Bêtes*, 1868; *Memoirs of Garibaldi*, reminiscences of various writers, historical compilations, etc.; Children's Tales; *Histoire d'un Casse-Noisette*. *La Bouillie de la Comtesse Berthe*; *Le Père Gigogne*.

SELECTED BIOGRAPHIES IN ENGLISH.—A. F. Davidson, *Alexandre Dumas Père*, 1902; H. Parigot, *Alexandre Dumas Père*, 1902; J. Lucas-Dubreton, *Alexandre Dumas, the Fourth Musketeer*, 1929; F. W. Reed, *The Life of Alexandre Dumas Père*, 1934; Ruthven Todd, *The Laughing Mulatto*, 1939; A. Craig Bell, *Alexandre Dumas*, 1950.

PREFACE

In which it is proved that, notwithstanding their names in *os* and *is*, the heroes of the history which we are about to have the honour to relate to our readers have nothing mythological about them.

A SHORT time ago, while making researches in the Royal Library for my History of Louis XIV., I stumbled by chance upon the Memoirs of Monsieur d'Artagnan, printed—as were most of the works of that period, in which authors could not tell the truth without the risk of a residence, more or less long, in the Bastille—at Amsterdam, by Pierre Rouge. The title attracted me; I took them home with me, with the permission of the guardian, and devoured them.

It is not my intention here to enter into an analysis of this curious work; and I shall satisfy myself with referring such of my readers as appreciate the pictures of the period to its pages. They will therein find portraits pencilled by the hand of a master; and although these squibs may be, for the most part, traced upon the doors of barracks and the walls of cabarets, they will not find the likenesses of Louis XIII., Anne of Austria, Richelieu, Mazarin, and the courtiers of the period, less faithful than in the history of M. Anquetil.

But, as it is well known, that which strikes the capricious mind of the poet is not always that which affects the mass of readers. Now, while admiring, as others doubtless will admire, the curious details we have to relate, the thing which attracted our attention most strongly is one to which no one before ourselves had given a thought.

D'Artagnan relates that on his first visit to M. de Tréville, captain of the king's Musketeers, he met in the antechamber three young men, serving in the illustrious corps into which he was soliciting the honour of being received, bearing the names of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis.

We must confess these three strange names struck us; and it immediately occurred to us that they were but pseudonyms, under which D'Artagnan had disguised names perhaps illustrious, or else that the bearers of these borrowed names had themselves chosen them on the day in which, from caprice, discontent, or want of fortune, they had donned the simple musketeer's uniform.

From that moment we had no rest till we had searched all the contemporary works within our reach for some trace of these extraordinary names which had so strongly awakened our curiosity.

The catalogue alone of the books we read with this object would fill a whole chapter, which, although it might be very instructive, would certainly afford our readers but little amusement. It will suffice, then, to tell them that at the moment at which, discouraged by so many fruitless investigations, we were about to abandon our search, we at length found, guided by the counsels of our illustrious friend, Paulin Pâris, a manuscript in folio, indorsed 4772 or 4773, we do not recollect which, having for title: "Memoir of the Comte de la Fère, touching some Events which passed in France towards the End of the Reign of King Louis XIII. and the Commencement of the Reign of King Louis XIV."

It may be easily imagined how great was our joy, when in turning over this manuscript, our last hope, we found at the twentieth page the name of Athos, at the twenty-seventh the name of Porthos, and at the thirty-first the name of Aramis.

The discovery of a completely unknown manuscript at

a period in which historical science is carried to such a high degree appeared almost miraculous. We hastened, therefore, to obtain permission to print it, with the view of presenting ourselves some day with the *pack* of others at the doors of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, if we should not succeed—a very probable thing, by-the-bye—in gaining admission to the Académie Française with our own proper *pack*. This permission, we feel bound to say, was graciously granted; which compels us here to give a public contradiction to the slanderers who pretend that we live under a government but moderately indulgent to men of letters.

Now, this is the first part of this precious manuscript which we offer to our readers, restoring to it the title which belongs to it, and entering into an engagement that if (of which we entertain no doubt) this first part should obtain the success it merits, we will publish the second incontinently.

