CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

BEQUEST

OF

WILLIAM P. CHAPMAN, JR.
Class of 1895
1947
The original of this book is in the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in the United States on the use of the text.

http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924082195417
WAR AND COURT GOSSIP

1710—1714
CONTENTS
VOL. IV

CHAPTER I

1710

The Duchess of Orleans asks for Madame de Saint-Simon as Lady of Honour to her daughter if the marriage comes off—I throw cold water on the proposal—Madame de Saint-Simon appeals to the Duchess of Burgundy to save her from a disagreeable office—The Duchess's surprise and kindness—The King dislikes mentioning the proposed marriage to Monseigneur—Monseigneur's reasons for preferring Madame la Duchesse to his other sister—Necessity for conciliating him—I make overtures to Mademoiselle Choin which are not well received—The King renews his promise to the Duke of Orleans—The Duchess of Orleans makes an ill-advised visit to Madame de Maintenon's room—She gets out of a difficulty adroitly—I report Mademoiselle Choin's reply to the Duke of Orleans—Madame de Fontainesmartel informs me of an abominable calumny against the Duke of Orleans . . . . . . . . . . . . . . pp. 1-18

CHAPTER II

1710

The King musters up courage to speak to Monseigneur—The latter consents to the marriage, but asks for delay—Joy of Madame—The Duke of Berry pleased at the prospect of marriage—D'Antin induces Monseigneur to let the engagement be announced—Astonishment of the Court—Monseigneur behaves with great kindness to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans—A merry dinner-party—Curious interview between two sisters—A note from the Duke of Orleans—"Veni, vidi, vici"—I go to St. Cloud—Mademoiselle's gratitude—Her reception of her aunt and cousins—The Duchess of Orleans again attacks me on the subject of a Lady of Honour—My obstinate though polite refusal—The King discusses the same question—He suggests Madame de Roquelaure—Madame de Maintenon's reply—The Duchess of Lesdiguières a Jansenist—The King decides to appoint Madame de Saint-Simon—I am warned not to refuse the appointment—My conversation with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans . . . . . . . . . . . . . . pp. 19-36

CHAPTER III

1710

The King insists on the appointment—Merits of Madame de Saint-Simon—The cabal insinuate that she is a Jansenist—Father Tellier reports
CONTENTS

favourably concerning her—Marshal Boufflers sent to warn me—
Difficulty about a Lady-in-Waiting—Madame de Cheverny too ugly
—Madame de la Vieuville appointed—The King speaks to me about
Madame de Saint-Simon—My reply—Her appointment announced
—My visit to Madame de Maintenon—The King’s kindness to us—
We are given the best rooms at Versailles—The marriage celebrated
—The Duke of Orleans spares the feelings of Madame la Duchesse—
His daughter allowed to leave her convent to bear her sister’s train
—Madame de Maré retires—I soon perceive her reasons, and bitterly
regret having brought about the marriage . . . pp. 37–53

CHAPTER IV

1710

Villars in Flanders—His reports of the wretched state of the army badly
received—His alarm—He is accused of missing a chance of victory—
Berwick sent to report—He insists on a reward beforehand—A perjured
settled on his second son—He chooses a ridiculous title, Duke of Fitz-
James—His reception in Parliament—Unpleasant remarks about
bastards—Caumartin’s want of tact—Consecration of the new
chapel—Death of Madame de la Valière—Insulting remark of
Villars about the Duchess of Burgundy’s ladies—Heudicourt reports
it—Anger of Villars, who attacks Heudicourt publicly—The “good
little man”—Ravignan captures a valuable convoy near Ypres—
Loss of Aire and St. Venant—Cardinal de Bouillon deserts to the
enemy—The King’s anger—Difficulty of punishing a Cardinal—
Folly of appointing them—The Duke de Mortemart and his gam-
bling debts—The Archbishop of Arles translated to Reims—The
Duchess of Berry disgraces herself at a supper-party—Vendôme
leaves for Spain—Campaign in that country—Spaniards defeated at
Saragossa—Allies capture Madrid—Hostility of the inhabitants—
Madrid evacuated—Vendôme marches on Brihuega—Stanhope
forced to surrender—Allies defeated at Villaviciosa—Gerona invested.
pp. 54–80

CHAPTER V

1710

Distress in France—Fresh taxation proposed—The King consults the
Doctors of the Sorbonne—Their decision—The new tax passed by the
Council—Strong remarks by Monseigneur and the Duke of
Burgundy—Dumont renders me a service—Strange report of Mon-
seigneur’s credulity—We appeal to the Duchess of Burgundy for
assistance—She undeceives Monseigneur—A Papal Bull—Capture
of the Grand-Prior—An anpanage for the Duke of Berry—His house-
hold appointed—La Haye—A favour for the Duchess of Burgundy
—Death of the Duchess of Mantua—Boudin—Festivities at Ver-
sailles—Depression in Paris . . . . pp. 81–97

CHAPTER VI

1711

The Elector of Cologne visits Paris—Anecdotes about him—A German
joke—Death of Fouquières—Of Estrades—D’Antin claims the duke-
CONTENTS


CHAPTER VII

1711

Description and character of Monseigneur—Mademoiselle Choin—Wife or mistress?—Monseigneur’s sloth and indifference to public affairs—His likes and dislikes—His relations with his two sons—The Duchess of Berry schemes to set the brothers at variance—Explanation of her frantic grief at Monseigneur’s death—Summary of his character pp. 147-163

CHAPTER IX

1711

Monseigneur’s body removed to St. Denis—Further traits in his character—Madame de Maintenon’s feelings—The King soon consoled—Arrangements for Mademoiselle Choin and others—The new Dauphin and Dauphiness—The Duke and Duchess of Berry—Designs of the latter—Her insane pride—Her notorious escapades—A storm brewing—Madame de Saint-Simon speaks to Madame de Maintenon, and administers a rebuke to the Duchess of Berry—The latter severely reprimanded by the King—Reconciliation between the Duchesses of Burgundy and Berry—The Duke of Berry’s good heart—Presenting the service—The Duchess of Berry refuses, but is eventually com-
Chapter X

1711


Chapter XI

1711

The Duke de Beauvilliers — His changed position — Fénélon, Archbishop of Cambrai — His character and conduct in exile — The "little flock" — Their hopes for the future — The Duke de Charost — Dignified conduct of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers — Mistaken dislike for them or the part of the Dauphiness — Throng of courtiers at Cambrai — Apparent change in the Dauphin — He shows himself in his true character — General satisfaction with him — The King takes him into his confidence and orders the Ministers to consult him on public affairs — Mortification of the Ministers — Position of other Ministers — The Chancellor — Pontchartrain — La Vrillière — A success in Flanders — Illness of the Queen of Spain — Play resumed at Marly — Address of the Assembly of the clergy — Bold speech of the Archbishop of Alby — The King's reply — Obsequies of Monseigneur — No Dukes attend — The Dauphin makes himself popular — Pontchartrain encroaches on my authority at Blaye — Captains of the Coast-guard — I remonstrate with him — Interview with Aubenton — My steady declaration to Pontchartrain — He refers the dispute to his father, who decides against me — I vow vengeance against Pontchartrain, but remain on friendly terms with the Chancellor pp. 199-224

Chapter XII

1711

Changed position of M. de Beauvilliers — He consults me — We discuss proposed changes in the Ministry — Torcy — I do not oppose his dismissal — St. Contes to succeed him — Desmarets — Pontchartrain — M. de Beauvilliers determined to dismiss him — Description of his person and character — I put in a word for him — M. de Beauvilliers consents to my warning him privately — My interview with him — M. de Beauvilliers suspects him of Jansenism, but is reassured by my explanation — I am authorised to give Pontchartrain another
warning, and he obtains a respite—I determine to try to reconcile M. de Beauvilliers and the Chancellor—A conversation with the Dauphin—My behaviour towards him—His reasons for looking upon me favourably—Explanation of my views respecting Jansenism, Rome, and the Jesuits . . . . . . pp. 225–243

CHAPTER XIII

1711

A few words with the Dauphin—My growing intimacy with him—A question of etiquette—Position of the Dukes—My first private conversation with the Dauphin—The style of "Monseigneur"—The Dauphin orders me to bring him some letters as evidence—M. de Beauvilliers surprised at the Prince's outspoken confidence—Another private conversation—The Dauphin's opinions on various subjects—The Dukes—Cardinals—Bastards—I am commanded to prepare a memorial—Disposal of Monseigneur's property—Many private conversations with the Dauphin—The Dauphiness takes us by surprise—Her gracious behaviour—I determine to bring the Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans together—The Duchess of Berry—I warn the Duke of Orleans of the calumnies against him—His horror—He repeats my report to his daughter—I break off friendly relations with him—The Duchess intercedes, and we are reconciled—I warn him to be careful in his talk before the Dauphin—He follows my advice, and their relations become more friendly . . . . . . pp. 244–268

CHAPTER XIV

1711

My memorial for the Dauphin—He tells me of another affair referred to him by the King—Cardinal de Noailles and his enemies—The King insists on the Duchess of Berry accompanying the Count to Fontainebleau—An accident by the way causes her to miscarry—The Count de Toulouse suffering from stone—He also is compelled to travel to Fontainebleau—My design to reconcile the Chancellor with M. de Beauvilliers—I inform the Chancellor of his son's late peril, and of his deliverance by M. de Beauvilliers—He is overwhelmed with gratitude—The reconciliation effected—Death of the Prince of Nassau—Of the Duke de Lesdiguieres—Funny remark of his widow—Death of Marshal Boufflers—His character—I apply for his office as Captain of the Guard—It is given to the Duke de Charost—Benevolent intentions towards me frustrated—Siege of Bouchain—Difficulty about Ravignan—Marlborough's generous conduct—Cardinal de Noailles' affair again—He makes a mistake—M. de Chevreuse and the duchy of Chaulnes—He quarrels with the Chancellor—His son created Duke—His reception in Parliament—The Count de Toulouse undergoes an operation . . . . . . . pp. 269–290

CHAPTER XV

1711

Illness of the Queen of Spain—The Duke de Noailles' ambitious projects—He suggests a mistress to the King—The suggestion taken in bad part
CONTENTS

The Queen and Madame des Ursins informed of it—The Duke de Noailles recalled in consequence, and coldly received at Versailles—He makes advances to me—His character—I am taken in by him—I bring him into friendly relations with the Duke of Orleans, with M. de Beavilliers, and with the Dauphin—Cardinal de Noailles—My acquaintance with him—Showers of hypocratic letters from Bishops—The King invoked as a modern Constantine—The plot disclosed—The Cardinal fails to use his advantage—The King taken in—The Dauphin takes a different view—He commands me to investigate the subject of the Gallican Church and its privileges, and to draw up a memorial—The First-President resigns his office—President Mesmes appointed to succeed him—The Mesmes family—Sieur de Mesmes—D’Avaux—La Bazinière—The new First-President—His character—Noëls—Quarrels between the Duchess of Berry and her mother—The King interferes—Dinners at Trianon—Sinister warnings—Illness of Madame de Gondrin—A devoted mother—Death of Marshal Catinat—

CHAPTER XVI

1712

The Dauphiness unwell on arriving at Marly—A shooting accident—A mysterious snuff-box—The Dauphiness becomes worse—The last Sacraments suggested—She refuses her usual confessor—Father Noel sent for—The Dauphin also ill—The last Sacraments administered to the Dauphiness—Her death—Description of her person and character—Anecdotes about her—Grief and gloom of the Court—

CHAPTER XVII

1712

The Dauphin leaves Versailles—My last sight of him at Marly—His interview with the King—The doctors advise him to take to his bed—His last illness—Untimely optimism of the Duke de Chevreuse—I am provoked to unbecoming anger—Death of the Dauphin—His history and character—Early years—His conversion to religion—His views on various subjects—

CHAPTER XVIII

1712

General grief in Europe—The Pope officiates at a special memorial service for the Dauphin—The snuff-box again—The Archbishop of Reims accuses the Duke de Noailles of poisoning the Dauphiness—I beg him to keep silence—Illness of the two infant Sons of France—Death of the elder—The younger is saved by an antidote—The bastards as Princes of the Blood at the funeral ceremonies—My unfortunate position—My alarm lest the King should discover certain papers—M. de Beavilliers adroitly prevents discovery—Marshal Villeroy recalled to Court—Horrible rumours afloat—Medical discussion on the result of autopsy of the Dauphiness—Post-mortem examination of the Dauphin—Fagon and Boudin positive that he was poisoned—
Maréchal alone contests their opinion—The Duke of Orleans accused—His position and that of M. du Maine contrasted—Which was most likely to be the poisoner?—The cabal at work—The Duke of Orleans publicly insulted—The Duchess of Orleans sends for me—By d'Effiat's advice the Duke of Orleans asks the King to hold an inquiry and send him to the Bastille—I disapprove of d'Effiat's counsel—What I would myself have advised—Impossibility of explaining my views to M. du Maine's sister—The King consents to send Humbert to the Bastille—The Duke of Orleans cut by everybody—in spite of numerous warnings I continue to associate with him as usual—Bold and incisive speech of Maréchal to the King, who revokes his order about the Bastille pp. 347-372

CHAPTER XIX

1712

Trifling successes in Flanders—Arrival of the galleons from America—An inappropriate reward for du Casse—Death of the Count de Brionne—Amusements resumed at Marly—Death of the Princess-Royal of England—I continue to show myself in public as the Duke of Orleans' friend—Reason why my conduct was displeasing to his enemies—I am informed of Madame de Maintenon's anger, and threatened with banishment—I yield to pressure and retire to La Ferté for a month—Mysterious arrest of a friar—He is examined by d'Argenson at the Bastille, and subsequently imprisoned for life at Segovia—D'Argenson's friendly messages to the Duke of Orleans—A scandalous matrimonial lawsuit—Shameful curiosity of the fashionable world—Death of Vendôme—His burial in the Escurial—His temporary lodgement in the Place of Decay likely to be permanent—Death of Harlay—A characteristic saying—Montesquieu wins a brilliant victory at Denain—Villars takes the credit for it—Death of M. de Soubise . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . pp. 373-389

CHAPTER XX

1712—1713

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XXI

1713

A Jesuit's book condemned—Montreuil encroaches on my rights as Governor of Blaye—Government of Guyenne given to the Count de Eu—I refer my disputes with Montreuil to M. du Maine—He receives me politely—Montreuil complains that I insult him—My reply—He resumes ordinary civility—M. du Maine decides the dispute in my favour—Pontchartrain's treachery—I announce my intention of receiving him if possible—Remonstrances of the Chancellor and his wife—Preparations for the Treaty of Utrecht—The renunciations to be registered by the Parliament of Paris—Reluctance of the King—He tries to avoid summoning the Peers—The Duke of Berry has to reply to a complimentary address—His difficulty in preparing his speech—Meeting of the Parliament—The Duke of Berry breaks down in his speech—On his return he receives an ill-timed compliment—Madame de Saint-Simon does her best to console him—The Treaty of Utrecht signed . . . . . . . . . pp. 418-433

CHAPTER XXII

1713

Fénelon's hopes revive—His relation appointed Bishop of Ypres—A posthumous trick of Janscnius's—Death of Sévigné—Of Cardinal Janson—His history and character—The Abbé de Beauvilliers appointed to the see of Beauvais—His deplorable conduct—The Duchess of Berry gives birth to a son—Flattery of courtiers—A new history of France—Bastardy no disqualification for the throne—Cardinal Gualterio—A quarrel between a Duke and a Prince—Question as to the privileges of the Marshal's tribunal—The Marshals give way—A marriage proposed between the Prince of Conti and the Duke of Orleans' daughter—Mademoiselle de Conti betrays the secret to her grandmother, who reveals it to the King—The King's anger—He forbids the proposed arrangement and insists on a double marriage in the Condé family—Anger of the Duchess of Berry with Mademoiselle de Conti—Pontchartrain marries again—The Chancellor compels me to attend the ceremony . . . . . . . . . pp. 434-450

CHAPTER XXIII

1713

Father Tellier and his designs—Bissy—Madame de Maintenon and the Jesuits—Father Quesnel's book referred to Rome—Composition of the Constitution "Unigenitus"—Cardinal Fabroni and Father d'Aubenton—The Sacred College alarmed—Father Tellier by threats enlists Cardinal de Rohan on his side—Character of the latter—His ingratitude to Cardinal de Noailles—Completion of the Constitution "Unigenitus"—The Pope protests, but signs the Constitution—It is received with general indignation in France—Father Tellier's determination—He consults me on the subject—My horror at his sentiments—He asks for a second interview—Description of my rooms at Versailles—My "shop"—Father Tellier visits me in it—Our discussion—Reflections on a Jesuit—An impertinent interruption—He bears no malice . . . . . . . . . pp. 451-469
CONTENTS

CHAPTER XXIV

1713

The Duke of Savoy becomes King of Sicily—Death of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld—His character—His "bores" and his servants—I find him playing chess with his footman—His bold reply to the King—He relates an instance of a miraculous interposition of Providence—His sons—Painful experience of the Chancellor—The Queen of England in extremity—Death of the Queen of Spain—Callous behaviour of the King of Spain—Death of the Duke de Foix—Of Le Charmel—The King's harsh treatment of him—Decision of the dispute between M. de la Rochefoucauld and myself in my favour—The Chancellor's joke—Madame des Ursins disappointed in her schemes for a sovereignty in the Netherlands—She takes possession of the King of Spain—Rumours that she means to marry him—His remark on the subject—She proposes a marriage between him and the Princess of Parma—The French Ambassador at Madrid makes a sudden journey to Versailles—He outstrips Cardinal del Giudice—Death of the Chancellor's wife—Her character—Instances of her charity—Death of the Bishop of Senlis—His folly and absurdity—Death of Madame Voysin—A sudden marriage . . . . pp. 470–483

CHAPTER XXV

1713

Illness and death of the Duke of Berry—His character—Anecdotes of the Duchess of Berry—Renewed calumnies against the Duke of Orleans—Death of the Maréchale d'Étrées—Her character—Of the Duchesse de Lorraine—Cardinal del Giudice invited to Marly—The King makes an enigmatic remark about Madame des Ursins—Death of the Duchesse de Bouillon—Her character—Cardinal Mazarin's nieces—Chalais informs the King of the King of Spain's intended marriage—Resignation of the Chancellor—His private reasons—Voysin succeeds him, but retains his office as Secretary for War—M. de Lausun's joke about him—The Queen of Poland returns to France—Her history—She is disappointed at her reception—The Prince de Dombes placed on an equality with Princes of the Blood . . . . pp. 494–515

CHAPTER XXVI

1714

Maisons, président-à-mortier, and his wife—He makes the acquaintance of the Duke of Orleans—He wishes to obtain my influence with the Duke—I am approached by M. de Beauvilliers and by the Duke himself—After some hesitation I yield to their entreaties—A mysterious appointment with Maisons—Nothing comes of it—A hasty request to meet him at Paris—I find him with the Duke de Noailles—They inform me that the King has made his natural sons capable of succeeding to the throne—Their suspicious outbursts of anger—Reception of the news at Marly—I visit the Duke du Maine—My sentiments—Progressive steps in the elevation of the bastards—What constitutes High Treason?—The King shows some regret—Cunning behaviour of Maisons—Reception of the bastards by the Parliament on the registration of the new edict—Their demeanour . . . . pp. 516–530
## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

**VOL. IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Louis Joseph de Bourbon, Duke de Vendôme</th>
<th>Frontispiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View of Mons</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshal de Boufflers</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Château de Marly</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

1710

The Duchess of Orleans asks for Madame de Saint-Simon as Lady of Honour to her daughter if the marriage comes off—I throw cold water on the proposal—Madame de Saint-Simon appeals to the Duchess of Burgundy to save her from a disagreeable office—The Duchess's surprise and kindness—The King dislikes mentioning the proposed marriage to Monseigneur—Monseigneur's reasons for preferring Madame la Duchesse to his other sister—Necessity for conciliating him—I make overtures to Mademoiselle Choin which are not well received—The King renews his promise to the Duke of Orleans—The Duchess of Orleans makes an ill-advised visit to Madame de Maintenon's room—She gets out of a difficulty adroitly—I report Mademoiselle Choin's reply to the Duke of Orleans—Madame de Fontaines-martel informs me of an abominable calumny against the Duke of Orleans.

At the time when we were only just beginning to move effectively in this affair, the Duchess of Orleans had asked me, so pointedly that it was impossible to misunderstand her, who would be a proper person to be appointed Lady of Honour to her daughter, if she became Duchess of Berry. I saw at once what she meant, and replied, in a dry and decided tone, that she had better arrange the marriage first; she would have time enough afterwards to think about a Lady of Honour, and plenty of persons to choose from. She was silent at once; the Duke of Orleans said nothing, and I immediately changed the conversation. From that time I heard nothing more about a Lady of Honour till about two days before I wrote the letter for the Duke of Orleans, when I happened to be with her alone, she lying in
her bed. We were discussing some important matters with regard to the marriage; all of a sudden she interrupted me, and fixing her eyes upon me, said: "By the way, if we are successful in this affair we should think ourselves only too fortunate if we could have Madame de Saint-Simon as Lady of Honour."

"Madame," I said, "it is your kindness for her makes you say so. She is too young, and not at all suited for such a post." "But why not?" said she, and began praising her up in every possible way.

After listening to her for some time I interrupted her in my turn, assuring her, again, that Madame de Saint-Simon would not do at all for the position; and I named several other ladies among her own friends whom she might appoint. She found something to say against all of them: with regard to one in particular, a very intimate friend of hers and also of mine,¹ she gave me to understand that there had been a brief episode in her life which disqualified her for taking charge of a young Princess. I said, with a smile, that was the very reason for choosing her; it was not easy to find a charming woman who had never had an intrigue of gallantry; but instances where there had been only one were so extraordinarily rare that, when they did occur, I thought they should be looked upon as deserving all praise; in the case of this particular lady the love-affair had been very quietly and decorously conducted, and there had been no relapse since it came to an end. The Duchess of Orleans smiled, and said no one could have put the case better for the lady in question; but I must allow that a person whose conduct was above all suspicion, like Madame de Saint-Simon, was in an even better position than a lady who had only once made a slip. I agreed with what she said about Madame de Saint-Simon, but I repeated that she was too young, and otherwise unsuitable. I named several other ladies, but she found some objection to all of them; so at last I told her that she was too particular, but to assist her in making a choice I would draw up a list of all the ladies of title (for I knew that, since the strange precedent established when Madame's two Ladies of Honour were appointed, no lady of inferior rank would be considered suitable for a Duchess of Berry), and among them she would surely be able to pick out more than one admirably suited for the post.

Accordingly, I went to her rooms next day with my list

¹ The Duchess de Villeroy.
in my pocket, firmly resolved to show her that my answers had not been a mere display of mock-modesty, but a positive refusal, politely conveyed. I found a few ladies with her, so it was impossible to renew our conversation; but I contrived to let her see the list of ladies, and then withdrew. I was determined not to be the first to broach the subject again, for I felt sure she understood what I meant; and in fact, though she would not admit it, she did understand me perfectly. Both Madame de Saint-Simon and I abhorred the idea of accepting a post so much beneath our birth and dignity; and though we knew well enough that their royal pride would not be content with anything less than a Duchess, we determined that we would not be consenting parties to this degradation of our rank if we could help it. We thought it advisable to take measures at once to protect ourselves. I spoke to the Duke de Beauvilliers, reminding him of what I had said to him two years before, when it was thought, not without some foundation, that the Duke of Berry would marry the Princess-Royal of England. I begged him, if he heard anything of our being offered the place, to use all his influence against it; for I assured him that, if it was offered, we should refuse it.

When we returned to Versailles we told our story to the Chancellor, under the seal of confession. He was very much astonished to hear that arrangements for the marriage were so far advanced. He was strongly prejudiced against the Duke of Orleans, both on account of the life he led and because of the Spanish affair; moreover, he was, very rightly, in favour of a foreign marriage for the Duke of Berry. He was very angry with me for having laboured so successfully, and I could only appease him by making him see clearly that if I had not done so the Duke of Berry would certainly have married Mademoiselle de Bourbon, who was the daughter of a bastard no less than Mademoiselle; for the taint of bastardy was, very properly, abhorrent to him. He quite approved of our sentiments with regard to the post of Lady of Honour, and thought we were wise in taking our precautions in good time.

The Duchess of Burgundy had, for many years past, given repeated proofs of her regard and esteem for Madame de Saint-Simon. The Chancellor cordially agreed with us that, matters having gone so far, we should do wisely in appealing to her. Madame de Saint-Simon therefore asked
her for a private audience; and, in order to keep the secret better, she arranged matters through Madame Cantin, First Woman of the Bedchamber, rather than through any of our friends the Ladies of the Palace, for we did not wish to arouse their curiosity. The audience was granted immediately. Madame de Saint-Simon went at eleven in the morning to the apartments of the Duchess of Burgundy, who had just got out of bed, and who immediately led her into a private room, where she made her sit down by her side on a sofa. After the preliminary compliments, Madame de Saint-Simon said that she came to her, as her last resource, to ask a favour which she trusted would not be refused; she had hesitated for some time before doing so, but the matter was urgent; and she felt she could speak without violating any obligations of secrecy, since it concerned a marriage which she was herself trying to bring about. "I know what you mean!" exclaimed the Duchess of Burgundy, embracing her warmly; "you are speaking of the Duke of Berry’s marriage, and you would like to be Lady of Honour? Of course you must; I had already thought of it!" "On the contrary," said Madame de Saint-Simon, "I have come to beg you to prevent the offer being made to me."

It is impossible to describe the Duchess of Burgundy’s astonishment at this reply; she was silent for a moment, and then asked Madame de Saint-Simon why she disliked the prospect so much. Madame de Saint-Simon said it might seem strange that she should ask in advance to be excused from accepting a post which had not been offered her, and which might, perhaps, never come into existence; but from what I had told her she could not doubt the intentions of the Duchess of Orleans, and she had therefore come to implore that she might be spared the offer of a situation which we neither of us desired; she herself even less than I did. She added that the height of her ambition was to be a Lady of the Palace to the Duchess of Burgundy herself, who possessed all her affection and esteem; if she could not obtain that post, she was quite content to remain as she was.

The Duchess of Burgundy replied, in the kindest possible manner, that it was out of friendship for her that she had thought of her as Lady of Honour directly she saw there was a chance of the marriage being arranged; Mademoiselle
would be a sister-in-law of her own choosing, and she hoped
to become very intimate with her; in that case she must
necessarily see a great deal of the Lady of Honour, and
it would be very irksome to her if she was a person whom
she did not know well. As for the situation of Lady of
the Palace, it was true that Madame de Saint-Simon could
not very well accept it after having been Lady of Honour;
but the Duchess du Lude was very infirm and could not
live for ever; Madame de Saint-Simon might succeed her
as Lady of Honour to herself; and this was another reason
why she had thought of placing her in the meantime with
the Duchess of Berry, so that the King might see more of
her, and not regard her as too young and inexperienced.

Madame de Saint-Simon thanked her, and said she thought
that an appointment to the Duchess of Berry would be rather
a hindrance than a stepping-stone to the position of Lady
of Honour to herself; whereupon the Duchess of Burgundy
replied, with some vivacity, that she would make the Duchess
of Berry, if there was one, understand that she must be
prepared to give up her Lady of Honour whenever she chose
to claim her for herself. Madame de Saint-Simon said that
if she did not come up to expectation in her new employment
it would disqualify her for the higher post; whereas if, on
the other hand, she did well, it would be considered a
sufficient reason for leaving her where she was. She went
on to speak of her incapacity; whereupon the Duchess of
Burgundy interposed with many flattering expressions of
esteem; but Madame de Saint-Simon pointed out the great
difference between the functions of her own Lady of Honour,
who was not expected to give advice, but merely to be in
attendance and see that she was properly served, and
those of a Lady of Honour attached to a Princess not quite
fifteen years old, to whom she would have to act, to a
certain extent, as governess and be held responsible for
her conduct in many ways. She said she had an invincible
repugnance to dictating and contradicting; in dealing with
a child of that age it was inevitable that she must give her
a good deal of advice, and persuade her to do many things
contrary to her inclination; thus she would not only become
odious to the Princess whom she was appointed to serve,
but if she sometimes failed to induce her to do what she
ought, all the blame would be thrown on her; and this was
a position which she could not bring herself to face. The
Duchess of Burgundy, in reply to these arguments, pointed out that Mademoiselle's parents were always about the Court, and that, in conjunction with herself they would accept all the responsibility for her conduct.

This discussion lasted for some time longer, but Madame de Saint-Simon held her ground firmly. Finally, the Duchess of Burgundy reminded her of our position in the Court, of the numbers of enemies I had, and of the sort of disgrace I had fallen into with the King, from which I had only extricated myself with the utmost difficulty. She pointed out that the situation offered to her would be a means of protecting ourselves against our enemies; it would, moreover, bring me into closer contact with the King, and open a road by which a man of my ability could attain a very advantageous position. She added that it was a great compliment to us to have been chosen at our ages, in my case for the mission to Rome, in hers for the chief place vacant at Court; that it was well known that we did not wish to go to Rome, and if we now showed our repugnance for this situation the King would be angry, and ask, with some justice, what it was that we wanted; since we did not consider employments such as were eagerly coveted by the principal men and ladies of the Court suitable for us. She added that we must be careful what we did, for the King would never forgive a refusal, and we should be ruined completely. Madame de Saint-Simon admitted that a refusal would indeed be our ruin, and said it was for that very reason she had applied to her for assistance, because we had firmly made up our minds to refuse if the offer was made to us. The Duchess of Burgundy, in the kindest possible manner, said she could see no other lady so well qualified, not only to suit her, but for the duties of the situation itself; she promised to do her best to avert the offer of it, though she could not understand our obstinate determination; she added that she might not succeed, but would honestly do her best, though acting entirely against her own inclination.

After this favourable and very prolonged audience (for it lasted till half-past twelve) Madame de Saint-Simon took her leave. In the outer room she found several ladies, who had come to attend the Duchess of Burgundy's toilet; she was much annoyed at this, especially as our friends the Ladies of the Palace were among them. However, we did
not let them into the secret, which, from its nature, was not our own. We were highly satisfied with the result of the audience; we felt sure that the place of Lady of Honour would not be filled without consulting the Duchess of Burgundy, and we had no doubt she would succeed in inducing the Duchess of Orleans to make another choice; for Princes are not in the habit of forcing people against their will to accept places which many would be only too thankful to obtain. We had done all we could; so, being restored to my usual tranquillity, I turned my attention entirely to the business before me, which was to keep Madame la Duchesse and her friends in ignorance of what had been done, and at the same time to prevent the irons which had been so fortunately heated from growing cold.

Our plans were thrown into some embarrassment after the close of the visit to Marly by the King’s perplexity about Monseigneur, which was quite genuine. It was a question of arranging a marriage for Monseigneur’s son: a purely domestic marriage, which could not affect the peace negotiations or the welfare of the State in any way, concerning which the wishes of a father fifty years of age must naturally be taken into consideration. We have seen that he was not favourably disposed towards the Duke of Orleans, and that his aversion for him was sedulously fomented, for their own ends, by those around him. I must now explain that the Duchess of Orleans had also given him offence, entirely through her own fault; and it was one of those offences which are not easily forgotten. There had been a time when Monseigneur’s intimacy with the Princess of Conti had cooled off, for her continual ill-humour made him uncomfortable; consequently he did not know what to do with himself, for their own home is the very last place where Princes in his position like to find themselves; and this was especially the case with him. Almost the only refuge he could think of was with one of his other bastard sisters, he did not care which; and d’Antin, who at that time had a higher opinion of the Duchess of Orleans than of Madame la Duchesse, did his best to turn his attention towards her.

The Duchess of Orleans, instead of being pleased, as she should have been, consulted only her pride and indolence; she thought of the boredom of having to give entertainments and hunting parties, and the bodily exertion of going to the opera, and making little expeditions. Moreover,
instead of being herself, as she hoped, a divinity to be adored, she would become merely the high-priestess of another divinity, and her house would become his temple. She thought she had nothing to gain; she had no children old enough to establish in the world, and she considered it beneath her dignity to make calculations for a future which, from the King's age at that time and his good health, appeared very remote. Consequently she was deaf to d'Antin's entreaties, and received Monseigneur's advances so coldly that at last he perceived they were unwelcome, with a vexation which he never got over. He turned to Madame la Duchesse, who received him with smiles and amusement, and used her advantages so well that she bound him to her hand and foot, and could do what she liked with him. So the Duchess of Orleans, who at that time was on good terms with her sister, made her a voluntary present of Monseigneur's affection; and consequently spent long years lying on her sofa doing nothing; yet she not only did not repent of this stupendous act of folly, but, such was her overweening pride, she actually congratulated herself on it. Afterwards came the enmity between the two sisters; and Monseigneur, in his heavy, indolent fashion, did not remain neutral in the quarrel.

I kept racking my brains to think of some way of smoothing down Monseigneur's ruffled plumes, and making him more willing to entertain proposals for a marriage between his son and the daughter of the two persons against whom he felt such resentment. I saw the danger of doing anything to alarm the cabal; on the other hand, the affair was already beginning to leak out; I was very much taken aback one day at being stopped in the Gallery by the First Equerry, who said he had to congratulate me on my success in arranging a marriage between Mademoiselle and the Duke of Berry. I got out of it by shrugging my shoulders and wondering what people would say next. As a matter of fact, they were saying nothing, not the slightest rumour was going about; it was merely that the First Equerry, who was always well informed, thought he had got wind of something; but I was terribly alarmed lest the matter should go further. I did not feel at all confident that the King would be able to settle the matter with Monseigneur promptly enough to prevent Madame la Duchesse and her friends interfering; and I could not refrain from reproaching the Duchess
of Orleans rather angrily for her ill-advised treatment of Monseigneur, which she had herself told me about. I cast my mind over the persons who composed the hostile cabal to see whether it might not be possible to detach one of them sufficiently to obtain some assistance from him. After mature consideration, it occurred to me that Mademoiselle Choin was the only person with sufficient influence over Monseigneur, and at the same time sufficiently independent of the cabal, to undertake the task of making him more amenable, if she was willing to do so; and I thought it might not be impossible to persuade her that it would be for her own interest to further Mademoiselle’s marriage. I determined, therefore, to sound her through Bignon, Intendant of Finance, the most intimate friend she had in the world; feeling my way cautiously at first, without saying a word about the marriage, and proceeding more boldly afterwards, if I saw a favourable opening. I made this suggestion to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, who highly approved of it; they thought that, with ordinary prudence, there was no danger, and that, if nothing more came of it, to make this little advance towards Mademoiselle Choin would at any rate be a polite mark of attention on their part. They entrusted me with the commission, and gave me full liberty to speak in their names.

Accordingly I saw Bignon in the room which the Chancellor had insisted on lending me, in the château, and began by leading the conversation to the various cliques and cabals which divided the Court, and especially to those by which Monseigneur was surrounded. I mentioned, as if casually, the growing kindness of the King and Madame Maintenon towards the Duke of Orleans; and remarked that the latter was mortified by Monseigneur’s coldness to him. I said both the Duke and Duchess of Orleans had a high esteem for Mademoiselle Choin, which proceeded in part, no doubt, from their respect for Monseigneur; but also in a high degree from the reports they heard of the wise and modest conduct of the lady herself; the quiet skill with which she kept up friendly relations between Monseigneur and the King, in particular, gave them a high opinion of her; and they were sincerely desirous of making her acquaintance and becoming friends of hers. I added that I knew how carefully she avoided society and anything likely to attract attention to her; but she had gone so far
as to make friends with the late Prince of Conti towards the end of his life, although he was notoriously out of favour with the King; and I thought an alliance with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, now that they were on such good terms with the King and Madame de Maintenon, would be still less objectionable from her point of view.

Bignon, feeling his way, replied by cautious generalities about Mademoiselle Choin's love of retirement and her unwillingness to have anything to do with public affairs. I knew well enough that she did interfere in them, very often; and that her little house in the Rue St. Antoine was the gathering-place of a sort of Court to which it was by no means easy to obtain admission—not so much because she wished to avoid seeing people as because she liked her company to be select; however, it was not my cue to argue with him or contradict him, so I pretended to take all he said as literally true. In this way I led him on to make some rather singular admissions; one, especially, regarding the part Mademoiselle Choin had taken against Chamillart; who, he said, would never have been dismissed if she had not induced Monseigneur to use all his influence against him with the King. As Bignon admitted that in this affair she had acted in concert with Madame de Maintenon, I repeated that the latter was very fond of the Duchess of Orleans, and would be pleased if Mademoiselle Choin was on friendly terms with her. I went on to speak of the alliance between Mademoiselle Choin, Madame la Duchesse, and Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and her sister, which I said could not last beyond the present reign, for they all had the same object, to govern Monseigneur. So long as he was merely Dauphin a common interest kept them together; but the moment he became King a struggle would break out to decide who should hold the reins. I spoke my mind freely about the two Lorraine sisters; partly to pump him, and also with a sincere desire to warn him and his friends. I had not said much, however, when he interrupted me, telling me with a smile that Mademoiselle Choin knew those ladies well enough, and shared my opinion of them. She did not think it advisable to break with them; but she did not trust them, and was on her guard.

I was extremely glad to hear this assurance, and went on, but much more cautiously, to speak of the really important point, namely, the relations between Mademoiselle Choin
and Madame la Duchesse. I told Bignon, with perfect sincerity, that when Monseigneur became King, Madame la Duchesse would be satisfied with nothing less than complete ascendancy over him, and would tolerate no rival; I reminded him of an attempt she had already made to overthrow Mademoiselle Choin, and warned him that the position of the latter would become very precarious in the future. He admitted the truth of this unsuccessful attempt on the part of Madame la Duchesse; adding, that he had informed his friend of it at the time, and it had made some impression on her. But, in spite of that, he said, Mademoiselle Choin believed firmly, as indeed he did himself, that Madame la Duchesse was her friend; and trusted her thoroughly; he agreed, however, that the extraordinary affection of Monseigneur for his sister would make her influence dangerously strong after he ascended the throne.

This admission made me think that possibly Mademoiselle Choin’s close alliance with Madame la Duchesse sprang less from her heart than her head; she knew Madame la Duchesse had many more opportunities for seeing Monseigneur than she had herself; and she saw it would not do to allow any suspicion to grow up in his mind regarding the genuineness of their friendship. I told Bignon my opinion of Madame la Duchesse’s ambition, of her want of heart, insincerity, and entire lack of principle; I commended Mademoiselle Choin’s conduct towards her, but said I thought it would be highly imprudent to abandon herself to her exclusively; I did not see why Madame la Duchesse should be offended if she entered into some sort of an understanding with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans. Under certain circumstances, I said, such an understanding might be useful to her; it would always be to her interest to keep on good terms with the Duchess of Burgundy, who was the Duchess of Orleans’ great friend; and, after all, the Duke of Orleans, though temporarily alienated from Monseigneur, was the only member of the royal family of sufficient age and experience to play a leading part; and, being already on friendly terms with the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, it was quite possible that he might be able some day to overcome Monseigneur’s prejudice against him. I submitted that it would, at any rate, be a polite attention on the part of Mademoiselle Choin to make the acquaintance of persons in the position of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans; it
could do her no harm; and she might afterwards keep up or drop the acquaintance as she felt inclined.

Bignon was so thoroughly convinced that I was right that he began discussing the characters of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans with me. He had imbibed all the prejudices of the hostile cabal, and did not conceal from me that Mademoiselle Choin was afraid of the Duke of Orleans, and had a very unfavourable opinion of him. I replied with a frankness which pleased him, and made him listen more readily to my arguments; though, of course, I said nothing disparaging about the Prince. I remarked that perhaps Mademoiselle Choin was annoyed at the liaison between him and her enemy, the Princess of Conti; but I assured him, with perfect sincerity, that the close intimacy which had formerly existed between them had long since given place to a mere outward show of polite friendliness. To confirm what I said, I told him a trifling incident which had lately occurred at Marly, when the Duke of Orleans went one day to call on the Princess of Conti; and he seemed so much struck by it that I began to hope that it was in reality this seeming friendship which had given offence to his friend.

We then talked of the Duchess of Orleans, for whom he assured me Mademoiselle Choin had the highest respect; and we discussed how they might contrive a meeting, for it was not a very easy matter, with that Princess; however I solved the difficulty by telling him that the Duchess of Orleans would go to Paris whenever it suited Mademoiselle Choin's convenience, and then they could easily arrange a meeting. Finally, Bignon said that though he much disliked talking to his friend about business matters, what I suggested seemed so reasonable and so little likely to compromise her that he would undertake to repeat our conversation to her, on two conditions: first, that he should be allowed to mention my name, to give greater weight to his representations; and, secondly, that the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, who, he saw clearly, were the prime movers in the business, should ignore it altogether; even to himself when he went to pay his respects to them; or wherever else he might meet them. I agreed readily to both conditions, and he then promised to do his best to persuade his friend to meet the Duchess of Orleans at any rate, if not the Duke; but, as Monseigneur was going that day to Meudon, where he intended to stay for a week or ten days, he would not
be able to see her just at present. It was arranged between us that, as soon as he had spoken to her he should send me an invitation to dinner, so as to avoid any appearance of a preconcerted interview; and I promised to go without fail, to hear Mademoiselle Choin’s reply.

After this long and confidential interview I began to entertain some hopes of success, and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans were still more sanguine. We could not refrain from commenting on the extraordinary pass things had come to when no one, not even those who stood nearest the throne, could approach the King except through Madame de Maintenon, or Monseigneur except through Mademoiselle Choin, and the highest personages in the land had to make humble advances to these two low-born creatures, and use all the arts of diplomacy to induce them to spare a few moments of their precious time for the consideration of their petitions. I was unwilling to discourage the Duke of Orleans by mentioning Mademoiselle Choin’s prejudices against him; but I told the Duchess about them privately.

In the meantime matters were progressing too slowly for my liking. About a week after our return from Marly I began urging the Duke of Orleans to say something to the King, if it were but a word or two, about the letter he had given him; and, after a great deal of persuasion, he did so. I was alone with the Duchess of Orleans that morning in her little room when the Duke came in rejoicing; he told us that, as soon as he began to speak, the King had interrupted him by saying that he was quite satisfied with his letter, and fully intended to bring about the marriage between the Duke of Berry and Mademoiselle, but he had not yet found a suitable opportunity for speaking to Monseigneur, from whom he expected some opposition; he was quite aware, however, of the danger of undue delay, and in the meantime the Duke of Orleans might set his mind at ease, for he intended to speak soon and to good purpose.

This favourable answer filled us with joy. We came to the conclusion that, in order to clinch the matter, the Duchess of Orleans had better be in attendance in Madame de Maintenon’s room that evening when the King came in, and thank him for the promise he had given to her husband. As she was not in the habit of going there without some special reason, Madame de Maintenon and the Duchess of Burgundy asked her, in great surprise, what brought her,
She was very much taken aback when they both told her on no account to carry out her design, as it would only upset the King and spoil the whole business. There was no time to say more before the King came in; and he added to her embarrassment by asking, as soon as he saw her, what she had come for. Madame de Maintenon immediately replied for her, that she had come rather late to see her; and the Duchess of Orleans added a few words about the difficulty of finding Madame de Maintenon alone on the days when she went to St. Cyr. The King said that, since she was there, she might as well sit down for a little while.

There were several Ladies of the Palace and friends of Madame de Maintenon present. Seeing that they did not pass on, as usual, into the large drawing-room, the Duchess of Orleans, in spite of her confusion, retained sufficient presence of mind to throw them off the scent. She began talking to Madame de Maintenon in a low voice about her two younger daughters, whom she destined for a religious life, and took advantage of her slight deafness to allow some words about her daughter and convents to be overheard. Madame de Maintenon was quick enough to perceive what she meant, and fell in with her design. Soon afterwards the Duchess of Burgundy made a sign to her to withdraw, and she did so, extremely perplexed how to reconcile the story she had heard from the Duke of Orleans that morning with the advice she had just received from two persons so friendly to her interests, and usually so well informed.