In the mean while, as the godfather is a second father, we beg the reader to lay to our account, and not to that of the Comte de la Fère, the pleasure or the *ennui* he may experience.

This being understood, let us proceed with our history.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

CHAPTER I

THE THREE GIFTS OF M. D'ARTAGNAN THE ELDER

ON the first Monday of the month of April, 1626, the market-town of Meung, in which the author of the "Romance of the Rose" was born, appeared to be in as perfect a state of revolution as if the Huguenots had just made a second Rochelle of it. Many citizens, seeing the women flying towards the Grand Street, leaving their children crying at the open doors, hastened to don the cuirass, and supporting their somewhat uncertain courage with a musket or a partisan, directed their steps towards the hostelry of the Jolly Miller, before which was gathered, increasing every minute, a compact group, vociferous and full of curiosity.

In those times panics were common, and few days passed without some city or other enregistering in its archives an event of this kind. There were nobles, who made war against each other; there was the king, who made war against the cardinal; there was Spain, which made war against the king. Then, in addition to these concealed or public, secret or open wars, there were robbers, mendicants, Huguenots, wolves, and scoundrels, who made war upon everybody. The citizens always took up arms readily against thieves, wolves, or scoundrels, often against nobles or Huguenots, sometimes against the king, but never against the cardinal or Spain. It resulted, then, from this habit that on the said first Monday of the month of April, 1626, the citizens, on hearing the clamour, and seeing neither the red-and-yellow standard nor the livery of the Duc de Richelieu, rushed towards the hostel of the Jolly Miller. When arrived there, the cause of this hubbub was apparent to all.

A young man,—we can sketch his portrait at a dash. Imagine to yourself a Don Quixote of eighteen; a Don

Quixote without his corselet, without his coat-of-mail, without his cuisses; a Don Quixote clothed in a woollen doublet, the blue colour of which had faded into a nameless shade between lees of wine and a heavenly azure; face long and brown; high cheek-bones, a sign of sagacity; the maxillary muscles enormously developed, an infallible sign by which a Gascon may always be detected, even without his cap,—and our young man wore a cap set off with a sort of feather; the eye open and intelligent; the nose hooked, but finely chiselled. Too big for a youth, too small for a grown man, an experienced eye might have taken him for a farmer's son upon a journey, had it not been for the long sword which, dangling from a leathern baldric, hit against the calves of its owner as he walked, and against the rough side of his steed when he was on horseback.

For our young man had a steed which was the observed of all observers. It was a Béarn pony, from twelve to fourteen years old, yellow in his hide, without a hair in his tail, but not without wind-galls on his legs, which, though going with his head lower than his knees, rendering a martingale quite unnecessary, contrived nevertheless to perform his eight leagues a day. Unfortunately, the qualities of this horse were so well concealed under his strange-coloured hide and his unaccountable gait, that at a time when everybody was a connoisseur in horseflesh, the appearance of the aforesaid pony at Meung—which place he had entered about a quarter of an hour before, by the gate of Beaugency—produced an unfavourable feeling, which extended to his rider.

And this feeling had been the more painfully perceived by young D'Artagnan—for so was the Don Quixote of this second Rosinante named—from his not being able to conceal from himself the ridiculous appearance that such a steed gave him, good horseman as he was. He had sighed deeply, therefore, when accepting the gift of the pony from M. d'Artagnan the elder. He was not ignorant that such a beast was worth at least twenty livres; and the words which accompanied the present were above all price.