Later on in the evening the Duchess of Burgundy told her that the Duke of Orleans' account of his interview with the King was quite correct. The King had repeated the same expressions to her and Madame de Maintenon, but he made such a point of letting nothing leak out that they felt certain he would be displeased at finding her in Madame de Maintenon's room, because so unusual an occurrence would be sure to give rise to talk; and, in fact, he had expressed his dissatisfaction. She added that the King had been trying for some days to get hold of Monseigneur in order to talk to him; but he noticed that Monseigneur seemed stiff, and was evidently keeping out of his way.

This embarrassed and grieved the King, and made him more anxious than ever that nothing should be done to alarm Madame la Duchesse. It is a fact that the Duchess of Orleans' visit did give rise to some talk; but her presence of
mind prevented any evil consequences, for the words she had let drop about putting her daughters into a convent had been overheard, as she intended, and passed as a sufficient explanation of her presence in Madame de Maintenon's room. I heard this explanation myself from my friends the Ladies of the Palace, and had a good laugh over it with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans.

The King returned to Marly on the 26th of May, and this was the only occasion after my audience on which I was not invited. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans missed me very much; they wrote to me frequently, and several times made me go to St. Cloud for informal repasts, so that we could meet without attracting attention. I was to go there on Ascension Day, the 29th; but, Bignon having sent me an invitation to dinner, the signal agreed upon between us, I wrote to the Duke of Orleans to tell him not to expect me till later, when I would go at once and report what I had heard. I went to Bignon's house in good time; he finished something he was doing in his study, and then led me into his gallery. There he told me that he had repeated our conversation to Mademoiselle Choin, but her reply was that, though she felt highly honoured by the request of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, she did not wish to enlarge her circle of acquaintances; the only people she saw were her own private friends, with the addition of a few others whom Monseigneur particularly wished her to know; she could not make new friends except at his special request; and so on, with a number of other plausible excuses. Bignon added that she had scolded him for undertaking the commission; and then, becoming more open with me, he said she had such a dislike for the Duke of Orleans that nothing would induce her to make his acquaintance, even if he were not on such bad terms with Monseigneur. So far as the Duchess of Orleans was concerned, she would gladly have made friends with her if she could have done so without giving offence to Madame la Duchesse; but, as the two sisters were so hostile to each other, it was impossible. He said he had tried to reason with her, but found it useless; she was convinced that Madame la Duchesse was sincere in her friendship for her; and in the end she had forbidden him ever to mention the subject again—not angrily, but as if she had quite made up her mind about it. That was quite sufficient for me, and I had no more to say.
I thanked Bignon sincerely. He asked me not to repeat all he had said to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, but merely to tell them, with many compliments, that Mademoiselle Choin preferred to live in complete retirement, and at the same time to make them understand that her decision was final. The subject then dropped; but I could see that he thought his friend in the wrong. During dinner I was as cheerful as usual, and I remained some little time afterwards, so as not to appear in a hurry; I then went home and took six horses to go to St. Cloud. There I found the Duke and Duchess of Orleans at dinner with Mademoiselle and a few ladies, in a charming menagerie near the gate of the avenue leading to the village, which, with its pretty private garden, belonged nominally to Mademoiselle, but practically to her governess, Madame de Maré. I sat down and began chatting with them, but the Duke of Orleans was so impatient that he could not refrain from asking me whether I was in good spirits. "Fairly so," I said, so as not to disturb the company; but he immediately rose from table and took me out into the garden.

There I gave him a report of the unsuccessful issue of our negotiation, and, though I did it as gently as I could, he was very much cast down. He returned to the dinner-table and whispered to the Duchess; the remainder of the meal was gloomy, and it soon came to an end. When she rose from table she took me into a private room, where we had a long talk; towards the end the Duke of Orleans joined us. I told them that their manifest impatience to see me, and their undisguised dejection, were not very prudent, and would make people talk; I suggested that we should go for a walk, and talk the matter over afterwards. The Duke of Orleans, always in extremes, said he did not care; and declared there was nothing for it but to retire into private life and plant cabbages—a sort of talk he always indulged in when out of spirits, though nothing ever came of it. The Duchess thought I was right; so, after some trouble with him, they took me to see the menagerie, and afterwards we went for a drive in the grounds of St. Cloud. Towards evening we walked in the orangery, and then I told them that we must not lose heart; for we had never expected to carry everything before us at once; the idea of making overtures to Mademoiselle Choin had merely occurred to me as a thing worth trying, without putting much faith in it; and,
though the overtures had been rejected, no harm was done. Not a word had been said about the marriage; and, after all, it was a polite attention which could not but be taken in good part by the woman herself, and even by Monseigneur. We still had the preponderating force on our side, in the Duchess of Burgundy, Madame de Maintenon, and the King himself, and we make the best use of these allies. Two things, I added, were certain: he was ruined if the marriage did not come off; and if the business was not pushed forward rapidly, it never would come off; so he must act accordingly.

I had arranged with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans that they should, without mentioning my name, confide these overtures to Mademoiselle Choin to the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon, who both approved of them, as did the King, when they informed him about them. My design was to show them that they were taken into confidence about everything; and also, in case the overtures were rejected, to work upon their fear of Monseigneur's opposition, and the growing influence of the clique which surrounded him. I advised the Duke and Duchess of Orleans to make the most of Mademoiselle Choin's refusal, warning them that, if they did not bring the marriage off before the close of the stay at Marly, they might give it up altogether; because the impression left on the King's mind by the letter would fade away, and his embarrassment with Monseigneur would grow stronger; Monseigneur, encouraged by Madame la Duchesse and the Choin, would become more obstinate; and their own presence would become irksome to the King, because he would feel that they were justly dissatisfied with him, and have the unpleasant consciousness that they knew he dared not speak to Monseigneur. His intention of bringing about Mademoiselle's marriage would insensibly die out; that of Mademoiselle de Bourbon would in all probability follow; and then they might judge for themselves what their future would be like.

They listened in silence to this forcible appeal, and entirely agreed with my arguments. The Duchess of Orleans then went in to write to Father du Trévoux, while the Duke and I rejoined the rest of the company. He took Mademoiselle on one side; and it chanced that I found myself with Madame de Fontainemartel. She was much
attached to them, and a great friend of mine; as I have formerly related, it was she who brought the Duke of Orleans and myself together again. She guessed that something of importance was under discussion, and told me straight out that it was Mademoiselle's marriage. I made no reply; but she went on at once to say that, if there was really a prospect of bringing it off, we should do well to lose no time, for our opponents would stick at nothing to prevent it. She confided to me, without much questioning on my part, that they were spreading the most horrible reports about the relations between the Duke of Orleans and his daughter. My hair stood on end; I perceived more clearly than ever what devils we had to deal with, and how important it was that there should be no delay. When we returned to the château I took the Duke of Orleans aside, and told him once more that he might make up his mind, if the marriage was not announced before the Court left Marly, that it would never come off at all. He seemed convinced by the force of my arguments, and I left him to all appearance more determined to take active measures than I had yet seen him.

I then went for another turn in the garden with my old friend and relation, Madame de Maré; while we were there a message came for me to say that Madame de Fontainemartel would like to see me at the château. I went in, and was at once shown into a room where the Duchess of Orleans was writing; it was she who had sent for me under another name. Madame de Fontainemartel had, in the meantime, confided to her the same horrible story which she had told me in the garden; and she wanted to talk to me about it. She protested that there were not the faintest grounds for such an abominable insinuation; that the Duke of Orleans had tenderly loved his daughter from infancy; he had been almost in despair during a dangerous illness she had, when he insisted on watching by her bedside night and day; and his affection for her was far greater than for his son; but there was nothing in his behaviour towards her which could be considered suspicious in the slightest degree, even if she had not been so nearly related to him. We agreed that it would be not only cruel but imprudent to tell the Duke of Orleans what we had heard, as it would only increase his embarrassment and damp his courage.
CHAPTER II

1710

The King musters up courage to speak to Monseigneur—the latter consents to the marriage, but asks for delay—Joy of Madame—The Duke of Berry pleased at the prospect of marriage—D’Antin induces Monseigneur to let the engagement be announced—Astonishment of the Court—Monseigneur behaves with great kindness to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans—A merry dinner-party—Curious interview between two sisters—A note from the Duke of Orleans—“Veni, vidi, victi”—I go to St. Cloud—Mademoiselle’s gratitude—Her reception of her aunt and cousins—The Duchess of Orleans again attacks me on the subject of a Lady of Honour—My obstinate though polite refusal—The King discusses the same question—He suggests Madame de Roquelaure—Madame de Maintenon’s reply—The Duchess of Lesdiguières a Jansenist—The King decides to appoint Madame de Saint-Simon—I am warned not to refuse the appointment—My conversation with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans.

The Duke and Duchess of Orleans returned to Marly with the firm resolve to make a last effort to hasten the declaration of the marriage; and began next day by informing the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon of Mademoiselle Choin’s obstinate refusal. By them it was carried to the King that same evening, with the necessary seasoning and comments. Next morning, Saturday, the Duke of Orleans asked the King, with a sort of boldness which he rather liked at times, provided there was no intention of contradicting him, what was the use of having d’Antin always hanging about his private room if he could not employ him to make Monseigneur listen to reason, considering that they were on such good terms. The King rejected this suggestion with a show of contempt for d’Antin, of the kind which would make an outsider think that a man is entirely out of favour; whereas, it had precisely the contrary effect on those behind the scenes, because they knew that it was assumed for the purpose of disguising, perhaps even from himself, the real influence which the man had usurped. But the King, annoyed that his embarrassment
in dealing with Monseigneur should be so clearly perceived, and, fearing its possible consequences in the future, again promised his nephew to take active steps at once; and that so positively, that there was nothing more to be said.

In fact, next morning, which was Sunday, the King managed to get hold of Monseigneur in his private room; and, after a short preamble, made the proposal for the marriage. He did it in a fatherly tone, with a slight admixture of the authority of the Sovereign; blending affection and command so judiciously as to make acceptance of the proposal much less unpalatable. Such a gracious and tactful manner is rare, but the King frequently adopted it, and it sat easily and naturally on him. Monseigneur stammered and hesitated; the King took advantage of his embarrassment to press his request. I do not enter into further details, for this is all that came to my knowledge; but the end of it was that Monseigneur gave his consent, merely asking the King, as a favour, to postpone the public announcement for a few days, to give him a little time to become reconciled to the idea. The King entered into his son’s feelings, and granted the delay requested; he made him pledge himself once more, however, in order to anticipate any resistance on the part of the cabal, asking him to make up his mind as quickly as possible, and let him know when he felt himself able to bear the public declaration of the marriage.

The King was much relieved when this decisive step had been taken; he told his nephew about it half an hour afterwards, giving him leave to carry the good news to the Duchess of Orleans; but forbidding him to betray the secret by word or look to any one else, except the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon. The Duke of Orleans instantly embraced his knees, expressing his warm gratitude; and at the same time submitted to him, with all due respect, that Madame would be hurt if he did not take her into his confidence. The King at once gave him permission to tell her, under the strictest promise of secrecy; and he went straight off to her apartments. She had never believed that the marriage would take place, and knew nothing of what we had been doing; consequently she was overjoyed. The Duke of Orleans then went to the Duchess, and they were able to congratulate each other on their success.

D’Antin had found out, between Thursday and Sunday, that the Duke of Orleans had handed a letter to the King,
and exclaimed that he could not make out how he had managed it without his knowledge. This speech of his, which soon came to our ears, showed what a close watch he had kept over the Duke of Orleans' movements in the King's rooms. On Monday, the 2nd of June, the King took the Duke of Berry apart and asked him whether he would like to be married. It was what he was longing for; thinking, like a child, that he would then be considered grown up and have more liberty; but the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, with whom he lived on terms of the most complete affection and confidence, had alarmed him about Mademoiselle de Bourbon, and turned his thoughts towards Mademoiselle. He replied modestly to the King's question; saying that he would await his good pleasure, without impatience and without repugnance. The King then asked him whether he would dislike marrying Mademoiselle, who appeared to be the only suitable match for him in France; and in the present state of public affairs there was no foreign Princess available. To this the Duke of Berry replied that he would obey the King's commands with pleasure. The King then told him that he intended the marriage to be celebrated at once, and Monseigneur had given his consent; but he was not to speak about it for the present. The Duke of Berry then went out wolf-hunting with Monseigneur and the Duke of Burgundy, and they had a long run.

That same day the Duke and Duchess of Orleans again went to St. Cloud. The weather was already growing hot, and the King took his walk later in the afternoon. Monseigneur had said nothing more to the King about the marriage; but d'Antin had either heard about it from him or guessed what was going on, and it occurred to him that he might make a merit of hastening the declaration. At this season of the year the King used to transact business with his Minister early in the afternoon, instead of in the evening; and went for his walk afterwards. As soon as the business was finished on this particular day d'Antin, intent on his scheme, entered the private rooms by the back way, and let fall some remarks which led the King to tell him about the marriage. He expressed his delight with a sort of cordial flattery which it cost him nothing to assume, even when in reality most displeased; then, with that freedom which he knew how to usurp at suitable moments, he went on to tell the King that he saw no use in making
a mystery about an arrangement which was not only very proper in itself, but had already begun to leak out; for while the King was making a secret of it in his private room, people were actually discussing it in whispers in the saloon. At this moment Monseigneur came in, either naturally or by preconcerted arrangement with d'Antin; perhaps to do the latter a favour, or to spare himself the unpleasantness of opening the subject. The King and d'Antin continued their conversation in his presence, and the King plucked up courage to ask him what he thought of it; adding immediately that, if the matter was really beginning to transpire, it would be as well to go at once to Madame and ask her consent to the marriage. Monseigneur made no opposition; the King then sent for the Duke of Burgundy and told him formally what he knew well enough already.

During the interval d'Antin slipped out, and, going to the little room where the valets used to wait for their masters, sent one of his own servants on foot to St. Cloud, to carry the news from him verbally; for he would not lose time in writing, or having a horse saddled. No sooner had he let out what he knew than there was a general rush from the Saloon to the small saloon adjoining the chapel, which was thronged to suffocation with courtiers waiting to see the King go by. Madame was in her room, writing as usual; when she saw the King come in with Monseigneur and the Duke of Burgundy she guessed at once what brought them. The King formally asked her consent to Mademoiselle's marriage; which, as may be supposed, was readily and joyfully accorded. The King then sent for the Duke of Berry and presented him to Madame as her grandson-in-law.

All this took very little time; the King returned to his own rooms almost immediately, and then went out into the garden. As soon as he had done so the whole Court rushed to Madame's apartments, and thence to those of Monseigneur and the Duke of Berry; every one anxious to show himself, and still more, perhaps, to study his neighbour's countenance. So few people had the faintest suspicion of what was going on that the sudden announcement of the marriage caused the greatest astonishment. Some were furious at it, even persons about the Court or in Parisian society, whom it did not really concern in the least; no one approved of the marriage. But in a case like this, where the circumstances cannot be explained, there is nothing for it but to
let people say what they like. Such was the thunderbolt which fell on the head of Madame la Duchesse just at the time when her daughters were enjoying their first visit to Marly. I never heard what scenes occurred in her rooms on this startling occasion; I would willingly have paid a good deal for a hiding-place behind her tapestry.

The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were on their way back from St. Cloud when they met d'Antin's servant; who delivered his message, and then went on to tell Mademoiselle. It may readily be supposed what a relief the news was to them. On arriving at Marly they went straight to Monseigneur's apartments, and found him at table with the Princes his sons, and some ladies. He was in reality a good-natured man; and, the sensation caused by the first public announcement having been got over, he would not displease the King by doing things with a bad grace; so when the Duke and Duchess of Orleans came in he received them not merely politely but cordially; embraced them, and made his sons do so, presenting the second to them as their son-in-law. He asked the Duchess of Orleans to sit down near him, took her hands and kissed her several times; proposed the health of the father-in-law, mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law, under those names; and, though the Duke and Duchess of Orleans were not seated at the table, he made them drink with the rest of the company. In short, no one ever saw Monseigneur so cheerful or so much interested in anything; the repast was prolonged, healths drunk again and again; all was mirth and merriment. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were never so much astonished in their lives as they were by this unlooked-for reception; as may be supposed, they were not backward in showing their pleasure and respectful gratitude. The Duchess of Burgundy stayed to the end, and was the life and soul of the party; the Duke of Burgundy, in his delight at the marriage itself and at Monseigneur's taking it so well, raised his glass to his lips so often that he broke out into jovial utterances which he refused to believe when they were repeated to him next morning. Monseigneur went so far as to talk of taking the Duke of Berry to St. Cloud next day to see Mademoiselle; but the King was more punctilious; he said she must first come to see him; he would then present her to the Duke of Berry; and the visit to St. Cloud must be postponed till the day after the morrow.
This visit being ended, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans went to Madame la Duchesse's rooms to give her a formal intimation of the approaching marriage. Whether she wished to avoid inquisitive eyes, or whether in this moment of anguish she really did not know what she was doing, she had left the house, and was walking in the gardens with very few attendants. The Duchess of Orleans was the first to speak; she apologised for not having called sooner to tell her the news, as she had been with Monseigneur ever since her return from St. Cloud. Madame la Duchesse thanked her in a tone of icy coldness; the Duke of Orleans put in a word or two to relieve the constraint; and the Duchess of Orleans, by way of making things more pleasant, and to carry out something her husband had hinted at in his letter to the King, said it was a pleasure to think that family arrangements were possible which might enable Madame la Duchesse to share in the advantages of this honourable alliance. Madame la Duchesse instantly lost her temper. "What!" she said tartly; "do you mean your younger daughter? My son at the present time would not be a good match for her; his affairs are sadly disordered; his whole inheritance is disputed, and no one can tell how much of it will be left to him; besides, your daughter is too young to think of marrying." The Duchess of Orleans, who had been only too good-natured in making such an advance, replied that M. le Duc would in any case be a good match for her daughter, and stated her age. Madame la Duchesse still insisted that she was too young; whereupon they compared dates, and she had to admit that she was mistaken; however, she said, more tartly still, that she did not mean her son to marry for a long time yet. The silence which ensued was broken by a few remarks about the weather; the Duchess of Orleans then excused herself on the ground of being very busy, and asked Madame la Duchesse to be kind enough to consider her visit as paid, since she had been on her way to her rooms when she met her in the garden. Madame la Duchesse then betook herself to compliments, and said she would return the visit at once; but both the Duke and Duchess of Orleans begged her not to do so. In the end they agreed to consider both visits as paid, and parted, Madame la Duchesse satisfied with having been rude to her sister; the Duchess of Orleans laughing heartily at her undisguised fury. I suppress the rest of this day, so
auspicious for the Duke and Duchess of Orleans; but this visit to Madame la Duchesse seemed so funny that I could not leave it out.

That same day, Monday the 2nd of June, I had gone with Madame de Saint-Simon to St. Maur to dine with Madame de Blansac; and, as we spent the rest of the day with the Abbé de Verteuil, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld’s brother, we did not get back till about seven in the evening. On arriving I found a note from the Duke of Orleans, which had been brought soon after twelve by one of his servants; the address was in his handwriting; the contents, which were very brief, were written by the Duchess of Orleans. It began with these words: “Veni, vidi, vici.” She said I should see well enough that he had dictated them; and, without going into particulars, she bound me to secrecy till after the public announcement of the intended marriage, which would not be long delayed. After my first outburst of joy, in which, owing to some secret presentiment, Madame de Saint-Simon did not join very heartily, I became uneasy about the postponement of the declaration. While I was trying to think what caused the delay one of the Duke of Orleans’ servants brought me a message from Mademoiselle informing me that her engagement had been formally given out; she had sent it directly she heard the news from d’Antin. Then my satisfaction was complete; the triumph of my friends, the disappointment of my enemies, pride at having brought such an affair to a successful issue, and the thought of the immense difference it would make in my future prospects—all combined to fill me with joy. I wrote at once to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans; and next morning I received a message from them asking me to go to St. Cloud as early as possible.

This visit was very different from my last, when I went to tell them of Mademoiselle Choin’s refusal. We found St. Cloud filled with a brilliant crowd; I was immediately surrounded by people expressing their pleasure and congratulating me, for most of them spoke of the marriage as my handiwork, though I pretended not to understand what they meant. In short, I had such a reception that I could almost have fancied they had come there to visit me. Madame de Saint-Simon was received in the same manner. Surrounded by this throng, embraced and taken hold of on all sides, I was hustled through the vast suite of rooms; at
the end of which was Mademoiselle, with the Princess of Conti and a group of distinguished persons who had come over from Marly and Paris. As soon as she caught sight of me she made an exclamation, ran to me, kissed me on both cheeks, and, taking me by the hand, led me into the orangery, away from the crowd. There she broke out into a profusion of thanks, which astonished me so much that I could not answer her. She perceived my surprise, and explained that she had known every step that had been taken throughout the affair, for her father had confided everything to her as we went along; that was why she had always left the Duchess of Orleans' room, without being told, as soon as I went in; and she confessed that she had often closely observed my face before and after these conversations. At this astonishing avowal I was forced to admit the part I had played in the affair, but I could not refrain from commenting on the Duke of Orleans' indiscretion in letting her into such a secret. She expressed her gratitude with so much grace, eloquence, and dignity that my astonishment was renewed. She said she wished I had been there half an hour earlier, for I had missed a good deal; Mademoiselle la Duchesse had come with her daughters to congratulate her, and the good aunt had tried to disguise her disappointment by an air of satisfaction so obviously assumed that it had increased her own pleasure; she had presented her daughters to her in a respectful manner, saying she hoped she would be kind to them; to which Mademoiselle replied maliciously that she would always love them as much as she had done in the past; a promise, she said, laughing, which she could keep without any difficulty. Madame la Duchesse had cut her visit short; when she left, Mademoiselle reconducted her, ostentatiously giving her the right hand and making her go first through all the doors, though they were thrown open wide. Madame la Duchesse saw that she was doing it out of malice, and begged her not to treat her with so much ceremony; but she had given herself the pleasure of keeping it up to the end.

We walked up and down the orangery for half an hour, during which she made me many confidences; at last our conversation was interrupted by the Duchess de la Ferté, and we returned to the crowd. I went at once to congratulate Madame, who received me with tears of joy. All this time Madame de Saint-Simon was surrounded by a crowd, who
congratulated her openly on her approaching appointment as Lady of Honour. She said, in reply, that there were many persons better qualified than herself for such an appointment, modestly alleging her want of age and experience, and other reasons why she would not be suitable. She contrived, however, to let her real sentiments appear so plainly that Madame de Châtillon asked her whether she really meant to give herself out as being too young for the appointment; to which she replied, quite frankly, "Yes, I do." Mademoiselle, who hardly knew her, came and greeted her with caresses and every imaginable attention; in short, the female population of the Court was so firmly imbued with the conviction that she was to have the place that she was treated with a servile politeness as pitiable as it was contemptible; and her fears on the subject were renewed.

She went with a few ladies in a carriage to meet the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, who had been to Sceaux to make a formal announcement of the marriage there. When they met the carriage they made the ladies get into their own coach, and thus arrived in the courtyard, where they were immediately surrounded by the illustrious crowd, and all was joy and congratulations. They went with Madame and Mademoiselle to drive about and show themselves to the common people, who swarmed in the courtyard and gardens; but, before getting into their carriage, they begged me most urgently to wait for them, so that they might have a talk with me when they got rid of the crowd. In the meantime I walked about with a most distinguished company. Presently, when Madame had left them to return to Marly, they sent me word to come to them in the gardens of the orangery. As soon as they saw me they came to meet me; and, drawing me away from the crowd, began to tell me all that had occurred at Marly, which I have already set down in its proper place. We congratulated each other warmly on having at last reached port after so many dangers; we had a good laugh at d'Antin's wonderful quickness in accommodating himself to circumstances; above all, we could not get over our surprise at the kind reception, so entirely unexpected, which they had met with from Monseigneur. I begged them to profit by it, and do their best to make friends with him.

While we were talking they had imperceptibly drawn me quite to the other side of the garden, where there was nobody,
All of a sudden the Duke of Orleans went away, to rejoin the crowd, leaving me alone with the Duchess. She sat down on a seat which happened to be there, and asked me to sit down with her. Intimate with them as I was, I was always careful to treat them with formal respect, except when conversing with them alone about their own affairs; for I am convinced that, whatever liberties they may allow, one is really more at ease with people in their position if one keeps to that line of conduct; moreover, it is the one prescribed by a sense of what is due to oneself. Certainly I had the right to be seated in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, and constantly was so; nevertheless, I did not think it becoming to sit down side by side with her on the same bench, in full view of all the people on the other side of the flower-beds. Accordingly I remained standing opposite to her; she concluded the remarks she had been making when she sat down; and then, abruptly changing the subject, said that, now the marriage was definitely arranged, it became necessary to appoint a Lady of Honour; that I had not responded very cordially to the advances which she had already made, but now it was necessary that something should be settled, and she would tell me frankly that Madame de Saint-Simon was the only person who would suit them. I replied, thanking her, but added that I had been quite in earnest in what I had formerly said on the subject; that Madame de Saint-Simon was not at all a suitable person for the appointment; she was not old enough, not strong enough to stand the fatigue, and she did not feel herself capable of managing so young a Princess; I was deeply grateful, I said, for the kind manner in which she made the offer, but I should make a poor return for it if I did not reply with equal frankness; there were many other ladies well qualified for the post, and she might cast her eyes on them. She replied that, seeing I did not wish Madame de Saint-Simon to be appointed, she had already considered the other ladies, and found objections to all of them; Madame de Saint-Simon was the only really suitable person, and she confessed that she had a passionate wish for her to be appointed. I repeated my former objections, to all of which she replied: “But if we think her suitable that is our own affair; you have only to say whether you will let us have her”; and she added that Madame de Saint-Simon should perform just as much or as little of her
functions as she pleased, and in the manner most convenient to her. Nothing could be more flattering, and the way in which she said these things made them still more so; nevertheless I remained firm, and continued to make excuses. At last, after looking at me sadly for a moment, she said: "I see what it is: it is only the second place, and that is why you dislike it!" and she cast down her eyes, which were full of tears. I was not so much moved by this as I ought to have been, for my mind was fully made up. I made no reply to what she had said about the second place because that was in fact our objection to the appointment; and I remained silent, still standing opposite to her, for the space of two good Misereres, during which she said not a word.

At last I could think of no better way of letting her see that my refusal was final, at the same time preserving the respect due to her rank and our friendship, than by an abrupt change of the conversation. "Madame," I said at once, in a steady voice; "Mademoiselle is extremely clever: I never heard any one say as much of the Duke of Berry. She must try to win his affection; then she will make him do anything she pleases." I continued in this strain for some time, talking for talking's sake, till the Duchess had overcome her vexation and recovered her presence of mind. She restrained her tears with an effort, said a few words on the subject which I had broached, and then, rising abruptly, said it was time to go back. She walked towards her carriage in silence till we met some one; the crowd quickly came round us, and, bowing to me civilly, she got into her carriage without another word. The Duke of Orleans and Madame de Castries drove back with her to Marly—not, I imagine, without talking over what had just occurred.

Madame de Saint-Simon and I took leave of Mademoiselle and returned to Paris, less occupied with the brilliant scene we had just beheld than with my interview with the Duchess of Orleans. All eyes had been fixed on us from the other side of the flower-beds; the Duke of Orleans and Mademoiselle had watched us attentively, he in particular, as I had noticed at the time. We were astonished at the pertinacity of the Duchess of Orleans, after the two distinct refusals which I had already made; we could not understand her exposing herself to a third, on the very day of her triumph. We perceived clearly, however, that this last attempt had been
prearranged between her and the Duke of Orleans; for, knowing that I was not so free with her as I was with him, he thought if he left me alone with her I should be less firm, and not so much on my guard. This explains why they had inveigled me to the far side of the gardens, where there was nobody, and why he had then made an excuse for leaving us alone together. We came to the conclusion that it was impossible to refuse more respectfully and at the same time more clearly than I had done; and after that we thought it would be difficult for them to mention the subject again. At the same time, we were glad that we had taken the precaution beforehand of obtaining the assistance of the Duchess of Burgundy and M. de Beauvilliers. Nevertheless, Madame de Saint-Simon, who was not of a sanguine disposition, felt that her uneasiness would not be entirely removed till the appointment of a Lady of Honour was actually announced. She would not be left long in suspense, for the celebration of the marriage was to take place as soon as the Papal dispensation arrived.

On Tuesday, the day following the scene at St. Cloud which I have just described, Mademoiselle went with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans to dine at Marly. Directly after dinner she was conducted first to Madame, and then by a back way to the King's apartments. He was in his large room, surrounded by Monseigneur, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, the Duke of Berry, and the principal officials of both sexes. Mademoiselle was presented to him by Madame, and threw herself at his feet; the King immediately raised her, embraced her, and then presented her to the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy and the Duke of Berry, who all kissed her. To prevent any embarrassment, the King, in that pleasant manner which came so naturally to him, told Mademoiselle not to say a word to any one, and also forbade the Duke of Berry to speak to her; he cut the interview very short, and, after going to Madame de Maintenon's room, Mademoiselle went away, to sleep at Versailles. The King himself was to return to Versailles on the Thursday instead of Saturday, which was the usual day; the reason being that the following Sunday, the 8th of June, was Whit-Sunday; and the King always gave up the previous day to his devotions.

Madame de Saint-Simon and I had thought of not going to Versailles till after the appointment of a Lady of Honour;
but, on consideration, we came to the conclusion that to abstain from presenting ourselves before the King, on an occasion when common politeness would have required us to call on a private person would be rather too marked; for even those persons who no longer came near the Court except on occasions of ceremony were taking this opportunity of paying their respects. As we sat at dinner on the Wednesday, the Chancellor, who had come to Paris with his son (for the Council never sat on the three days before Whit-Sunday), sent to ask us to go to his house after dinner, as he wished to speak to us. This is what we heard from him and Pontchartrain. On the evening following the announcement of the marriage the question of a Lady of Honour had been discussed between the King, Madame de Maintenon, and the Duchess of Burgundy. The King suggested the Duchess de Roquelaure. We have seen that he had formerly had more than a passing fancy for her, and he had always continued to like and esteem her. For that very reason Madame de Maintenon disliked her, and would have been furious to see her appointed to a place which would necessarily admit her into the innermost circle. The Duchess de Roquelaure was a very haughty, imperious person, who disgusted everybody by her airs; and yet she was generally despised, for she was mean in the extreme and an abject flatterer. Madame de Maintenon took advantage of this; she smiled, and said that if the King wanted to make the whole Court angry, he could not do better than appoint her, for nobody could bear her. The King, in apparent astonishment, asked the Duchess of Burgundy whether that was so; and, as she confirmed Madame de Maintenon's opinion, he said then she was out of the question. He then produced a list of the Duchesses from his pocket and paused at the name of Madame de Lesdiguières, the daughter of the Duke de Vivonne, Madame de Montespan's brother, and widow of old Canapes, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. She was a person of virtue and merit; extremely clever, with that peculiar wit characteristic of the Mortemart family; but she had never seen anything of the Court or society in her whole life, living on a very small income, in great piety, hardly seeing any one. D'Antin, her cousin and intimate friend, had spoken strongly in her favour; the King, however, while praising her highly, said she would not do, as she was suspected of a leaning towards Jansenism.
This was said in a sort of soliloquy, and no one answered a word.

My peerage was next in date to that of Lesdiguières, so the King came immediately to Madame de Saint-Simon's name; and said that, after running his eyes over the list, he saw no one else to choose. "What do you think?" he said, addressing Madame de Maintenon. "I have always heard her well spoken of, and I think she will do very well." Madame de Maintenon said she thought so too, for though she did not know Madame de Saint-Simon she had never heard anything against her, but quite the reverse. "But," she added, "the Duchess of Burgundy knows her, and can tell you more about her." The Duchess of Burgundy, in reply, praised Madame de Saint-Simon, but rather coldly; and concluded by saying that she was not sure that she would be a suitable person. "But why not?" said the King, in surprise, and insisted on her high character and other qualifications for the appointment. The Duchess of Burgundy, who was merely trying to serve Madame de Saint-Simon according to her own request, but did not wish to injure her, was forced to agree with all the King said; but still maintained that she was not quite suitable. At last the King lost patience, and the Duchess of Burgundy, reduced to extremities, hinted that it was doubtful whether Madame de Saint-Simon would accept the appointment. "You think she would refuse?" said the King rather sharply. "Oh! no, she will not do that, if it is put to her properly, and she knows that it is my wish!" He went over the list of names again, however; and, being really disappointed at not finding another suitable person, for he thought the Duchess of Burgundy did not wish to have Madame de Saint-Simon, he asked if she had anything against her; to which the Duchess replied, "No"; but in such a way as not to remove his doubts entirely. The subject then dropped for the present.

Ponchartrain added that, as soon as the marriage was announced, everybody had picked out Madame de Saint-Simon as the future Lady of Honour, but no one had said we wished for the appointment; many, indeed, had gone so far as to say we should refuse it. The Duke of Orleans had told him that he was doing all he could to bring it about, and although he knew I would not ask for the appointment he was sure I would accept it if offered. Thereupon Pont-
chartrain, who liked to interfere in everything, had urged our friends, the Ladies of the Palace, to use their influence with the Duchess of Burgundy, and she, knowing how the case really stood, had replied to Madame de Nogaret that she was quite perplexed about it. Pontchartrain began remonstrating with me; but I cut him short by telling him that he was always meddling with other people's affairs; that our silence ought to have made our sentiments quite clear to him, for we were quite old enough to know that a Lady of Honour must be appointed, and to apply for the post ourselves, if we wanted it. He tried to defend himself by quoting what the Duke of Orleans had said, to which I replied that I could not understand it, after the very plain language I had used to the Duchess of Orleans, which she must certainly have repeated to him. Madame de Saint-Simon's tears completed Pontchartrain's enlightenment, and I never saw a man so much astonished.

We then went into the Chancellor's room. He knew we did not wish for the appointment, but was almost as much surprised as his son at my anger and Madame de Saint-Simon's tears. He told us he knew for certain that, since the discussion in Madame de Maintenon's room, there had been some talk of sending us an order to accept the appointment. He said the matter had now come to such a point that he could no longer advise me to refuse the post, for a refusal would ruin us completely. The King would be extremely offended; the sight of another person whom he had been forced to appoint against his will would keep his displeasure constantly alive, and he would take every opportunity to make us feel it. On the other hand, if we gave in to his wishes with a good grace, our reluctance, which was well known to him, would be an additional merit in his eyes; and we might look forward to all sorts of favours and distinctions. The Chancellor was of opinion that in our situation, especially considering how very lately I had been restored to the King's favour, there could be no hesitation as to what we ought to do.

The discussion lasted two hours; in the end we made up our minds to sleep at Versailles; and, if the threatened storm did not blow over, as we still hoped it might, we determined not to bring ruin on ourselves by a refusal. On our way we met the Duke de Charost, who was returning from Marly; he stopped us, and said our friends had begged
him to tell us that a refusal would be equivalent to absolute ruin. Since Chamillart's downfall had forced us to give up the Duke de Lorge's rooms we had no quarters in the château; only the room which the Chancellor had made me accept from him for use in the day-time; so we went to Madame de Lausun's apartments on our arrival. We found that the Duchess of Burgundy had sent four times to Madame de Lausun, begging her to write to Madame de Saint-Simon and tell her on no account to absent herself from Versailles; for the appointment would certainly be offered to her, and a refusal would ruin us both irretrievably. Through the negligence of a servant the letter had gone astray, and we only heard of it through Madame de Lausun's surprise that we had not received it. This message renewed my anger and Madame de Saint-Simon's tears; but I will not dwell on them, nor on the discussion which followed. The two sisters had to go to the Duchess of Burgundy in Madame de Maintenon's drawing-room; as soon as they appeared they were surrounded by a crowd of persons congratulating Madame de Saint-Simon; and the Duchess of Burgundy, who no longer made any secret of her wishes, added her own congratulations. Madame de Saint-Simon, in her embarrassment, replied that people were joking with her; but the Duchess of Burgundy assured her the matter was serious. To avoid anything of the sort I did not stir out of Madame de Lausun's rooms the whole evening.

I was extremely angry with the Duke of Orleans on account of what he had said to Pontchartrain; only the recollection of our old friendship, and the consideration that I was about to be forced into a situation which must necessarily bring me into closer relations with him than ever, prevented me from quarrelling with him. I saw him next morning walking before the King on his way to Mass. He came up to me at once, and whispered in my ear (and this was the first time in his life that he ever alluded to the subject with me), "Do you know that people say positively that we are to have you in our household?"

"Yes, Sir," I replied very gravely, "and I hear it with very great surprise; for such an appointment would not suit us in the least," "But why not?" he asked, in some embarrassment. "Because," I replied, "if you insist on knowing, it is an appointment of the second rank; and such a post is not, and never will be, to our liking."

"But
would you refuse it?" he said. "No!" I replied warmly, "for I am not like Cardinal de Bouillon" (whose treason, of which I will speak later on, had just been consummated), "I am the King's subject, and it is my duty to obey him; but he must lay his commands upon me before I do so, and then I shall obey with extreme reluctance, which the consideration that you are the Princess's father will hardly soften in the slightest degree." During this conversation we were advancing towards the chapel; the Duke of Burgundy was close behind us; my evident emotion made him come closer still, to hear what I was saying; and he smiled, for I turned my head and saw him. The Duke of Orleans made no reply. But, making my own reflections, I asked him whether he had, at any rate, considered the question of a suitable Lady-in-Waiting. I was afraid we should have Madame de Caylus, on account of her relationship to Madame de Maintenon, and for other reasons; I said so to him, but he replied that he hoped the choice would not fall on her. Our arrival at the tribune put an end to this singular colloquy.

In the course of the afternoon I went to call on the Duchess of Orleans, and found her alone with the Duke. As soon as she saw me she said, with a very joyful air, that she still hoped we should come to them. I said, very gravely, that I trusted she would forgive me if up to the very last moment I hoped the exact contrary; that I refrained, out of respect, from repeating to her what I had said to the Duke in the morning, but that I thought he had himself told her about it. She admitted that he had done so; and I then took the opportunity of speaking freely to her once for all. I said it was true that an appointment of the second class was extremely distasteful to us, and even the consideration that the Princess was their daughter did not make it much more palatable; it was unsuited to our birth and dignity, the strange precedent set by the Duchesses de Ventadour and de Brancas had astonished the whole Court, and the King himself had expressed great surprise at their accepting such posts; these ladies, however, had done so literally to obtain food, and to escape from their jealous and spend-thrift husbands; motives which, thank God, did not apply in our case. She interrupted me by pointing out the difference between attendance on Madame at her age, involving almost complete separation from the Court, and
being attached to a young Princess, wife of the King's own grandson; and went on to speak, in the most charming and flattering terms, of the high esteem shown for Madame de Saint-Simon by entrusting her with such a charge at her age.

I replied that nothing could alter the fact that the appointment was the second of its class, and not the first; and I still hoped that Madame de Saint-Simon would not be selected for it. I added that I was glad to have had this opportunity of telling her plainly what we thought; but, having done so, once for all, I should never say another word about the matter; for I thought, having once accepted a situation, nothing could be in worse taste than to give oneself airs of being superior to it; Madame de Saint-Simon would therefore avoid the example of the Maréchale de Rochefort, and would endeavour to perform the duties of her appointment cheerfully, as if they were perfectly agreeable to her. I said this because the Maréchale, who thought with some reason that she conferred honour on her post of Lady of Honour by accepting it, was perpetually worrying the Duchess of Orleans by her grumblings and reproaches; and, after our stubborn resistance, I was afraid she might think we should act in the same way. Since we should in future have to live with them on terms of closer intimacy than ever, I did not wish to begin on an awkward footing, or to risk a quarrel which would deprive our new situation of its only compensating advantages. I did, however, remonstrate mildly with her for treating her friends in such a manner in spite of their obvious reluctance. She laughed at what I said about her Lady of Honour, and did not seem in the least displeased at having to listen to so many unpalatable truths. The Duke of Orleans said not a single word during the whole of the conversation.
CHAPTER III

1710

The King insists on the appointment—Merits of Madame de Saint-Simon —The cabal insinuate that she is a Jansenist—Father Toller reports favourably concerning her—Marshal Boufflers sent to warn me—Difficult about a Lady-in-Waiting—Madame de Cheverny too ugly —Madame de la Vieuville appointed—The King speaks to me about Madame de Saint-Simon—My reply—Her appointment announced —My visit to Madame de Maintenon—The King’s kindness to us—We are given the best rooms at Versailles—The marriage celebrated —The Duke of Orleans spares the feelings of Madame la Duchesse—His daughter allowed to leave her convent to bear her sister’s train —Madame de Maré retires—I soon perceive her reasons, and bitterly regret having brought about the marriage.

It is astonishing that the King and other royal personages should not have taken offence at our obstinate resistance, and proceeded to make another choice. One cannot disguise the fact that they look upon themselves as a race apart from ordinary mortals; a pleasing error in which they are encouraged by the flattery, not to say adoration, of the courtiers who surround them. It is astonishing, I say, that persons so accustomed to see people creeping at their feet, and eager to anticipate their slightest wishes, should have persisted in forcing us to accept an appointment which, to the majority of courtiers, was an object of ambition. But the King had a powerful motive which set aside all other considerations. He had long wished to bring Madame de Saint-Simon within his private circle; we heard afterwards that the cause of the long delay of six weeks in appointing a new Lady of the Palace, after Madame de Montgon’s death, was, that he wished to give the post to her, and hoped to overcome the opposition of the Duchess of Burgundy, who at that time, influenced by the Noailles, wished to have Madame de la Vallière, and eventually had her own way. Fortunately I had asked for that appointment; for it was now put about that I looked upon the post even of Lady of the Palace as beneath the dignity
of a Duchess: an absurd accusation, for the Queen had had several Duchesses in that capacity, to say nothing of the Princess of Baden, daughter of a Prince of the Blood, and wife of a German sovereign.

I cannot refrain from saying that no woman ever enjoyed a more general and solid reputation for merit and virtue than Madame de Saint-Simon; and none ever deserved it better, or bore it with more modesty and amiability. She was respected and liked by every one; and nobody was afraid of her, not even the young women who put least restraint upon themselves, notwithstanding the difference of their morals and behaviour. Her steadfast piety, which never failed her at any time, repelled no one; for she never paraded it, and was content to live her own life. So many rare qualities made up for her comparative youth; and, combined with her rank, birth, and high connections, fitted her admirably to be the adviser of a young Princess. My intimacy with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans; my attachment to the Duke of Burgundy, which, as the public had already begun to notice, was not without response on his part; and my close alliance with all the principal members of his private circle, also rendered the appointment most suitable. These considerations, combined with others, made the King insist on the appointment of Madame de Saint-Simon; and when he was warned by the Duchess of Burgundy that we might possibly refuse, it became a point of honour with him to have his own way; in fact, he was so determined to be obeyed that he spared no threats, and sent us repeated warnings of what would happen to us in the event of a refusal.

Nothing short of such a powerful combination of reasons would have made the King insist on the appointment, in spite, not only of his displeasure at our reluctance, but of the artifices employed to prevent it being offered to us. Madame la Duchesse, d'Antin, and their secret cabal were furious at the marriage, and they let slip the expression that all was lost if Madame de Saint-Simon was appointed Lady of Honour; for they wanted some one in that position who would be, if not actually useful to them, at any rate neutral and accessible. For want of a better weapon they availed themselves of the regularity of Madame de Saint-Simon's life; they ferreted out her confessor, and thought their triumph assured when they discovered that, for many
years, she had resorted to Father de la Brue, rector of St. Germain-l'Auxerrois, who had been appointed by Cardinal de Noailles and was suspected of a leaning towards Jansenism. That, in the King's eyes, was of all crimes the most unpardonable; and they never doubted that Madame de Saint-Simon could be convicted of it; for what could be more suspicious than the case of a lady of well-known, though unostentatious piety, who, though she lived at Court, did not choose a Jesuit as her director; did not confess herself at the parish church of Versailles, or in her own parish of St. Sulpice, but resorted to an outside priest of doubtful orthodoxy? Unfortunately for them, by the time this accusation reached the King he was already bent on appointing Madame de Saint-Simon; and it merely alarmed him, instead of putting an end to the appointment once for all, as it would have done under ordinary circumstances; for this was the way in which many a man's prospects had been utterly ruined without his having the slightest suspicion of the reason. In this case the King, contrary to his usual practice, determined to make further inquiries; and he addressed himself to Father Tellier, than whom no one had a keener scent for anything savouring in the smallest degree of Jansenism.