“My son,” said the old Gascon gentleman, in that pure Béarn *patois* of which Henry IV. could never rid himself,—“my son, this horse was born in the house of your father about thirteen years ago, and has remained in it

ever since,—which ought to make you love it. Never sell it; allow it to die tranquilly and honourably of old age, and if you make a campaign with it, take as much care of it as you would of an old servant. At court, provided you have ever the honour to go there,” continued M. d’Artagnan the elder,—“an honour to which, remember, your ancient nobility gives you right,—sustain worthily your name of *gentleman*, which has been worthily borne by your ancestors for five hundred years, both for your own sake and the sake of those who belong to you. By the latter I mean your relatives and friends. Endure nothing from anyone except Monsieur the Cardinal and the king. It is by his courage, please to observe,—by his courage alone,—that a gentleman can make his way nowadays. Whoever hesitates for a second perhaps allows the bait to escape which during that exact second fortune held out to him. You are young. You ought to be brave for two reasons: the first is, that you are a Gascon; and the second is, that you are my son. Never fear quarrels, but seek adventures. I have taught you how to handle a sword; you have thews of iron, a wrist of steel. Fight on all occasions. Fight the more for duels being forbidden; since, consequently, there is twice as much courage in fighting. I have nothing to give you, my son, but fifteen crowns, my horse, and the counsels you have just heard. Your mother will add to them a recipe for a certain balsam, which she had from a Bohemian, and which has the miraculous virtue of curing all wounds that do not reach the heart. Take advantage of all, and live happily and long. I have but one word to add, and that is to propose an example to you,—not mine, for I myself have never appeared at court, and have only taken part in religious wars as a volunteer; I speak of M. de Tréville, who was formerly my neighbour, and who had the honour to be, as a child, the playfellow of our king, Louis XIII., whom God preserve! Sometimes their play degenerated into battles, and in these battles the king was not always the stronger. The blows which he received increased greatly his esteem and friendship for M. de Tréville. Afterwards, M. de Tréville fought with others: in his first journey to Paris, five times; from the death of the late king till the young one came of age, without reckoning wars and sieges, seven times; and from that date up to the present day, a hundred times, perhaps! So that

in spite of edicts, ordinances, and decrees, there he is, captain of the Musketeers; that is to say, chief of a legion of Cæsars, whom the king holds in great esteem, and whom the cardinal dreads,—he who dreads nothing, as it is said. Still further, M. de Tréville gains ten thousand crowns a year; he is therefore a great noble. He began as you begin. Go to him with this letter; and make him your model in order that you may do as he has done."

Upon which M. d'Artagnan the elder girded his own sword round his son, kissed him tenderly on both cheeks, and gave him his benediction.

On leaving the paternal chamber, the young man found his mother, who was waiting for him with the famous recipe of which the counsels we have just repeated would necessitate frequent employment. The adieux were on this side longer and more tender than they had been on the other,—not that M. d'Artagnan did not love his son, who was his only offspring, but M. d'Artagnan was a man, and he would have considered it unworthy of a man to give way to his feelings; whereas Madame d'Artagnan was a woman, and still more, a mother. She wept abundantly; and—let us speak it to the praise of M. d'Artagnan the younger—notwithstanding the efforts he made to remain firm, as a future musketeer ought, nature prevailed, and he shed many tears, of which he succeeded with great difficulty in concealing the half.

The same day the young man set forward on his journey, furnished with the three paternal gifts, which consisted, as we have said, of fifteen crowns, the horse, and the letter for M. de Tréville,—the counsels being thrown into the bargain.

With such a *vade mecum* D'Artagnan was morally and physically an exact copy of the hero of Cervantes, to whom we so happily compared him when our duty of an historian placed us under the necessity of sketching his portrait. Don Quixote took windmills for giants, and sheep for armies; D'Artagnan took every smile for an insult, and every look as a provocation,—whence it resulted that from Tarbes to Meung his fist was constantly doubled, or his hand on the hilt of his sword; and yet the fist did not descend upon any jaw, nor did the sword issue from its scabbard. It was not that the sight of the wretched pony did not excite numerous smiles on the

countenances of passers-by; but as against the side of this pony rattled a sword of respectable length, and as over this sword gleamed an eye rather ferocious than haughty, these passers-by repressed their hilarity, or if hilarity prevailed over prudence, they endeavoured to laugh only on one side, like the masks of the ancients. D'Artagnan, then, remained majestic and intact in his susceptibility, till he came to this unlucky city of Meung.

But there, as he was alighting from his horse at the gate of the Jolly Miller, without anyone—host, waiter, or hostler—coming to hold his stirrup or take his horse, D'Artagnan spied, through an open window on the ground-floor, a gentleman, well-made and of good carriage, although of rather a stern countenance, talking with two persons who appeared to listen to him with respect. D'Artagnan fancied quite naturally, according to his custom, that he must be the object of their conversation, and listened. This time D'Artagnan was only in part mistaken; he himself was not in question, but his horse was. The gentleman appeared to be enumerating all his qualities to his auditors; and, as I have said, the auditors seeming to have great deference for the narrator, they every moment burst into fits of laughter. Now, as a half-smile was sufficient to awaken the irascibility of the young man, the effect produced upon him by this vociferous mirth may be easily imagined.

Nevertheless, D'Artagnan was desirous of examining the appearance of this impertinent personage who ridiculed him. He fixed his haughty eye upon the stranger, and perceived a man of from forty to forty-five years of age, with black and piercing eyes, pale complexion, a strongly marked nose, and a black and well-shaped moustache. He was dressed in a doublet and hose of a violet colour, with aiguillettes of the same, without any other ornaments than the customary slashes, through which the shirt appeared. This doublet and hose, though new, were creased, like travelling-clothes for a long time packed in a portmanteau. D'Artagnan made all these remarks with the rapidity of a most minute observer, and doubtless from an instinctive feeling that this unknown was destined to have a great influence over his future life.

Now, as at the moment in which D'Artagnan fixed his eyes upon the gentleman in the violet doublet, the gentleman made one of his most knowing and profound remarks

respecting the Béarnese pony, his two auditors laughed even louder than before, and he himself, though contrary to his custom, allowed a pale smile (if I may be allowed to use such an expression) to stray over his countenance. This time there could be no doubt; D'Artagnan was really insulted. Full, then, of this conviction, he pulled his cap down over his eyes, and endeavouring to copy some of the court airs he had picked up in Gascony among young travelling nobles, he advanced with one hand on the hilt of his sword and the other resting on his hip. Unfortunately, as he advanced, his anger increased at every step; and instead of the proper and lofty speech he had prepared as a prelude to his challenge, he found nothing at the tip of his tongue but a gross personality, which he accompanied with a furious gesture.

"I say, sir, you, sir, who are hiding yourself behind that shutter—yes, you, sir, tell me what you are laughing at, and we will laugh together!"

The gentleman raised his eyes slowly from the nag to his cavalier, as if he required some time to ascertain whether it could be to him that such strange reproaches were addressed; then, when he could not possibly entertain any doubt of the matter, his eyebrows slightly bent, and with an accent of irony and insolence impossible to be described, he replied to D'Artagnan, "I was not speaking to you, sir."

"But I am speaking to you!" replied the young man, additionally exasperated with this mixture of insolence and good manners, of politeness and scorn.

The unknown looked at him again with a slight smile, and retiring from the window, came out of the hostelry with a slow step, and placed himself before the horse within two paces of D'Artagnan. His quiet manner and the ironical expression of his countenance redoubled the mirth of the persons with whom he had been talking, and who still remained at the window.

D'Artagnan, seeing him approach, drew his sword a foot out of the scabbard.

"This horse is decidedly, or rather has been in his youth, a buttercup," resumed the unknown, continuing the remarks he had begun, and addressing himself to his auditors at the window, without paying the least attention to the exasperation of D'Artagnan, who, however, placed himself between him and them. "It is a colour

very well known in botany, but till the present time very rare among horses."

"There are people who laugh at the horse that would not dare to laugh at the master," cried the young emulator of the furious Tréville.

"I do not often laugh, sir," replied the unknown, "as you may perceive by the expression of my countenance; but nevertheless I retain the privilege of laughing when I please."

"And I," cried D'Artagnan, "will allow no man to laugh when it displeases me!"

"Indeed, sir," continued the unknown, more calm than ever; "well, that is perfectly right!" and turning on his heel, was about to re-enter the hostelry by the front gate, beneath which D'Artagnan on arriving had observed a saddled horse.

But D'Artagnan was not of a character to allow a man to escape him thus who had had the insolence to ridicule him. He drew his sword entirely from the scabbard, and followed him, crying,—

"Turn, turn, Master Joker, lest I strike you behind!"