Father Tellier was quite satisfied as to my own soundness on account of my friendship with Father Sanadon, who was his own friend, and a member of his society; and he knew from him in what close union Madame de Saint-Simon and I had lived ever since our marriage. As I have already mentioned, he took some pains to ingratiate himself with me, on account of my intimacy with the principal members of the Duke of Burgundy's circle; and he had been a fellow-plotter with me in the matter of the marriage which we had just brought off so successfully. When questioned by the King about Father de la Brue he answered rather vaguely; without saying much in his favour he said nothing against him, and indeed there was nothing to say; but he told the King most decidedly that he could answer for both Madame de Saint-Simon and myself, and that a more suitable person for the appointment could not be found. So, as it turned out, the poisonous insinuation which was intended to exclude Madame de Saint-Simon, not only from this appointment, but from every kind of favour, had precisely the contrary effect. I heard from the Duke of
Orleans how effectively Father Tellier had parried this thrust, but not till some time afterwards. He was in rather a difficulty about admitting it himself; for he did not like people to know the sort of inquisition which had been set up; on the other hand, he did not wish to lose the credit of the great service he had rendered me, which was all the greater because it was one which I could never have guessed at; and, but for his assistance, we should have been irretrievably ruined without ever knowing the reason.

The rage of the cabal at the failure of a stroke to all appearance so certain of success may be imagined. Father de la Brue, who, though he liked Madame de Saint-Simon, did not care much about having penitents in high places, tried to persuade her to leave him, for fear of future consequences; but we both refused to listen to him, for we were firmly convinced that in spiritual matters one ought to be at liberty to act in a simple and straightforward fashion, and that they ought not to be mixed up with, much less be influenced by, the affairs of this world. After her appointment Madame de Saint-Simon received repeated hints that she would do well to change her director; but they soon dropped, for she quietly but firmly let it be seen that they were useless. So long as that wise and holy priest lived, which was for many years after this, she never had another confessor.

Having made up our minds, though with bitter reluctance, to yield to violence, we began to think of the best means of avoiding the appointment of a Lady-in-Waiting who might be obnoxious to us. Madame de Caylus was the only one we were really afraid of, on account of her aunt.1 All the considerations which had led to Madame de Saint-Simon's appointment tended equally to disqualify Madame de Caylus; she was an intimate friend of Madame la Duchesse, and through her had obtained the good-will of Monseigneur to such a degree that she regarded him as a resource for the future; and even for the present, in case her aunt failed her. Moreover, the Duchess of Burgundy feared and disliked her, influenced perhaps by the Duchess de Villeroy's outspoken jealousy of her husband's still subsisting inclination for Madame de Caylus, which had formerly been the cause of her being banished from the Court in disgrace.

1 Madame de Maintenon.
We were not kept in suspense very long. The Duchess of Orleans told me that Monseigneur had spoken to Madame de Maintenon on behalf of Madame de Caylus, and the result had been that Madame de Maintenon was extremely angry with her niece for approaching her in this roundabout fashion, instead of applying directly to her. She had gone so far as to say that she would have Monseigneur know that, if she wanted an appointment for Madame de Caylus, she still had sufficient influence to obtain it for her without his interference. She added that after the life Madame de Caylus had led she had no intention of letting her have any appointment; certainly she would not have it said that she had placed her in charge of a young Princess, to bring her up in the practices which had caused her own banishment from the Court. In the mouth of a professional penitent this speech seemed, perhaps, to show an imperfect recollection of the parable of the mote and the beam. It came to the ear of Madame de Caylus—indeed it had been made with no other object; and it made her quite ill; but she saw her chance was gone, and, not daring to remonstrate with her aunt, she had to content herself with pouring bitter complaints into the ears of her intimate friends.

It seemed to me that Madame de Cheverny would be a suitable Lady-in-Waiting. She was a great friend of mine, and I have mentioned her already more than once. Her husband's birth, and his place in the Duke of Burgundy's household, satisfied all the requirements of pride; and everything else was satisfactory. She was old Sauversy's daughter by one of M. Colbert's sisters; consequently she was first-cousin to the Duchesse de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, and on very friendly terms with them. She was accustomed to good society, although she did not go out very much; she was clever, sensible, and agreeable, and had been very successful at Vienna and Copenhagen, where her husband had been Ambassador. I mentioned the matter to M. and Madame de Beauvilliers, who were highly delighted at the suggestion; the Duke and Duchess of Orleans also approved of it, as did the Duchess of Burgundy; and it was settled between the latter and Madame de Maintenon that Madame de Cheverny should be appointed. That matter being disposed of, we thought we had given sufficient evidence of our compliance by remaining three
days at Versailles, where we could not show ourselves without being exposed to unwelcome congratulations. I told the Duke and Duchess of Orleans so; we sent word to the Duchess of Burgundy that we could stand it no longer; and on the eve of Pentecost we returned to Paris, where we barricaded our door; and Madame de Saint-Simon was quite unwell from the effects of grief and the violent constraint which had been put upon her.

After a week’s absence I yielded to the importunity of our friends and went back to Versailles by myself. At the end of the Sèvres bridge I met Marshal Boufflers, who stopped me, made me get out of my carriage, and drew me aside to talk to me privately. He had written to me that morning to say that my absence from the Court could not be prolonged with decency; he repeated the same thing now, adding that, in spite of the Duchess of Burgundy’s assurances, the King was uneasy lest I should disobey him. Thereupon he began to lecture me as if the question had only just arisen, giving me to understand clearly that a refusal would ruin me irretrievably; and he did it in so pointed a manner, assuring me repeatedly that he knew what he was talking about, and had his reasons for speaking as he did, that I could not doubt for a moment that he did so by the King’s express orders. He knew my mind was made up; he had written to me to go to Versailles, and I was on the road thither when he met me; why, then, should he stop me, lecture me, and threaten me—(for he told me, among other things, that I should be banished to a very distant place, where I should be very ill at ease, and have plenty of leisure for repentance)—unless he was obeying a positive command?

On arriving at Versailles I heard that the cause of the delay in giving out the appointment of a Lady of Honour was that the question of the Lady-in-Waiting was still unsettled. Madame de Saint-Simon had not dared to remain at Paris more than three days after I left; and during this suspense we were very uncomfortable at Versailles; stared at by everybody, and no doubt exposed to ill-natured remarks such as are always made freely about persons who form the topic of the day. I begged the Duke and Duchess of Orleans to bring the matter to an end as quickly as possible; but there was still a hitch about the Lady-in-Waiting. The Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon
wanted to have Madame de Cheverny; but, with all her merit, she had a repulsive face; and the King, who was a good deal influenced by personal appearance, could not bear to see her. She and her husband had suffered from scurvy in Denmark, where it is very common; they had left nearly all their teeth there, and I do not know that they would not have done better to leave them all. This defect, combined with a pimply complexion, was very unpleasing in a woman no longer young, though her face was full of intelligence; in short, the King could not be reconciled to it. Moreover, the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon made a mistake in pressing her claims too warmly; the King took it into his head that there was a cabal in her favour; and there was nothing he feared and disliked so much as cabals, though he was a continual prey to them without knowing it. So in the end he said positively that he could not bear to see Madame de Cheverny's face among his suite, and very frequently at his own table; and he decided to appoint Madame de la Vieuville.

The King announced Madame de Saint-Simon's appointment on Sunday, the 15th of June. The Duke of Orleans warned me, as soon as Mass was over, that he was about to do so; he also told me that, while he was talking the matter over before Mass with the King and Monseigneur, the King had said to him, apparently with some uneasiness: "But what about your friend? I know him; he is sometimes eccentric; will he not refuse?" Reassured by the Duke of Orleans' report of my allusion to Cardinal de Bouillon, the King had spoken of the hot-headed manner in which I had behaved on certain occasions; not going into details, and not unkindly, but as if he wished me to be careful; and no doubt he intended his nephew to repeat his words to me. The Duke of Orleans availed himself of this opening to say that, since this appointment had been talked about, people had probably been saying ill-natured things about me, as they had done at the time of the proposed mission to Rome; to which the King replied, good-naturedly, that such was the amiable practice of courtiers. Thereupon they had gone to Mass.

On his way back the King called to me in the Gallery, and told me to follow him into his room, as he wished to speak to me. He advanced to a little table against the wall,
at some distance from the other persons present, on the side nearest the Gallery from which he had entered. There he told me that he had selected Madame de Saint-Simon to be Lady of Honour to the future Duchess of Berry; that it was a special mark of his esteem for her virtue and merit to entrust to her charge, at the age of thirty-two, a Princess of such tender age and so nearly related to himself; moreover, by bringing me into closer access to himself he intended to show me that he was quite convinced of the sincerity with which I had spoken to him a few months ago. I made him a moderately low bow, and replied that I felt deeply the confidence placed in Madame de Saint-Simon at her age, and the honour he had conferred on her; but what afforded me most pleasure was His Majesty’s gracious assurance that he trusted me and was satisfied with my conduct. After this laconic reply, which, with all due respect, let him see my real sentiments about the appointment, he continued for some time to say the kindest things about both Madame de Saint-Simon and myself; for nobody better understood the art of making himself pleasant in this way, especially when he wanted any one to swallow a disagreeable morsel. Then, looking at me more attentively, he said, with a smile which he meant to be agreeable: “But you must keep your tongue in order.” This was said in a familiar way which seemed to demand a similar tone from me; I replied that I had been careful to keep it in order, especially for some time past, and I would continue to do so for the future. He smiled again at this, with a more satisfied expression; as much as to say that he understood, and was pleased with the kind of free manner I had adopted, which let him see that I was making a sacrifice, without offending his ears by any open allusion to it. Then, turning towards the rest of the company, he said in a loud but dignified voice: “The Duchess de Saint-Simon is appointed Lady of Honour to the future Duchess of Berry.”

I immediately went to Monseigneur, who was at the other end of the room, and said with a slight bow that I should shortly pay my respects to him at Meudon and in the meanwhile took this opportunity of making my bow. He returned my salute; and said, rather coldly, that he was pleased with the appointment, and that Madame de Saint-Simon would do very well. I intended to go next to the Duke of Burgundy, who was at some little distance; but he
came half-way to meet me, and, pressing my hand cordially, said I knew what a warm interest he had always taken in me, and he must tell me how delighted he was to hear of Madame de Saint-Simon's appointment. Still continuing to overwhelm me with kind remarks and praises of Madame de Saint-Simon, he led me to the further end of the room, where I had some difficulty in getting through the crowd, and making my escape into the Gallery. Here I was almost suffocated by the throng of people waiting to congratulate me; I thanked them politely, but with a serious air, for I disdained to show a joy which I did not feel; just as I had carefully avoided thanking either the King or Monseigneur.

I sent word at once to Madame de Saint-Simon that her appointment was declared; and, though the news was not unexpected, it came as a shock to her. After giving way to a few tears she had to make an effort, and went to the Duchess de Lausun's rooms to dress, after which the two sisters went to the Duchess of Burgundy, whom they found hastily dressing for dinner at Meudon; for Monseigneur often scolded her, with some justice, for arriving late. Her reception of Madame de Saint-Simon was kindness itself; when she rose to go to Mass she called her, and, taking her by the hand, led her the whole way to the chapel. She said that, although personally she was delighted at the appointment, she had done her best to avert it, because in helping a friend one must not consult one's own inclinations; but it had been extremely embarrassing for her, because, as she always hoped that Madame de Saint-Simon would some day succeed to the Duchess du Lude's office, she could not leave the King under the false impression that she had some personal objection to her. She could assure her, however, that she had done all she could to prevent the appointment, though very much against her will; but now it was settled she must say how delighted she was, not only on her own account and that of the young Princess, but on ours; for she really thought it was for our good, and would lead to better things. During the whole of the long walk to the chapel she continued to talk in the kindest manner, and Madame de Saint-Simon could hardly get in a word to express her thanks. She ended by saying that she would have conducted Madame de Saint-Simon to the King immediately after the service of the Mass if she had not been expected at Meudon.
Madame de Saint-Simon then went to Madame, who shed tears of joy on seeing her enter; for she had always held her in the highest esteem, though she only saw her on rare occasions of ceremony. At the time when Madame de la Vallière was appointed Lady of Honour, Madame had not refrained from saying at the King's supper-table that she was very sorry to hear it, but she never thought they would have sense enough to appoint Madame de Saint-Simon. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were not in their room; they were with Mademoiselle, where Madame de Saint-Simon found them. They were in the highest delight; and Mademoiselle told Madame de Lévi privately that this appointment made her happiness complete. The Duchess of Orleans did not offer to conduct Madame de Saint-Simon to the King, rather to our surprise; so she went with Madame de Lausun. The King received her in the most gracious and flattering manner, assuring her that he considered the young Princess most fortunate in being placed in such hands, and hoped she would profit by it; he prolonged the interview for more than a quarter of an hour, talking almost the whole time himself. Madame de Saint-Simon said little, expressing the most profound respect, but taking care, as I had done, to say nothing of thanks, except for the confidence placed in her.

In the evening she went to Madame de Maintenon's rooms, still with her sister. She had hardly begun to speak when Madame de Maintenon interrupted her by the most polite and flattering remarks, winding up by saying that the King and the future Duchess of Berry were to be congratulated on obtaining a Lady of Honour whose birth and dignity conferred so much honour on the appointment. The visit lasted only a short time, but it is impossible to describe Madame de Maintenon's cordiality. I was much surprised at her remarks about the honour conferred on the appointment by Madame de Saint-Simon's acceptance; still more so when we heard subsequently that she often said the same thing, even to the Duchess of Berry herself on more than one occasion. It cannot be denied that certain truths, in spite of all efforts to conceal them, will make themselves felt even in the most unlikely quarters.

In the afternoon I went with the Duke de Lausun to Meudon, where Monseigneur received me more graciously and cordially than he had done in the morning. When I
got back I was warned, most seriously, that I must go to see Madame de Maintenon. I had never set foot in her rooms, except when I went there with the crowd on the occasion of the Duchess de Noailles' marriage; we had never had any acquaintance with her, or sought it in any way, and I did not even know how her rooms were arranged. However, I had to do as I was advised, and accordingly went there the same evening. As soon as my name was announced I was admitted; I was obliged to ask the servant to conduct me to Madame de Maintenon, and he led me along like a blind man. I found her lying in her recess; with her were the Chancellor's wife, the Maréchale de Noailles, and Madame de Saint-Géran, none of whom had any terrors for me, and Madame de Caylus. As I drew near she relieved my embarrassment by speaking first; she said she must congratulate me on my good fortune in having a wife of such merit as to have been chosen at the age of thirty-two to be Lady of Honour to a Princess of fifteen. Every one, she added, approved of the appointment—a very rare thing, which she thought it must be pleasant for a husband to know. I replied that I could not thank her sufficiently for her kind expressions about Madame de Saint-Simon; then, looking at the rest of the company, I said, in an easy way, that I thought the shortest visits were the most respectful, and thereupon made my farewell bow. Madame de Maintenon bowed, and said she hoped I fully appreciated my happiness in having such a wife; adding, with an agreeable smile, that I must go and talk to Madame de Noailles, who had told her when I came in that she wanted to see me on business; and she said something to her, in a joking way, about her always carrying off her guests. Madame de Noailles did, in fact, lay hold of me as I was going out, and began talking about some appointment on my property which was vacant. I told her that anywhere else I would talk to her as much as she pleased; but she must let me get out of that place, where I felt as if I was at the bottom of a pond. We both laughed; and so ended this great visit. I never set foot there again.

The King, although we asked for nothing either directly or indirectly, did all he could to make our new position more tolerable. He announced that, so long as the Duke of Berry continued to be grandson or son to the reigning Sovereign, the appointments of the Duchess du Lude and Madame de
Saint-Simon would be on an equal footing. The pay was also to be the same, namely, 20,000 livres: and the new Lady-in-Waiting was also to be on the same footing as Madame de Maillé, with a salary of 9,000 livres. The King also took pains to provide us with the most agreeable rooms at Versailles; for this purpose he dislodged d'Antin and the Duchess Sforza, throwing their two suites into one for us; he also provided us with kitchens in the court below—a very rare convenience in the château—because he knew we were in the habit of giving dinners and supper-parties. At the same time, he announced that the rest of the future Duchess of Berry's household would be on the same footing as that of Madame; so that all the distinction was for the Lady of Honour and the Lady-in-Waiting; and this gave rise to fresh talk and comment.

If I have dwelt at such length on the story of the intrigues which led to the marriage, and of what occurred with regard to Madame de Saint-Simon's appointment, it has not been altogether on account of my personal interest in these affairs; the description of the characters and objects of the various personages, and the growth and development of their cabals, seemed to me to afford so curious and interesting a picture of the inner life of the Court that it would be a pity to pass them over too lightly.

Madame de la Vieuville's appointment was announced on the same day, and she came to Versailles in the evening. She met with a cold reception everywhere, even from Monseigneur, though presented to him by Madame d'Espinoy. Madame de Maintenon cut her thanks short by telling her that she owed her none, for her appointment was entirely the King's own doing. Her family were natives of Picardy of the name of Chaussée-d'Eu; she was poor, good-looking, and well-conducted, though far from clever, and had been brought up in the household of Madame de Nemours. Here M. de la Vieuville, a widower with a family, fell in love with her and married her. She was an intimate friend of Madame de Roquelaure, and on good terms with Madame de Ventadour, Madame d'Elbœuf, Madame d'Espinoy, and Made-moielle de Lillebonne. She was always bent on pleasing everybody, with unstinted flattery, and had a great talent for insinuating herself into the confidence of any one who, she thought, might be useful; but beyond that she had no sort of ability. She was much taken up with her domestic
affairs, which were in great disorder; she was often to be seen at Court, knocking at every door; but rarely invited to Marly. She came repeatedly to call on Madame de Saint-Simon, with many compliments and expressions of respect. We did not know her at all; but believed her to be a gentle, good-natured woman, and we hoped we might get on with her as well as with any one else. We learnt by experience, however, that self-interest and meanness, with no good sense to counterbalance them, do not make a person an agreeable companion. The poor woman conducted herself in such a way that she had to be pulled up pretty sharply, which caused her to lose her head completely. Nobody pitied her or took her side; and in the end she had to beg Madame de Saint-Simon’s pardon, with humble submission and many tears. Her husband was a sort of clumsy hog, tiresome to the last degree, who saw no one at Court; and no one ever spoke to him, though he was first cousin to the Maréchal de Noailles. He was descended from a family of petty gentlemen in Brittany, of the name of Coskaer; nobody ever heard of them before the year 1500, when they came to France with Anne of Brittany. I do not know any reason for their assumption of the name and arms of La Vieuville, except that these are unquestionably better than their own. They gained nothing by it; for that good old family of Artois and Flanders never recognised them, and every one knows that there is in reality no connection whatever.

The Duke of Orleans, in the midst of his joy, was troubled about the Spanish Court; for he could not doubt that the marriage would be very distasteful there on his account. He could hardly avoid sending a formal notification; but, being in a difficulty about it, he ventured to consult the King, who was himself somewhat embarrassed. After considering the matter for some days, he advised him simply to follow the usual custom. The Duke of Orleans therefore sent letters to the King and Queen of Spain, who wrote in reply to the Duchess, but not a word to him. The Duke of Alba came pointedly to pay a visit of congratulation to the Duchess of Orleans on a day when he knew the Duke would be at Paris, and ostentatiously ignored him altogether. The Duke of Orleans was very much vexed and hurt, but he dared not show any sign of displeasure.

The dispensation was expected at any moment, and arrangements were being made for the immediate celebration
of the marriage. At ceremonies of this kind, beginning with that of the betrothal, the bride wears a train, such as I described not long ago; and this is borne by a young lady of equal rank, if one can be found; if not, by one as near that rank as possible. This ceremony was formerly observed at the weddings of Duchesses also; but of late they have allowed it to fall into desuetude. In this case there was no Daughter or Granddaughter of France to bear the bride's train; consequently the duty devolved on Mademoiselle de Bourbon, as senior Princess of the Blood; for the other daughters of the Duke of Orleans, who ranked before her, were in a convent at Chelles. It is easy to imagine the feelings of Madame la Duchesse, who had hoped to make this great match for her own daughter, in which case Mademoiselle would have been the train-bearer. They could not endure the thought of such humiliation; Madame la Duchesse gave out openly that the bride had better dispense with a train, for no one would carry it for her. The Court was watching with malignant curiosity to see what would come of this rising quarrel, when the King intervened. Although he had sanctioned the marriage he did not wish to vex Madame la Duchesse unnecessarily; so he asked the Duke of Orleans whether he would not let his younger daughters come to Versailles for their sister's wedding. The Duke of Orleans, always easy-going and absolutely incapable of hatred or malice, forgot all the advice he had received and his own promises to his Duchess, and, instead of pleading the expense, or, better still, the danger of unsettling their minds, he consented to let them come. I really believe that a weak desire to give them pleasure had a good deal to do with this ill-timed concession. The Duchess of Orleans was very much annoyed; by way of concealing the real reason for the return of her daughters, she gave out that it was necessary for them to be baptized, for hitherto they had merely been sprinkled; and the baptismal ceremony was accordingly performed two days before the betrothal. So the bride's train was borne by Mademoiselle de Chartres, who afterwards became Abbess of Chelles.