"Strike me!" said the other, turning on his heels, and surveying the young man with as much astonishment as contempt. "Why, my good fellow, you must be mad!" Then, in a suppressed tone, as if speaking to himself, "This is annoying," continued he. "What a godsend this would be for his Majesty, who is seeking everywhere for brave fellows to recruit his Musketeers!"

He had scarcely finished, when D'Artagnan made such a furious lunge at him that if he had not sprung nimbly backwards, it is probable he would have jested for the last time. The unknown, then perceiving that the matter went beyond raillery, drew his sword, saluted his adversary, and seriously placed himself on guard. But at the same moment his two auditors, accompanied by the host, fell upon D'Artagnan with sticks, shovels, and tongs. This caused so rapid and complete a diversion from the attack, that D'Artagnan's adversary, while the latter turned round to face this shower of blows, sheathed his sword with the same precision, and instead of an actor, which he had nearly been, became a spectator of the fight,—a part in which he acquitted himself with his usual impassibility, muttering, nevertheless, "A plague upon these

Gascons! Replace him on his orange horse, and let him begone!"

"Not before I have killed you, poltroon!" cried D'Artagnan, making the best face possible, and never retreating one step before his three assailants, who continued to shower blows upon him.

"Another gasconade!" murmured the gentleman. "By my honour, these Gascons are incorrigible! Keep up the dance, then, since he will have it so. When he is tired, he will perhaps tell us that he has enough of it."

But the unknown knew not the headstrong personage he had to do with; D'Artagnan was not the man ever to cry for quarter. The fight was therefore prolonged for some seconds; but at length D'Artagnan dropped his sword, which was broken in two pieces by the blow of a stick. Another blow full upon his forehead at the same moment brought him to the ground, covered with blood and almost fainting.

It was at this moment that people came flocking to the scene of action from all sides. The host, fearful of consequences, with the help of his servants carried the wounded man into the kitchen, where some trifling attentions were bestowed upon him.

As to the gentleman, he resumed his place at the window, and surveyed the crowd with a certain impatience, evidently annoyed by their remaining undispersed.

"Well, how is it with this madman?" exclaimed he, turning round as the noise of the door announced the entrance of the host, who came to inquire if he was unhurt.

"Your Excellency is safe and sound?" asked the host.

"Oh, yes! perfectly safe and sound, my good host; and I wish to know what is become of our young man."

"He is better," said the host; "he fainted quite away."

"Indeed!" said the gentleman.

"But before he fainted, he collected all his strength to challenge you, and to defy you while challenging you."

"Why, this fellow must be the Devil in person!" cried the unknown.

"Oh, no, your Excellency, he is not the Devil," replied the host, with a grin of contempt; "for during his fainting we rummaged his valise, and found nothing but a clean shirt and twelve crowns,—which, however, did not prevent his saying, as he was fainting, that if such a

thing had happened in Paris you should have instantly repented of it, while here you would only have cause to repent of it at a later period."

"Then," said the unknown, coolly, "he must be some prince in disguise."

"I have told you this, good sir," resumed the host, "in order that you may be on your guard."

"Did he name one in his passion?"

"Yes; he struck his pocket and said, 'We shall see what M. de Tréville will think of this insult offered to his *protégé*.'"

"M. de Tréville?" said the unknown, becoming attentive, "he put his hand upon his pocket while pronouncing the name of M. de Tréville? Now, my dear host, while your young man was insensible, you did not fail, I am quite sure, to ascertain what that pocket contained. What was there in it?"

"A letter addressed to M. de Tréville, captain of the Musketeers."

"Indeed!"

"Exactly as I have the honour to tell your Excellency."

The host, who was not endowed with great perspicacity, did not observe the expression which his words had given to the physiognomy of the unknown. The latter rose from the front of the window, upon the sill of which he had leaned with his elbow, and knitted his brows like a man disquieted.

"The devil!" murmured he, between his teeth. "Can Tréville have set this Gascon upon me? He is very young; but a sword-thrust is a sword-thrust, whatever be the age of him who gives it, and a youth is less to be suspected than an older man," and the unknown fell into a reverie which lasted some minutes. "A weak obstacle is sometimes sufficient to overthrow a great design."