The marriage was celebrated on Sunday, the 6th of July, by the Grand Almoner, Cardinal de Janson, in the presence of a most distinguished company. The tribunes of the chapel were filled with a brilliant crowd, among whom I took
my place, to feast my eyes the more easily on the ceremony below. When it was over, and the party were leaving the chapel, the bride made a show of reluctance, rather gracefully, to taking precedence of Madame; till at last Madame took her by the shoulders and made her go first. In the evening the King was present at a supper given by the Duchess of Burgundy, in the room adjoining his apartments which is lighted by an *œil-de-bœuf*; the guests, twenty-eight in number, were arranged in the order of their precedence, at a horse-shoe table, the King sitting at the head of it by himself in his arm-chair, with his *cadenas* in front of him. After supper the King went immediately to the apartments of the bridal pair, in the new wing, followed by the whole Court, both men and ladies, who had been waiting for him, drawn up in rows along the Gallery. Cardinal de Janson blessed the nuptial bed. The ceremony of the *coucher* did not last long. The King gave the skirt to the Duke of Berry; the right of handing it to him was claimed by M. de Bouillon as Grand Chamberlain, but the King decided in favour of M. de Beauvilliers, as governor. I was present, holding the candlestick, and I was surprised to see that M. de Bouillon remained in the room while M. de Beauvilliers performed this function. The Duchess of Burgundy gave the chemise to the bride; it was handed to her by Madame de Saint-Simon, to whom the King spoke in a most gracious manner. When the newly married pair were in bed the curtains were drawn by M. de Beauvilliers and Madame de Saint-Simon, who could not refrain from laughing a little at the idea of their performing such a function together.

Next morning, at the Duchess of Berry’s toilet, Madame de Saint-Simon presented the whole Court, men and ladies, to her, as to a stranger; causing her to kiss all persons of title. After dinner, play went on, as on the previous day, in the room at the end of the Gallery adjoining the Duchess of Burgundy’s apartments. The King had ordered all ladies to appear in full dress to receive the Queen and Princess-Royal of England, who went first to visit Monseigneur, who was playing cards in the Princess of Conti’s rooms; then to Madame de Maintenon’s rooms, where they found the King; and, lastly, to the newly-married pair; after which they returned to Chaillot. The King of England was serving with the Army of Flanders, as in the previous year. The Queen of England had always hoped that the
Duke of Berry would marry her daughter; and indeed the match had been talked of, as I think I have mentioned already. They were in despair at this marriage, for they did not make sufficient allowance for the situation of our public affairs. For this reason the King wished to spare them the sight of the wedding, and as much as possible of subsequent ceremonial.

Madame la Duchessee was also spared this spectacle, on account of her deep mourning. Monseigneur told Madame de Saint-Simon that Madame la Duchessee would be much obliged if she could arrange a time for her to visit the Duchess of Berry in private, because of her mourning; and this was done at once. The visit was short; Madame la Duchesse overwhelmed Madame de Saint-Simon with apologies for not having called upon her, giving her recent widowhood as an excuse. On the following Wednesday the Court went to Marly. The King, who had made the bride a present of jewels, of no great value, gave nothing to the Duke of Berry; so that during the first days of the stay at Marly he was unable to play cards for want of money. The Duchess of Burgundy represented the matter to the King, whose own finances were at a low ebb. He consulted her as to whether it was worth while to give him 500 pistoles, which was all he could spare; and, as she thought with some reason that it would be better for the Duke of Berry to have even that small sum than to be unable to play at all, he did give them, with some apologies about the bad times.

When the Court moved to Marly the Duchess of Berry's sister went back to Chelles, and Madame de Maré was emancipated from her office of governess to the children of the Duke of Orleans. The King and Madame de Maintenon had hoped that she would be Lady-in-Waiting to the Duchess of Berry, whom she had brought up, and to whom she seemed strongly attached; but she refused the post with the greatest determination, in spite of the repeated entreaties of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, and even of Madame de Maintenon herself; pleading her age, the state of her health, and her desire for repose. She retired, therefore, to the regret of everybody, and to ours especially; for she was my relation, and had always been our intimate friend. The King gave her a pension of 2,000 crowns, with a lodging in the Luxembourg; she was, moreover, allowed
to retain her rooms at the Palais-Royal and St. Cloud, with the salary of 12,000 livres paid her by the Duke of Orleans and the honorary title of governess to his children.

We soon found out the cause of her obstinate refusal to remain with the Duchess of Berry. The more that Princess let her real character be known (and she took very little trouble to conceal it) the more convinced we were that Madame de Maré was right. We were amazed at the care and prudence which had prevented anything leaking out sooner, for it was nothing less than a miracle; we had to confess how completely in the dark one works for the objects one desires most passionately; and we lamented over our success in an affair which, far from undertaking and pushing as I had done, I would have opposed with all my might, even if Mademoiselle de Bourbon were to profit by my services and never hear of them, had I foreseen the tenth part—what am I saying?—had I foreseen the thousandth part, of what we had unfortunately to witness afterwards. I shall say no more on this subject at present, and in the future I shall mention only what it is impossible to conceal. I only allude to it now because the tendencies which developed later on in so many strange and shocking ways began to show themselves even during this first visit to Marly.
CHAPTER IV

1710

Villars in Flanders—His reports of the wretched state of the army badly received—His alarm—He is accused of missing a chance of victory—Berwick sent to report—He insists on a reward beforehand—A peerage settled on his second son—He chooses a ridiculous title, Duke of Fitz-James—His reception in Parliament—Unpleasant remarks about bastards—Caumartin's want of tact—Consecration of the new chapel—Death of Madame de la Vallière—Insulting remark of Villars about the Duchess of Burgundy's ladies—Heudicourt reports it—Anger of Villars, who attacks Heudicourt publicly—The "good little man"—Ravignan captures a valuable convoy near Ypres—Loss of Aire and St. Venant—Cardinal de Bouillon deserts to the enemy—The King's anger—Difficulty of punishing a Cardinal—Folly of appointing them—The Duke de Mortemart and his gambling debts—The Archbishop of Arles translated to Reims—The Duchess of Berry disgraces herself at a supper-party—Vendôme leaves for Spain—Campaign in that country—Spaniards defeated at Saragossa—Allies capture Madrid—Hostility of the inhabitants—Madrid evacuated—Vendôme marches on Brihuega—Stanhope forced to surrender—Allies defeated at Villaviciosa—Gerona invested.

I MUST now go back a little, for there are some matters which I postponed, in order to relate the story of the marriage without interruption.

The King appointed the same Generals to the command of the various armies. Villars was destined for Flanders; Marshal de Montesquiou had been in command there during the winter, and was to act as second in command during the campaign. Villars was uneasy at the prospect before him; having attained the summit of his ambition, loaded as he was with favours, dignities, and riches, he thought that, for the first time in his life, he could afford to state some unpleasant truths, which might save him from blame in case things went wrong. He therefore complained bitterly to Desmarests and Voysin of the wretched condition of the fortified places and garrisons; the lack of money, provisions, and all necessaries for a campaign; and the miserable plight of the army, both officers and men. Finding that his representations produced no effect he ventured
to carry them to the King and Madame de Maintenon, laying before them incontestable proofs of the truth of his statements. They were startled and horrified at the picture so suddenly placed before them, and angry at hearing such language from Villars, for hitherto he had always assured them that everything was in good order. Nothing but his bold and confident lies had made them regard him as their last resource; they had given him everything he asked for, simply because he was the only General who never complained, never raised difficulties, and led them to hope that he was able to accomplish great things. Now that he spoke the same language as all the rest their confidence in his prowess vanished; they began to see, what other people had long seen, that he was a ridiculous, lying braggart; they regretted having raised him so rapidly to such a pinnacle, and they allowed their sentiments to be perceived, not only by him, but by others.

Villars, in his turn, was alarmed. His design was to show that only a General in full health could deal with such a state of things as he had described, so that, under pretext of his wound, he might be allowed to retire and enjoy his fortune. But he wanted to retain all his favour and influence, so that he might be consulted about the campaign, and keep up his credit with the King by recommending bold enterprises, the execution of which would be entrusted to others. When he realised that he was on the point of being deprived of his command, and would have to retire into private life, discredited and friendless, he suddenly changed his note, and, with his usual effrontery, began once more to make light of dangers and difficulties, and declare himself ready for anything. The difficulty of finding another General saved him; he then gave himself out as a Roman hero, hastening to the rescue of his King and country at the sacrifice of his health and well-earned repose, in spite of a wound which almost disabled him from sitting on horseback. Indeed, he bragged so much about his self-sacrifice in giving up a visit to some waters which, he said, would have saved him from being a cripple for life, that the Duke de Guiche, who had retired to the same waters with a wound in his foot, also received at Malplaquet, but less severe than Villars', took his words as a personal affront, and never forgave him.

Prince Eugène and the Duke of Marlborough determined
to take advantage of the wretched state of our army and push their conquests as far as possible. They began by laying siege to Douai, where Albergotti, who had a good garrison and plenty of supplies, prepared for a stout defence. M. le Duc and the King of England were with our army; the latter, as before, under the style of the Chevalier de St. Georges. The King, annoyed by his successive defeats, was bent on gaining a victory, in hopes of influencing the shameful negotiations which were dragging on at Gertruden-berg. The enemy had now taken up a strong position; but Villars had let slip a good opportunity of beating them immediately after his arrival, although it had been pointed out to him by Marshal de Montesquiu and other Generals. The whole army cried out against this unfortunate mistake, and the quarrels between the two Marshals brought about a state of things very detrimental to the public service. To put an end to the crisis, the King determined to send the Duke of Berwick to Flanders, to decide whether it was advisable to attack the enemy in their position or not; and he was to return at once with his report.

But nowadays no one could be found to perform a service without making sure of some sort of reward beforehand, and Berwick was no exception. This was the Golden Age of bastardy. Berwick was only eighteen years old when he came to France with James II after the English Revolution in 1688; at the age of twenty-two he became a Lieutenant-General, and served as such in Flanders; at thirty-three he commanded the French army in Spain, and after his victory at Almanza was deservedly made a Grandee of Spain and a Knight of the Golden Fleece; he was not thirty-six when he became a Marshal of France. He was also a Knight of the Garter and an English duke; and though these Dukes have no rank in France, the King had granted it to such as had followed King James into exile. This was sufficiently rapid promotion under a King who, as a rule, looked upon men of thirty as children; but he thought bastards were like the gods, unaffected by age.

Berwick had asked, more than a year ago, to be made a Duke and Peer. There were times when the King was extremely lavish with that dignity, but he had occasional fits of stinginess as well; Berwick happened to come upon him in one of these moods, and his request was refused. Now that he felt his services were required he renewed it,
and, to avoid letting him start in an ill-humour, the King gave him his dukedom. He had one son by his first wife, and several by his second, besides daughters. He was always looking forward to a return to England, as the Jews do to the coming of the Messiah. His mother was sister to the Duke of Marlborough, with whom he kept up a secret correspondence, with the approval of our King and of the King of England; and, though they were all three taken in, it helped Berwick to maintain a connection with England. He always hoped to be allowed to return to that country, even under the new Government; and for this reason he asked, and obtained, the unprecedented favour of being allowed to settle his French peerage on his second son. He intended that his eldest son should succeed to the dukedom of Berwick and his English property, and his third was to inherit his Grandeeship of Spain. But his English projects came to nothing, so he settled the dignity of Grandee of Spain on his eldest son, and sent him to that country, where he married the sister and heiress of the Duke of Veragua. For the second son he bought Warties, a moderate-sized property near Clermont, and had it erected into a Duchy, under the barbarous and shameful title of Fitz-James. The King, though he allowed the transaction itself to pass, was shocked at this name, and, in my presence, asked the Duke of Berwick for an explanation. He gave it without the slightest embarrassment; and here it is.

The Kings of England, when they acknowledge their illegitimate sons, give them a name and a coat of arms which they transmit to their posterity. The arms are always the royal arms of England, debruised by some mark of bastardy; the family name varies; thus the Duke of Richmond, bastard of Charles II, is called Lennox; the Dukes of Cleveland and Grafton, sons of the same King, are called Fitzroy, which means King’s son; and the family name of the Duke of Berwick, son of James II, is Fitz-James, that is, Son of James; so that the name he gave his French duchy is Son of James, and its proprietor for the time being is the Duke of Son of James. If this title was expressed in French it would be impossible to help laughing at it; and it is scandalous that French people should be forced to use it in its English form. However, the Parliament dared not remonstrate, or perhaps disdained
to do so; the title was duly registered, as was the clause settling the dignity on the second son; and Berwick, who would not stir till the business was finished, took his departure for Flanders. After examining the locality, and hearing the evidence of the Generals, he reported that the enemy was now so strongly posted that it was not advisable to attack him, but that Villars had let slip a good opportunity of attacking earlier. The King was dismayed at this report, and letters received from the army made public opinion run very strongly against that swaggering braggart, Villars.

The Duke of Berwick remained only twenty-four hours at Court on his return, as he proceeded at once to Dauphiné, to assume the command in that province. It was not till the following December that he could be received in Parliament as a Duke and Peer; but I will anticipate a little, to record a rather queer thing which happened on that occasion. We attended the ceremony in a body; and it was singular to observe that at our head were a number of bastards in the first and second degree, while a bastard of England brought up our rear. It made one reflect on the constant, unvarying manner in which the laws are maintained in that island, while here everything may be turned upside down at a nod from the Sovereign. However, after the ceremony of reception, the Duke de Tresmes, as Governor of Paris, gave a dinner in honour of the Duke of Berwick, at which most of the Dukes were present, with other persons of distinction, among them Caumartin. He was a Conseiller d'État and Intendant of Finance; a great friend of the Duke de Tresmes, whose son had married his niece; well known at Court and in society. He had a great store of curious and entertaining knowledge; was a great talker, and talked cleverly; a conceited person, with a fine figure, and an imposing air of fatuity; at bottom, however, he was a good sort of man, and even knew how to behave respectfully, after his own fashion. In some strange fit of absence of mind he began at the dinner-table to tell a long story of a trial over which he had presided, in which a bastard was interested, and dilated on the difficult legal position of persons of that birth; he explained the severe laws relating to them, to which he gave his emphatic approval. This discourse lasted nearly three-quarters of an hour, amidst an embarrassed silence, which
Caumartin took as a tribute to his powers as a story-teller. The Duke de Tresmes tried several times to interrupt him; but he raised his voice and went on. The guests sat with downcast eyes, hardly venturing to eat or drink, and not daring to look at each other for fear of laughing. The Duke of Berwick, to whom, as the principal guest, Caumartin frequently addressed his discourse, saw that he had quite forgotten who he was, and took no offence; but poor Tresmes was in such a state of mind that the perspiration ran down his face. I confess I was extremely amused at this long and absurd scene; and could not help reflecting on the contrast between the grandeur of the bastards, exemplified by the reception of the morning and by that very dinner, and the real infamy and degradation of their position, as depicted with so much force and eloquence by Caumartin.

The new chapel having been completed at last, and duly admired by the King and courtiers, a dispute arose as to who should consecrate it. Cardinal de Janson contended that it was exempt from the jurisdiction of the Ordinary; and that he ought to perform the ceremony as Grand Almoner. Cardinal de Noailles, on the other hand, as Archbishop of the diocese, thought it was his duty, alleging that he had officiated in the chapel in the King's presence, having his cross borne before him; and that at all marriages, baptisms, and funerals the rector of Versailles had been in attendance, wearing his stole. He carried his point, for he was still on good terms with the King and Madame de Maintenon; and he consecrated the new chapel on the 5th of June, in the presence of the Duke of Burgundy. The old one was then disused, and soon afterwards pulled down. The dispute among the clergy on this occasion was heated, but the two Cardinals behaved with politeness and moderation. The chapel clergy still maintained their pretensions in spite of the King's decision, though the rector of Versailles was present in his stole at the Duke of Berry's marriage, and at all similar functions afterwards. But no Archbishop of Paris has since officiated in the chapel on account of the difficulty about his cross, notwithstanding the precedent of Cardinal de Noailles.

Madame de la Vallière died about this time in the Carmelite convent, where she had become a nun in 1675, at the age of thirty-one, under the name of Sister Marie de
la Miséricorde. The story of her fortunes and her shame does not come within the scope of these Memoirs; nor can I do more than allude to her modest disposition and kind heart, to her efforts to dissuade the King from perpetuating the memory of her sin by legitimating her children; to her sufferings at the hands of Madame de Montespan, and her two attempts to escape from the Court; to her touching farewell to the Queen, whom she had always treated with respect and forbearance, and whose forgiveness she humbly begged on her knees in the presence of the whole Court; or to the life of austerity and severe penance which she afterwards led in the convent. The Princess of Conti always treated her with the most dutiful attentions, which, however, she avoided as much as possible. Her constitution was naturally delicate, and had been much impaired by her rigorous penances. It was discovered that she had abstained entirely from drinking during a whole year, which caused a very serious illness. Her infirmities increased, and at last she died of a rupture, in great pain. Her last illness was very short, and the Princess of Conti only arrived just in time to see her expire. The grief of the Princess was very acute, but she soon got over it. She received visits of condolence from the whole Court, and expected one from the King, which, however, he did not pay; to the general surprise.

He had preserved a sort of dry regard for Madame de la Vallière, which he sometimes expressed, but only briefly and on rare occasions. He was not much affected on hearing of her death; he said she had been dead for him since the day she entered the convent. Madame de Montespan's children were deeply mortified by the visits paid to the Princess of Conti, and still more so when they saw her go into deep mourning for a simple nun, although she was her mother; for their own mother could not be avowed, and they had not ventured to assume the slightest sign of mourning when she died. The King could not refuse this favour to the Princess of Conti, who begged for it most urgently, though it was not much to his taste. The other bastards had to submit in silence to this triumph of simple adultery over the double adultery from which they sprang; but it vexed them cruelly, for it drew the attention of the whole world to the monstrous and infamous stain on their birth.
Marshal de Joyeuse also died, over eighty years of age. He looked exactly like a King of the Huns, with a haughty and noble air; great bravery, and no little ability. He was an excellent General of cavalry, so long as he had only a wing to command; but if, by any chance, he found himself in charge of an army he lost his head, and his manners were so rough and brutal that he caused his subordinates to lose theirs. He was a sort of royster ing brigand, who plundered wherever he could, and spent the proceeds magnificently on good cheer. He had been made Governor of Metz and the surrounding country on the death of the Duke de la Ferté; this post was at once given to Marshal Villars, to make up for the loss of Fribourg.

In the meantime Albergotti was defending Douai vigorously. The Duke de Mortemart headed a sortie which caused great disorder in the enemy’s trenches, with little loss on our side. On the 20th of June an important action took place; the enemy had taken possession of a half-moon, but were vigorously driven out again by Dreux and the Duke de Mortemart. They returned to the assault, when one of our mines exploded and blew nearly 2,000 of them into the air. In the end, however, they established themselves in the angle of the work, and on the 23rd Albergotti beat the chamade; for the breach was wide enough to admit two battalions abreast. The terms of the capitulation, which were such as Albergotti demanded, were carried to the King by the Duke de Mortemart. The enemy then laid siege to Béthune, which capitulated on the 28th of August, after a brave defence.

An absurd affair happened which caused a good deal of talk, both in the army and at Court. Marshal Villars, to ease his wounded knee, or perhaps because he liked to give himself airs, used to ride with his leg thrown over the horse’s neck, almost like a lady on a side-saddle. One day, in a moment of impatience, he forgot himself so far as to say that he was sick of sitting on horseback like those who went out riding with the Duchess of Burgundy; the persons alluded to, I may observe in passing, being young ladies of the Court, including the daughters of Madame la Duchesse. Such a speech, made in public by an unpopular commander, was not long in flying from one end of the camp to the other, and thence to Paris and the Court.

The riding ladies were mortally offended, and the Duchess
of Burgundy took up their cause. Villars soon heard of it, and was very uneasy at the thought of having raised up this formidable band of fresh enemies; for he had quite enough on his hands already. He set himself to work to find out the tale-bearer, and was extremely angry when he discovered that it was Heudicourt; for, in order to curry favour with his mother, Madame de Maintenon's bad angel, he had received him into his household, protected him, and—a very remarkable thing indeed for him—not only lent, but frequently given him, money.

Old Madame Heudicourt was dead, but Heudicourt, to whom Madame de Maintenon still extended her favour for her sake, remained with Villars, and was treated by him as a member of his family. He was a clever rascal, extremely witty and amusing, with a knack of hitting off people's absurdities in verses which it was impossible to forget; being spoilt by the favour showered upon him, he spared nobody, and his sarcastic tongue caused him to be generally feared. He was utterly unprincipled; a drunkard and a debauchee; but by no means a coward. His face was hideous, like that of a nasty satyr; he was quite conscious of it, and knew that he could expect no successes in love, so he used to lend a helping hand in the love intrigues of others; and, as he was thoroughly trustworthy in this honourable profession, he had made many friends about the Court, especially among the ladies. By way of contrast to his real disposition they used always to call him the "good little man"; and this good little man had the history of all the intrigues of gallantry at his fingers' ends, and there were few in which he did not lend his assistance. The ladies of the Court used to vie with each other to get him to their houses, and not one of them, not even the very highest, dared quarrel with him. This tacit protection was well known, and of course made him still more audacious; so that Villars was much embarrassed to know how to deal with him; however, he determined on a bold stroke.

He sent for fifteen or sixteen of the principal Generals and other persons of distinction in the army, and Heudicourt among them. When he heard that they were all there, he left his room and went to them, accompanied by a number of other persons, such as always swarm about headquarters, who had come there by chance; for he wished the scene to be as public as possible. He then asked the
Generals, one by one, if they remembered his saying such and such a thing, which he repeated. Albergotti cunningly answered first, to the effect that he remembered Villars referring that way to the vivandières and other women who followed the army, but not to any one else. Nangis, the Prince de Rohan, and others, delighted to find this way out of the difficulty, backed up Albergotti and confirmed what he said. Then Villars broke out into violent language against the inventor of such a cruel calumny and the tale-bearer who had reported it to the Court, and, turning to Heudicourt, denounced him to his face. The "good little man," who had not expected such a scene, was strangely taken aback. He tried to deny it, but Villars produced undeniable proofs. He then had the audacity to go up to Villars and attempt to speak to him in a low voice; but the Marshal, drawing back indignantly, told him to speak up, for he would have no private dealings with blackguards of his sort. Then Heudicourt, regaining his presence of mind and his effrontery, declared that all present knew that Villars had used the very words he had repeated, though none of them dared offend him by saying so to his face; he might have done wrong, he added, in mentioning what he had heard in his letters; but the Marshal could not suppose that words spoken in a public place before so many persons, could remain secret; and there was no particular harm in his repeating them, since many others might have done so. The Marshal was furious at this bold reply, and retorted that, even if Heudicourt's story had been true, it was disgraceful of him to tell it, considering his many personal obligations to him. With that he turned him out of the room; and in a few minutes afterwards had him arrested and conducted to Calais.

This violent scene caused a great sensation at Court, where the Marshal's conduct was generally approved. The King announced that he left him to deal with Heudicourt as he pleased; Madame de Maintenon and the Duchess of Burgundy that they declined to interfere; even Heudicourt's friends said his behaviour was indefensible. But before long the wind changed. After the first surprise, the "good little man's" excuse began to seem reasonable to ladies who had their own reasons for not wishing to offend him; public opinion in the army was also favourable to him, for Villars was not liked there. Several of the per-
sons whom the Marshal had interrogated let it be understood that they had been taken by surprise, and had been unwilling to commit themselves. It was argued that Villars’ words could not have been meant to apply to the *vivandières* and other camp-followers, for they rode cross-legged like men, not on side-saddles like most ladies, and like all those who rode with the Duchess of Burgundy. So it turned out that when Heudicourt left Calais, where his imprisonment was not of long duration, he became once more the “good little man” in the fashion, in spite of the Marshal’s displeasure.

So many unpleasant things happened to the Marshal during this campaign that he obtained permission to go to Bourbonne for the waters; and Harcourt, who had only just arrived at Strasbourgh after taking the same waters at his leisure, was recalled and sent to Flanders in Villars’ place. He travelled slowly, and spent a month in Paris; so that the season was far advanced when he took up his new command. He found desertion rife in the army; and both Aire and St. Venant were besieged by the enemy. A brilliant action, however, took place soon after his arrival; Chevilly, the commandant of Ypres, heard that a valuable convoy was to leave Ghent with supplies for the enemy. He sent Ravignan with 2,500 men to intercept it. It consisted of 45 barges loaded with ammunition and provisions, escorted by 800 infantry, all English, and 500 cavalry. Ravignan fell on them roughly near Vive St. Eloi; the cavalry took to flight, and the infantry were all killed or captured. Ravignan burnt the barges and blew up an immense quantity of powder, which destroyed the village. It was calculated that the loss to the enemy amounted to nearly 3,000,000 livres. In the meantime Goesbriant was making a stout defence at Aire, where there was much severe fighting; but he was forced to surrender on the 8th of November. St. Venant had capitulated some time before. And so ended the campaign in Flanders, the last in which the Duke of Marlborough took the field.

Cardinal de Bouillon had long been fretting under his banishment, and saw no prospect of his sentence being reconsidered. He had been engaged for a long time in a series of disputes and lawsuits with the monks of Cluni; and the case, after coming before several Courts, was finally decided against him by the King in Council. This was the last
drop which caused his cup of bitterness to overflow, and
made him carry out a design which he had been meditating
for some time. As he had leave to visit any of his abbeyes,
he went to Arras; under pretence of inspecting the Abbey
of St. Waast in that neighbourhood, he drove out in his
carriage, mounted a horse which was waiting for him, and
rode off in the direction of the enemy, where he had made
arrangements for a party of cavalry to meet him. His
flight was discovered before he had gone very far, and a
detachment sent after him from Arras; he was very nearly
cought, but, after several adventures, he met with the party
of cavalry, under the command of his nephew, the Prince
d’Auvergne, and arrived safely at the enemy’s headquarters.
Here he was received with great distinction by Prince
Eugène and the Duke of Marlborough, who presented the
principal officers in the army to him, asked him to choose
the parole and countersign, and, in short, did the honours
in such a way as to raise his spirits marvellously. He
repaid them by welcome descriptions of the misery prev-
ailing in France, which his frequent journeys in different
provinces had brought particularly to his notice; the
genereal discontent with the Government; the exhaustion of
the country, and the impossibility of our continuing the war
much longer. He omitted nothing which perfidy and in-
gratitude could suggest; for the same spirit of treason and
treachery was alive in him which always inspired his ancestors,
and procured for them immense fortunes and high position
without satisfying either themselves or their posterity.

His flight was announced to the King by a letter which
he left on his table at Arras; a monstrous combination of
insolence and folly, in which he told the King that he was
about to resume the independence to which he was entitled
as a foreign Prince, son of a reigning Sovereign, and a
Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church; but which he had
voluntarily surrendered for a time when he took two oaths
of allegiance to His Majesty: the first as Grand Almoner;
the second as one of the nine prelates, Commanders of the
Order of the Holy Ghost. He added that he now resigned
these offices, and sent back the cross and ribbon of the
Order; which, he said, out of respect for His Majesty, he
had worn under his clothes since he had been forbidden,
without trial or being allowed to say anything in his own
defence, to wear them openly.
I will not go into a discussion respecting the nature of the fiefs of Sedan and Bouillon, or the manner in which they came into the Cardinal's family; it is enough to say that neither his father nor his grandfather was ever a foreign Prince, much less a Sovereign; and that his resignation of his office left him just where he was before, namely, a gentleman of Auvergne, of the name of La Tour; and consequently the King's subject, like all the other gentlemen of that province. It is true that his father had, in spite of the opposition of the whole body of the nobility, obtained from the King the nominal rank of foreign Prince (which, however, the Parliament steadily refused to recognise); this was a favour which the King had a right to bestow, but which in no wise released the recipient from the allegiance and duties of a subject.

The King received this letter on the 24th of May, and, though of no more real consequence than the sting of a gnat to an elephant, it made him extremely angry. He sent it to Daguesseau, the Public Prosecutor, ordering him to lay it before the Parliament, and request that body to take the necessary steps to prosecute Cardinal de Bouillon for high treason; at the same time he issued an order confiscating all the Cardinal's temporal property. He also wrote to Cardinal de la Trémouille, his Minister at the Court of Rome, announcing his intention of bringing Cardinal de Bouillon to justice. This letter went too much into details of the King's grievances against the Cardinal, and was generally condemned as lacking in dignity; moreover, considering the position which Cardinals had usurped, it was not likely that the Court of Rome could be induced to approve of the prosecution of one who was not only a member of that body, but Doyen of the Sacred College. The only effect was to swell Cardinal de Bouillon's pride to a higher pitch than ever; he wrote to President de Maisons a letter even more insolent than that which he had addressed to the King, declaring that no Cardinal could, in any case whatever, be brought before a secular tribunal; the only Court to which he was amenable, he said, was that of the Pope himself, acting in conjunction with the whole of the Sacred College.

The Parliament at once proceeded to issue warrants for the arrest of Cardinal de Bouillon, of a secretary of his named de Certes, and of a Jesuit who had been mixed up in his intrigues. But when it was proposed to go further,
so many difficulties of procedure arose, connected with that immunity of the Cardinals which Kings have allowed to grow up, that, after all this fuss, the matter was quietly allowed to drop, for fear of giving offence at Rome. A good lesson for our Kings, who, instead of raising up a powerful and useful party for themselves at Rome by giving their nominations to Italians, choose to elevate their own subjects to a dangerous degree of power—persons perfectly useless to them at Rome, because they have neither connections nor friends there, and indeed never go there. All they do is to lay their hands on benefices worth perhaps 300,000 or 400,000 livres a year, a tenth part of which would be ample reward for an Italian. A French Cardinal is the Pope's man against the King, the State, and the Church of France; he makes himself the tyrant of the clergy; all his interests are foreign; he is audacious because he is inviolable; he accumulates wealth and obtains high position for his family; and, when he has got all he wants, he is free to commit any crime without any possibility of bringing him to justice.

I mentioned that the despatches relating to the surrender of Douai were brought by the Duke de Mortemart; it caused some surprise that a man of his position, holding an office which brought him so near the King's person, should have undertaken such an unpleasant commission; and he performed it so badly that the King felt quite sorry for him. When he returned to Flanders he took to playing ombre with M. d'Isenghien, who was by no means a gambler, and played this game very badly. However, fortune was against the Duke de Mortemart; he lost large sums, and would insist on increasing the stakes, in spite of the remonstrances of M. d'Isenghien; who, as a winner, could not well refuse to go on. No one ever knew how much the Duke of Mortemart lost, but M. d'Isenghien let him off for 100,000 livres. This loss caused a great sensation in the army; the King was much displeased when he heard of it, and M. de Beauvilliers was in despair. It was not the first time this son-in-law had caused him grievous vexation, and it was not the last. His daughter, already so unhappy in her married life, was in the family way; the shock of this news brought on a miscarriage, and she was for some time in the greatest danger.

M. de Beauvilliers came and confided his griefs to me;
till then I had not said a word on the matter, on account of the former quarrel between his son-in-law and myself, which I mentioned in its proper place. The payment of this gambling debt caused much discussion. The Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers thought too much of the ruinous state of the Duke de Mortemart’s affairs, and considered it a matter of conscience to pay debts due to tradesmen, workmen, and people who had lent him money, before this obligation incurred over the card-table. I was obliged to tell them that the delay was producing a very bad effect in society; but I had great difficulty in making them understand that a man’s honour is involved in the prompt payment of gambling debts, and how inexorable the world is on that point. In the end, the Duke de Mortemart gave up the command of his regiment in favour of M. d’Isenghien, to be sold by him in part payment, and M. de Beauvilliers contrived to pay the balance by instalments. M. d’Isenghien, whose probity was beyond suspicion, behaved with admirable politeness and good breeding throughout.

Another disagreeable affair of more importance happened about the same time. Marshal de Montesquiou’s secretary had long been in the pay of Prince Eugène; fearing discovery, he deserted to the enemy, towards the end of the campaign, taking with him all his master’s ciphers and papers. The ciphers were immediately changed; but there could be no doubt that the enemy had long been in possession of our most important secrets.

Many ecclesiastical benefices were vacant at this time. Father Tellier never did things in the same way as Father de la Chaise; he had changed the usual time for announcing the appointments, which had formerly been the days when the King communicated; for he liked to upset the calculations of those applying for them, so that he might not find the King prepossessed in favour of any particular applicant. He excluded as far as possible men of family or distinction of any sort; obscure and needy men were what he wanted, who would be ready to follow his directions blindly; for he meditated vast designs, and was already choosing his instruments. About the middle of July it became known that several bishoprics and many abbeys, with revenues amounting to 240,000 livres, had been given away; but the appointments only leaked out by degrees, for Father Tellier had abandoned the practice of publishing a list,
fearing the effect on public opinion if they all became known at once. Some of the nominations on this occasion are worthy of mention on account of their influence on events to be recorded hereafter.

My friend M. de Mailly, Archbishop of Arles, had been at daggers drawn with Cardinal de Noailles since a dispute which occurred in an Assembly of the clergy. The good fortune of the Noailles family irritated him; his own sister-in-law was only Madame de Maintenon's niece after the fashion of Brittany,¹ while her real niece had married the Duke de Noailles. The good things which fell to the Noailles in consequence filled the Archbishop with jealousy, for his ambition was to be a Cardinal; though to all appearance he had so little prospect of attaining it; and he was furious that his sister-in-law should have failed to obtain at least a dukedom and other honours for his family. Accordingly he had attempted to make himself a rival of Cardinal de Noailles in the Assembly of the clergy; had opposed him, intrigued against him, and done his best to annoy him. But the result had not come up to his expectations; Cardinal de Noailles was still in favour with the King, and liked and respected by the clergy; nobody wished to oppose him without very good reason. He saw that the Archbishop was in a bad temper, and tried to conciliate him by politeness and gentle reasoning; but it was of no avail, the Archbishop only became more rancorous, till at last the Cardinal, in spite of his peaceable disposition, was obliged to speak to him in a tone of authority. This reduced him to silence, but he never forgave the Cardinal. He had always been friendly with the Jesuits; in his desire for vengeance, he courted them more than ever; and their common hatred for Cardinal de Noailles formed a bond of union between him and Father Tellier. As a man of illustrious family, nearly connected with Madame de Maintenon, and an Archbishop of some standing, he was just what the confessor wanted as an instrument to use against the Cardinal; but it was necessary to bring him out of Provence and place him where his services would be readily available; for this reason he caused him to be appointed to Reims. I never saw a man so delighted as the new Duke and Peer, for more reasons than one.

Cardinal de Janson, though his opinions were by no means identical with those of the Jesuits, had always been on good

¹ That is, her first cousin once removed.
terms with them, till they tried to interfere in some affairs of his diocese, and got the King, who saw everything through their eyes, to back them up. Then they discovered that they had to do with a man who was not afraid of them, because his conduct at Court and in his diocese afforded no grounds for attack, and his fortune was such that he was independent of further favours. He took the matter up with great spirit and haughtiness; when the King himself tried to put in a word for the Jesuits he made such a firm reply that the King said no more, and the Jesuits treated him with much caution and respect ever after. He had a nephew at St. Sulpice, a very worthy priest, but stupid and ignorant to the last degree, and steeped in all the petty doctrines of that seminary. It occurred to Father Tellier that this nephew would be the very man for his purposes at Arles, and he thought it would at any rate conciliate Cardinal Janson if he offered him the Archbishopric in his own province. But when the King sent to tell the Cardinal of the proposed appointment the latter, who was an upright and truthful man, said: "Tell the King that he does not know the Abbé de Janson; he is hardly fit to be an assistant-priest in a country parish, much less a Bishop"; and he begged the King, if he wished to show his nephew a kindness, to give him an abbey worth 10,000 or 12,000 livres a year, which would be riches to him, without committing him to duties beyond his powers. But the King, though he praised the Cardinal's outspoken reply, was not to be turned from his purpose, and the Abbé de Janson became Archbishop of Arlès.

Marshal Boufflers obtained Autun for his relation the Abbé de Dromesnil, who was afterwards translated to Verdun, and there built the vastest and most superb episcopal palace in France. Autun had been given more than a year before to the Abbé de Maulévrier; but he resigned the see without having received his bulls, and was now given the Abbey of Moutiers-St. Jean, in his own province of Burgundy, in addition to his other benefits. This Abbé de Maulévrier was a tall, gaunt man, of a corpse-like pallor; his name was Andrault; and the family is of so little account that, although nowadays everything is reduced to one level in France by the laxity (to say the least of it) shown when proofs of nobility are required, I cannot understand how he managed to gain admission to the Chapter of St. John of
Lyons. He was Almoner to the Bavarian Dauphiness, and, after her death, to the King. He was a great friend of Father de la Chaise and the humble servant of the Jesuits; he was also intimate with the Archbishop of Cambrai, and consequently, up to a certain point, with the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beavilliers. He was extremely polite in his manners, obsequious and obliging; his great ambition was to know all that was going on and to win the confidence of everybody, both small and great; and he had many friends in high places of both sexes. But, in spite of his honeyed manner, it was not safe to tread on his toes, for he was extremely irritable, and never forgave. He was accused, more than a year before this, of keeping up a secret correspondence with the Archbishop of Cambrai; and the King spoke very angrily about it to Father Tellier. But the confessor took him under his protection, as much on account of his friendship with the Archbishop of Cambrai as of his connection with the Jesuits; he persuaded the King to grant him an audience, at which he contrived to clear himself, and Father Tellier took advantage of the opportunity to have him made a Bishop. The Abbé de Maulévrier, however, was old and miserly; he liked card-playing and good cheer; he felt that his time for the episcopate had gone by, and that he would be bored to death in his diocese. He only wanted to be made a Bishop for the honour of the thing, just as, before the birth of our Saviour, the Jewish women used to marry to take away their reproach. He wished merely to be nominated, being quite determined to resign his see without paying for his bulls; which he eventually did.

Some deaths took place about this time. Madame de Caderousse died, leaving no children; she was the last of the House of Rambures. She never frequented the Court, but went much into society in Paris; especially to houses where there was play. Her husband, whose family name was Cadart, was a gentleman of the county of Avignon; he was known as the Duke de Caderousse, which did not profit him much. He was an Avignon Duke; but these Dukes, who are of the Pope’s creation, are not recognised anywhere, not even at Rome, and have no sort of rank or precedence; only at Avignon, at the house of the vice-legate, they are allowed some distinction. The Popes are not stingy with this dignity; it is often granted for money.

Lavienne, First Valet-de-Chambre to the King, died at
the age of eighty. I have spoken elsewhere of this personage, and need not say anything more of him now.

Denonville also died, a brave and meritorious gentleman, formerly Governor-General of Canada, where he had done good service, was liked by everybody, and had gained the confidence of the Indians. But at Court, where M. de Beavuilliérs made him sub-Governor to Monseigneur's children, he was a complete nonentity. He was not fortunate in his domestic life, either in his wife or his children.

I must here allude to an adventure which, coming as it did on the top of one or two others, caused a good deal of talk though great pains were taken to hush it up. There was a supper-party at St. Cloud, at which the Duchess of Burgundy and the Duchess of Berry were present; Madame de Saint-Simon, however, was not, having excused herself from attendance. The Duke of Orleans and the Duchess of Berry both got drunk, but she was far the worse of the two; she was so bad that the Duchess of Burgundy, the Duchess of Orleans, and other ladies did not know what to do. The Duke of Berry was there; they made up some story for him and the rest of the numerous guests, and the Grand-ducresse of Tuscany did what she could to keep them entertained in another room. The effects of intoxication on the Duchess of Berry were disgusting in the extreme; but they did not restore her to sobriety, and she had to be brought back to Versailles in that condition. All the servants saw her, and did not hold their tongues; nevertheless, it was contrived that the matter should not reach the ears of the King, Madame de Maintenon, or Monseigneur.¹

Very important events took place this year in Spain. In order to understand them it is necessary to bear in mind the preposterous conditions of peace proposed by the Allies, the refusal of which caused the rupture of the shameful negotiations at Gertruydenberg. Philip V was now left to his own resources, weak as they were; for it was as much as France could do to defend herself, and peace was becoming so necessary to us that our King, to conciliate the Allies, was careful to avoid any appearance of helping Spain. For this reason he even let it be understood that Madame des Ursins was about to be recalled; and she herself professed to be making her preparations for departure

¹ Madame, writing on the 29th of April, 1704, says that drunkenness was only too much in fashion among young ladies.
in a month or six weeks. I do not believe, however, that either she or their Catholic Majesties took this announce-
ment very seriously; at any rate, nothing came of it.

The Spanish Government was in great need of a good General, and repeatedly asked for Vendôme's services; but, for the reasons already mentioned, the King would not allow him to go. Towards the end of March the King of Spain left Madrid to put himself at the head of his army in Aragon, which was commanded by Villadarias, one of their best Generals; a brave and experienced officer, but advanced in years. He obtained some trifling successes at the opening of the campaign; but Staremburg, who had been ill, recovered more quickly than had been expected, and, drawing his forces together, attacked the King's army and drove it back to Saragossa. The loss on our side was not great, amounting only to about 1,000 men; the enemy also lost rather heavily in proportion; but there was much disorder, and the moral effect of the defeat was serious. All the blame was attributed to Villadarias, who was accused of recklessness and negligence, and he was superseded by the Marquis de Bay. This bad news reached the King about the beginning of August, coupled with renewed en-
treaties for Vendôme; and, as the negotiations at Gertruy-
denberg were by this time broken off, the King consented to let him go.

Vendôme arrived at Versailles on the 19th of August. M. du Maine had, by Madame de Maintenon's intercession, arranged that he should have an interview with the Duchess of Burgundy; for, as he was going to Spain at the express request of the King and the Queen her sister, it would have been very unpleasant for him to be refused permission to see her before starting. Accordingly, the Duke du Maine conducted him to her toilette, which happened that day to be more numerously attended than usual, both by men and ladies. The Duchess of Burgundy rose when they entered, as she did for Princes of the Blood and all Dukes and Duchesses; but after this first act of courtesy, which could not be refused, she, who cared little about her dress, and whose eyes and tongue as a rule were never still for a moment—at her toilette, or anywhere else—fixed her eyes on her looking-glass and said not a single word to any one. M. du Maine and M. de Vendôme stood close by her side, looking much disconcerted; nobody came up to them, nobody
spoke to them, but all eyes were turned in their direction. They remained in this situation for nearly ten minutes, after which they could stand it no longer, and quietly retired. This reception was not sufficiently agreeable to encourage Vendôme to ask for a farewell audience, which would have been doubly embarrassing because he would have had to kiss the Duchess of Burgundy, like all Princes, Dukes, and Marshals of France on their departure for, or arrival from, a campaign or long journey. Perhaps he feared the unheard-of affront of a refusal; however that may be, he was satisfied with his first experience, and did not take leave of her. Next day he had an audience of the King, and left for Paris after dinner. He had only spent twenty-four hours there since his marriage; Madame de Vendôme had not been at Anet, where he passed all his time; so they had much opportunity for making each other’s acquaintance. The Duke of Burgundy treated Vendôme with civility during his stay at Versailles; that is to say, he treated him far too well.

In the meantime Staremberg pushed his advantage; he attacked the Spanish army almost under the walls of Saragossa, and totally defeated it. Bay, on assuming the command, had found his men completely demoralised; the infantry, which consisted almost entirely of militia, threw down their arms and fled at the first onset. The cavalry did rather better, but the battle was soon over; the whole of the artillery was lost, and the rout was complete. This misfortune happened on the 19th of August; Vendôme heard the news while on his way, and, after his usual fashion, thought it advisable to let things take their own course for a while before he intervened in person; he therefore lingered at Bayonne till the middle of September.