"Host," said he, "could you not contrive to get rid of this frantic boy for me? In conscience, I cannot kill him; and yet," added he, with a coldly menacing expression,— "and yet he annoys me. Where is he?"

"In my wife's chamber, on the first flight, where they are dressing his wounds."

"His things and his bag are with him? Has he taken off his doublet?"

"On the contrary, everything is in the kitchen. But if he annoys you, this young fool—"

“To be sure he does. He causes a disturbance in your hostelry, which respectable people cannot put up with. Go; make out my bill, and notify my servant.”

“What, Monsieur, will you leave us so soon?”

“You know that very well, as I gave the order to saddle my horse. Have they not obeyed me?”

“It is done; as your Excellency may have observed, your horse is in the great gateway, ready saddled for your departure.”

“That is well; do as I have directed you, then.”

“What the devil!” said the host to himself. “Can he be afraid of this boy?” But an imperious glance from the unknown stopped him short; he bowed humbly, and retired.

“It is not necessary for *Milady*¹ to be seen by this fellow,” continued the stranger. “She will soon pass; she is already late. I had better get on horseback, and go and meet her. I should like, however, to know what this letter addressed to Tréville contains.” And the unknown, muttering to himself, directed his steps towards the kitchen.

In the meantime the host, who entertained no doubt that it was the presence of the young man that drove the unknown from his hostelry, re-ascended to his wife's chamber, and found D'Artagnan just recovering his senses. Giving him to understand that the police would deal with him pretty severely for having sought a quarrel with a great lord,—for in the opinion of the host the unknown could be nothing less than a great lord,—he insisted that notwithstanding his weakness D'Artagnan should get up and depart as quickly as possible. D'Artagnan, half stupefied, without his doublet, and with his head bound up in a linen cloth, arose then, and urged by the host, began to descend the stairs; but on arriving at the kitchen, the first thing he saw was his antagonist talking calmly at the step of a heavy carriage, drawn by two large Norman horses.

His interlocutor, whose head appeared through the carriage window, was a woman of from twenty to two-and-twenty years. We have already observed with what rapidity D'Artagnan seized the expression of a counte-

¹ We are well aware that this term, *milady*, is only properly used when followed by a family name. But we find it thus in the manuscript, and we do not choose to take upon ourselves to alter it.

nance. He perceived then, at a glance, that this woman was young and beautiful; and her style of beauty struck him the more forcibly from its being totally different from that of the southern countries in which D'Artagnan had hitherto resided. She was pale and fair, with long curls falling in profusion over her shoulders, had large blue, languishing eyes, rosy lips, and hands of alabaster. She was talking with great animation with the unknown.

"His Eminence, then, orders me—" said the lady.

"To return instantly to England, and to inform him as soon as the duke leaves London."

"And as to my other instructions?" asked the fair traveller.

"They are contained in this box, which you will not open until you are on the other side of the Channel."

"Very well; and you,—what will you do?"

"I,—I return to Paris."

"What, without chastising this insolent boy?" asked the lady.

The unknown was about to reply; but at the moment he opened his mouth, D'Artagnan, who had heard all, precipitated himself over the threshold of the door.

"This insolent boy chastises others," cried he; "and I hope that this time he whom he ought to chastise will not escape him as before."

"Will not escape him?" replied the unknown, knitting his brow.

"No; before a woman you would not dare to fly, I presume?"

"Remember," said Milady, seeing the unknown lay his hand on his sword,—“remember that the least delay may ruin everything.”

"You are right," cried the gentleman; "begone then, on your part, and I will depart as quickly on mine." And bowing to the lady, he sprang into his saddle, while her coachman applied his whip vigorously to his horses. The two interlocutors thus separated, taking opposite directions, at full gallop.

"Your reckoning!" vociferated the host, whose regard for the traveller was changed into profound contempt on seeing him depart without settling his account.

"Pay him, booby!" cried the unknown to his servant, without checking the speed of his horse; and the man,