The Archduke joined Staremberg’s army immediately after the battle, and a warm debate took place in his presence as to the best means of profiting by the victory. Stanhope was for marching straight to Madrid and proclaiming the Archduke King of Spain, which he thought would strike terror into the whole country. Staremberg admitted that this proposal had some specious advantages, but held that, from a military point of view, the occupation of Madrid was not only useless but dangerous. He proposed to leave a small force in Aragon, sufficient to keep the beaten army in check, and with his main body return to the Portuguese
frontier and overwhelm the small army left there by Bay under the Marquis de Richebourg. From this base he intended to advance to the conquest of the central provinces, keeping within easy reach of the seaports. If this advice had been followed the ruin of Philip V would probably have been rendered complete; for the country would have been conquered foot by foot, leaving him no way of retreat except by Bayonne. But Stanhope, who commanded the English and Dutch troops, without which the army was worthless, threatened to withdraw them if his advice was not followed, declaring that the orders of his Sovereign were to march on Madrid in preference to any other object. Staremberg had to give way; and the Allies proceeded to put into execution a project which struck terror into the Court of Spain, but eventually proved the salvation of Philip V.

Madrid was indefensible, and the Court had to leave the capital for the second time and take refuge at Valladolid. All classes in Spain vied with each other in showing their fidelity to their Sovereigns; the poorest gave what money they had, and stripped themselves to send provisions to the troops. The Queen sold all her jewels; and, to encourage the zeal of her subjects, received the most trifling presents of money with affectionate and gracious thanks; for she knew that, small as they were, they were great in proportion to the means of the givers. She won all hearts by her courageous and gracious conduct, and the devotion of the people to her was of no small advantage in this desperate extremity.

In the meantime the Archduke entered Madrid in triumph; but he found the city half deserted by its inhabitants, and was welcomed with no signs of joy. Staremberg was careful to maintain strict discipline; no damage was done to the town, and it was hoped that the ill-will of the surrounding country might be overcome by clemency and conciliation. But the army was starving; neither threats nor money could procure food or forage; not a Castilian but would have considered himself dishonoured if he had sold anything to the enemy, or even left it where it could be taken. After an occupation of not more than ten or twelve days the Archduke was forced to evacuate Madrid and retreat to Toledo. Nothing was carried off by the enemy except some tapestry belonging to the King, which Stanhope was not
ashamed to appropriate—an act which was blamed by his own friends. Before very long he had the additional shame of being forced to give it up again.

Vendôme arrived at Valladolid on the 20th of September, and was agreeably surprised to find Spanish affairs in a better state than could possibly have been expected after such a disaster. Thanks to the fidelity and devotion of his subjects, Philip V found himself in a very short time at the head of 12,000 or 15,000 men, well clad and well armed, with abundance of money and provisions; while the enemy, after their brief triumph at Madrid, were in want of everything, retreating through a hostile country, where the inhabitants not only burnt their property rather than let it fall into their hands, but murdered all stragglers, even within 500 yards of the main body. The King of Spain left his army for a few days, and went to Madrid, where he was received with indescribable joy. The streets were filled with such prodigious crowds that it took him three hours to go from the church of Notre Dame d’Atoche to the palace. The city made him a present of 20,000 pistoles.

During his brief stay there he did a thing almost unprecedented in Spain, which gave great pleasure to the public: he went to visit the aged Marquis de Mansera, who had stubbornly refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Archduke. He had completed his hundredth year, and nearly died of joy at this mark of esteem from his Sovereign. The King discussed his plans for the future with him; embraced him when they parted, and would not allow him to rise from his chair. I believe it is the only instance of a visit paid to a subject by a King of Spain since Philip II went to see the famous Duke of Alba, then on his deathbed; who, when he saw him enter, merely remarked that it was too late, and, turning on his side, refused to say another word. On the fourth day after his arrival at Madrid the King returned to Vendôme and his army.

Vendôme’s plan was to withdraw the small army left by Bay in Estremadura and effect a junction with it, with which object he made a number of bold and skilful movements. Staremberg, no longer embarrassed by the presence of the Archduke, was endeavouring not only to prevent this junction, but to bring up his own detached troops from Estremadura. With this object he threw Stanhope, with a strong garrison of English and Dutch troops, into
Brihuega, a small fortified town with a strong citadel, which Vendôme must take before he could unite his forces. Staremberg had served against Vendôme before, and knew his habits; he thought he could deceive him into thinking that Stanhope had been rashly placed in an isolated position where he could be crushed before support could reach him.¹ In this he succeeded perfectly; Vendôme threw himself upon Brihuega, and was very much astonished to find that, instead of a weak detachment, he had to deal with a strong body of troops in a fortified place. A retreat, however, would have discouraged his troops, and might not perhaps have been a very easy operation; so he gave orders for the attack. Two assaults were made and failed, when the news came that Staremberg was advancing with 5,000 men; in reality he had nearly double that number.

Vendôme was now in an extremely perilous position; but the die was cast, and he determined to stake the fate of the Spanish Crown upon a third assault, while he himself, with the King of Spain, led the whole of his cavalry, and such other forces as could be spared, to meet Staremberg. Fortunately the last assault was completely successful; the town was carried after a desperate resistance, and though the garrison withdrew into the citadel, it was immediately surrendered. Among the prisoners of war were Stanhope himself, Generals Carpenter and Wills, and two Brigadiers; the whole of the enemy’s artillery and baggage fell into the hands of the assailants. It was here that Stanhope had to disgorge the tapestry which he had carried off from the King of Spain’s palace at Madrid.

While the capitulation was being arranged repeated reports arrived of Staremberg’s advance; and it was necessary to conceal the news from the enemy, who might have held out in the citadel had they known that support was so near at hand. Next morning Vendôme was in a

¹ Whatever Saint-Simon may say, the capture of Brihuega was a brilliant feat on Vendôme’s part. He made a forced march from Talavera, covering nearly 140 miles in seven days, and took the allied Generals completely by surprise; for the country people were so hostile that they could procure no information. Stanhope admitted that neither he nor Staremberg had any suspicion that Vendôme was within several days’ march, when he suddenly appeared before Brihuega. The fortifications of that place consisted merely of an old Moorish wall. Stanhope had eight weak battalions and a small force of cavalry. They made a desperate resistance, and did not surrender till their ammunition was exhausted: Saint-Simon’s theory that Stanhope was placed at Brihuega as a bait for Vendôme is simply ridiculous.
difficulty, for it was necessary to march off the captured garrison under a very strong escort, and at the same time to send every available man to meet Staremborg, who was by this time close at hand. However, the prisoners were safely disposed of, and Vendôme drew up his forces in a plain near Villaviciosa. The battle began late in the afternoon by a charge of cavalry which broke the enemy's left and captured a battery; but another attack on their right was not so successful; our cavalry was repulsed by their infantry, and driven back on the reserves. These reserves consisted of the Walloon Guards, who had just come up from Brihuega, the prisoners having been safely removed; they charged the enemy in their turn, and drove them back vigorously. But in the meantime the Spanish centre had given way, and there was great confusion. Vendôme was so much alarmed that he issued orders for a retreat to Torija, and himself retired in that direction with the King of Spain. While they were on their way news arrived that Mahony and the Marquis de Valdecañas had made a vigorous charge on the enemy's infantry, captured many prisoners and guns, and were now in possession of the battle-field. These welcome and unexpected tidings caused Vendôme and the King of Spain to retrace their steps, with the troops they had taken with them; and, as it was now dark, they bivouacked on the heights of Brihuega. When day broke all that was to be seen of the enemy was five or six battalions, and a few squadrons of cavalry, which had remained on the battle-field not knowing which way to go in the darkness. These gave way at once, abandoning twenty guns, two mortars, and all their wounded. A vigorous pursuit was instituted, and many prisoners brought in; but Staremborg, with his main body, had too long a start, and effected his retreat in good order. He lost all his baggage, however, and most of his ammunition.

One shudders to think how near to the verge of ruin the fortunes of the Spanish monarchy were brought on this occasion by the rashness and negligence of Vendôme. Instead of saving up the forces so miraculously provided for him, and proceeding, cautiously and by degrees, to restore the situation, he chose to stake all on a single throw of the dice, and his carelessness led him straight into the trap prepared for him. Thinking he had to deal with a weak, isolated outpost, he found, when it was too late to retreat,
that he had run his head against a strong fortified post, commanded by the enemy's second General; and, while the assault was proceeding, had to prepare for a second battle against the relieving force of Staremberg. Defeat in either case meant irretrievable ruin to the Spanish monarchy, and very possibly the capture of the King in person. By the most wonderful good fortune Brihuega was carried at the third attempt, and the battle of Villaviciosa was won; but Vendôme had nothing to do with it. The hero who had protested so loudly against the unavoidable retreat from Oudenarde was the first to leave the field at Villaviciosa, taking with him all the troops he could lay his hands on; his keen eye, so much vaunted by his admirers, was clouded on this occasion; he saw only the confusion in his centre, and did not perceive that both his wings were carrying all before them; and it was not till he reached Torija that he heard he had won the battle. It was this ill-timed retreat which gave Staremberg time to withdraw in good order, and prevented him from being crushed altogether. Such were the exploits of this great warrior, and the first proofs of his capacity in the country which had so urgently requested his services!

As soon as the King of Spain had returned with Vendôme to the battle-field, and success was no longer doubtful, a courier was despatched to the Queen, whose mortal anxiety was turned into the liveliest joy. She instantly went out on foot into the streets of Vittoria, where she was received with acclamations; and the news of the victory was greeted with transports of delight throughout Spain, especially at Madrid. Don Gaspard de Zuniga, a young officer who had greatly distinguished himself in the action, was sent with despatches to our King; who was informed by the King of Spain that no one could give him a better account of what had happened. In fact, his report charmed everybody by its clearness and modesty. I met him at dinner with the Duke de Lausun immediately after his arrival at Versailles, and had plenty of opportunities for talking to him and putting questions. He made no attempt to conceal his opinion of Vendôme's proceedings either from the King or the public. Vendôme's cabal tried in vain to make out that the victory was a triumph for their hero; this time he was completely unmasked, and the King made no secret of his displeasure. The cabal had to be content with the
applause of loungers at the cafés of Paris and the provinces; people utterly ignorant of the details who only knew that there had been a victory.

The fury of the Allies at this unexpected reverse fell on Stanhope, who was indeed greatly to blame. He knew Staremberg’s design in placing him at Brihuega; he had a good garrison, with plenty of supplies; and if he had held out only seven or eight hours longer the King of Spain must have been ruined irretrievably. Some of his principal officers had been opposed to the surrender of Brihuega, and spoke their minds freely. Stanhope himself could not deny his fault; he was obliged to apply for leave to return to England, to justify himself. He met with a cold reception; was deprived of all military rank in England and Holland, and ran some risk of being sentenced to death by court-martial; together with some other officers who had been concerned in the surrender.

The Duke de Noailles invested Gerona on the 11th of December; but as the history of this expedition belongs properly to the year 1711, I will postpone it for the present. It was necessary to appoint an Ambassador to Spain, and the Abbé de Polignac was talked of; but the Spanish Court would not have him. They asked for Amelot, who had succeeded so well before; but in the end neither was appointed.
CHAPTER V

1710


The exhaustion of the country and the impossibility of obtaining peace, in spite of the most humiliating concessions, weighed heavily on the King's mind; and Desmarets did not know where to turn to raise money. The markets were flooded with bills of various denominations, all more or less discredited; Government payments were made only in paper, which private persons were forced to take, though they had to submit to a discount of 50 or even 70 per cent. Moneyed men and jobbers grew rich on these discounts, at the expense of the public; specie had entirely disappeared from circulation, because all that remained in the country was hoarded in the tax-farmers' coffers. All classes without exception were crushed by taxation; yet of the money thus squeezed out of the people the portion which reached the Government was quite insufficient to meet the current expenses, for the greater part remained in the pockets of the innumerable horde of persons employed in collecting it.

In this situation Desmarets conceived the scheme of imposing, in addition to all the existing taxes, that tithe of all property, whether belonging to private persons or to communities, which Marshal Vauban and Boisguilbert had formerly proposed. But, as we have already seen, they proposed it as a substitute for other taxes, not as an additional burden; we have also seen how the whole body of
tax-farmers and financiers shuddered at the idea, and how they contrived to bring about the disgrace of the two excellent persons who had conceived it. Desmarets now proposed the same thing; not as a relief of the people's burdens, for that, in the eyes of the tax-gathering race, would be an unpardonable crime; but as an addition to them.

Having drawn up a scheme, he submitted it to five Commissioners chosen by himself: namely, Bouville and Nointel, his brother-in-law; Vaubourg, his brother; Berry, his son-in-law; and Harlay-Coeli, a trusty friend of his, who was afterwards Intendant of Paris. With them were associated, as expert advisers, three eminent tax-farmers. Nointel was horrified at the idea of such monstrous extortion, and refused to act; he was followed by one of the tax-farmers, who seems to have retained some vestige of a heart. The remainder set to work assiduously to overcome the obstacles which presented themselves. These, from their point of view, were chiefly the difficulty of obtaining from each individual a clear, honest statement of his property and debts, supported by proofs, so that evasion should be impossible. They dismissed, as unworthy of consideration, other objections, such as the inquisitorial nature of the tax, the cruelty of forcing people to reveal their domestic secrets, the loss of credit which must inevitably follow such forced revelations, and the ruin of many families whom only their credit had enabled to keep their heads above water. These proposals, in fact, were closely akin to those impious numberings of the people which, in all ages, have aroused the wrath of the Creator, and drawn down His chastisements on their authors.

Less than a month sufficed for these humane Commissioners to draw up their report, and Desmarets at once proceeded to lay it before the King. Accustomed as he was to proposals for fresh taxation, the King was startled; for a long time he had been distressed by reports of the extreme misery of the country, and the thought of increasing it by this additional burden threw him into a state of melancholy depression which attracted the notice of his valets, and alarmed them for his health. After some days Maréchal, who told me this curious story, ventured to question him about his low spirits; the King admitted that he had something on his mind, but gave no explanation beyond a vague reference to the bad state of public affairs.
Eight or ten days afterwards he appeared all of a sudden to have recovered his natural spirits. He called Maréchal to him one day, no one else being present, and told him that now his mind was at ease he had no objection to explaining the cause of his trouble. He said the extreme urgency of public affairs had forced him for some time to impose very heavy taxes, and now he found himself under the necessity of increasing them still further; he had been tormented by scruples, arising, not only from natural compassion, but from doubts as to whether he had any right to lay his hands so freely on the property of his subjects. He had unburdened his mind to Father Tellier, who had asked for a few days to consider the matter, and had consulted some of the most learned doctors of the Sorbonne. They gave it as their unanimous opinion that no subject possessed any private property, for all belonged to the King; who, therefore, had a right to take any portion of it that he pleased, for, whatever he took, he was merely taking what belonged to himself. This decision, the King said, had set his mind at ease, and restored him to his former tranquillity. Maréchal was so astounded at this avowal that he could not utter a single word. Fortunately for him, the King left him directly he had made it; and he remained standing there for some time, hardly knowing where he was. He told me this story a few days later, while the impression was still fresh on his mind. It requires no comment on my part; it is an illustration of what may happen when a King puts all his confidence in such a confessor, and opens his mind to no one else; it is also a warning of the inevitable fate of a country entrusted to such hands.

On Tuesday, the 30th of September, Desmaretts attended the meeting of the Council of Finance, carrying with him in his bag the edict for the tithe ready drawn up. For some days past it had been generally known that this bomb-shell was about to burst; and everybody was awaiting the event in dismal expectation, hoping against hope that something might still prevent it. The members of the Council of Finance met that day without knowing more than the public; they were even uncertain whether the project would be submitted to them at all. When they were all seated, Desmaretts took a large bundle of paper from his bag, and the King addressed the Council. His scruples had been completely laid to rest by Father Tellier and the Sorbonne
doctors; he felt quite satisfied that his subjects' property was absolutely his own, and that if he allowed them to keep anything for themselves it was purely an act of grace on his part. He said the extreme difficulty of carrying on the war, and the apparent impossibility of obtaining peace, had compelled Desmarets to resort to extraordinary means of obtaining revenue; he had examined his project and approved of it, and, though sorry to have recourse to such methods, he did not doubt that when the Council had heard Desmarets' explanation they would see that it was inevitable.

After this decided expression of opinion on the part of the King, which was quite contrary to his usual practice, Desmarets made a pathetic speech, winding up by saying that, harsh as his proposals might be, he thought them preferable to allowing the enemy to ravage every province of France. He then proceeded to read the edict from beginning to end. As nobody spoke, the King called on Daguesseau, as junior member of the Council, to give his opinion first. That worthy magistrate replied that he was not prepared to vote on such an important matter without mature deliberation; it would be necessary for him to have a copy of the edict, and study it at leisure; he begged the King, therefore, to excuse him from giving an opinion. The King said Daguesseau was quite right; but he thought it would be useless to postpone the decision, since it would be impossible to examine the project more closely than Desmarets had already done; he himself approved of the edict which had just been read, and he thought it would only be waste of time to discuss it further. All were silent, except the Duke de Beauvilliers, who put implicit faith in Desmarets, as the nephew of his father-in-law Colbert, and looked upon him as an oracle in matters of finance; he said a few words to the effect that, grievous as the proposed tax would be, he thought those who suffered most by it would prefer it to seeing France overrun by the enemy.

Such was the manner in which this cruel edict was passed; and without further delay it was signed, sealed, and registered; amid the suppressed but bitter complaints of the people. I heard all these details next day from the Chancellor. It was generally reported that he had strongly opposed the edict in the Council of Finance, and he was held in great honour in consequence; but he did himself more
honour by disclaiming praise to which he was not entitled; he told everybody that he had had no opportunity of saying a single word on the subject, and he was glad of it, because he could have done nothing to prevent the edict from passing; the decision had been arranged beforehand, and the matter was merely referred to the Council as a matter of form; he was even surprised that it had been brought before them at all. The revenue brought in by the new tax fell far short of the expectations of the cannibals who had devised it, and the King was not in a position to pay any one a halfpenny more than he had done before. It was cruelly felt by private persons, many of whom were not in actual possession of a tenth part of their nominal property, so that this so-called tithe amounted in many cases to confiscation of a fourth, and even of a third part, of their whole capital. The people of Languedoc offered to surrender nine-tenths of their property to the King provided they might be guaranteed the secure possession of the remaining tenth; and this they implored as a favour. Their petition was not only rejected, but taken as an insult; and they received a sharp rebuke.

Some days after the publication of the edict Monseigneur went to dine at the Menagerie with the Princes his sons and their wives, attended by a few other ladies. There the Duke of Burgundy, feeling himself more at his ease than usual, began declaiming against the new tithe, and the harshness and greed of the tax-farmers and other financiers, declaring that his heart was full and he could no longer keep silence. His just and righteous indignation recalled the memories of St. Louis; of Louis XII, the father of his people; and of Louis the Just. Monseigneur, carried away by his son's unusual warmth, also spoke angrily about our barbarous and impolitic system of taxation, and the number of persons of low birth who had amassed wealth by sucking the blood of the people. This plain speaking on the part of the two Princes amazed their auditors, and gave them some consolation, for they began to look forward to better days under them. But it was otherwise decreed; Louis XIV's real successor was the son of an exciseman1; during his long and sinister administration he outdid all that had been previously devised in the way of exactions and made the publicans and their horde of satellites a terror to

1 Cardinal Fleury.
everybody. More than that; he did his best to exalt them to honour, by forcing the most distinguished persons to treat them with an odious show of respect, and by admitting them on an equal footing with noblemen to distinctions at Court, in the Church, and in the Army, to which, in former days, not one of them would have dreamt of aspiring.

I must now relate how a fresh mine was suddenly sprung under my feet by the incredible gullibility of Monseigneur. I have elsewhere spoken of Dumont, his confidential attendant, and mentioned his gratitude for the services which my father had rendered to his. One day, while the Court was at Marly for the second time since the Duke of Berry's marriage (that is, from the 20th of August to the 15th of September), Dumont pulled my sleeve as I was following the King on his way back from Mass; when I turned round he put his finger on his mouth, and, pointing to the gardens, whispered, "Meet me at the arbours." This was a secluded part of the gardens, surrounded by palisades; as it led nowhere it was very seldom that any one walked there, even after dinner or in the evening. I went there as soon as I could without attracting notice, and waited under cover, peeping through an opening in the trellis till I saw Dumont appear. He begged me to come down towards the stream, where we should be better concealed, and there we stationed ourselves behind the thickest part of the palisade. These mysterious preliminaries alarmed me considerably; my alarm was considerably increased when he told me what it was all about. After some expressions of his friendship for me and his gratitude to my father, he said he was about to give me a strong proof of both, but only on two conditions: first, that I would not betray by the slightest sign that I knew what he was going to tell me; and, secondly, that I would not attempt to make any use of my knowledge till he gave me leave, and that I would then act only in concert with him. I gave him my word on both points; and he then proceeded with his story.

He said that, two days after the wedding, he had followed Monseigneur out of his rooms on to the terrace of the orangery at Versailles, and thence into the Princess of Conti's rooms, which he was in the habit of entering through the window. They found the Princess alone; as soon as they entered, Monseigneur, who had been looking very serious, broke out in an excited manner, very unusual with him, and told her
that she seemed to be taking things very easily. She was extremely astonished, and asked in alarm what was the matter, and whether there was any bad news from Flanders. Monseigneur replied, with an air of great vexation, that there was no news, except that M. de Saint-Simon had announced that, now the marriage was over, the first thing to be done was to get rid of her and Madame la Duchesse, and then he and his wife would do what they pleased with that worthy fool, meaning himself. So, he added, she might see that she was not quite so safe as she fancied; then, as if lashing himself into a further paroxysm of rage, he used language which such a speech would have well deserved if it had ever been made; with various threats, saying he would warn the Duke of Burgundy to be on his guard against me, and keep me at a distance. He went on talking like this for some time; I did not hear what the Princess said in reply, but from Dumont's silence, and what I knew of her anger about the marriage, I have no reason to think that she tried to calm him. Dumont listened to all this, standing glued to the wall, without daring to say a word; only the arrival of St. Maur put an end to the scene, and changed the conversation abruptly.

My amazement on hearing this may be easily imagined. I asked Dumont how any one could possibly believe such a story, and how it was supposed that I should proceed to induce the King to banish his two daughters, Princesses of the Blood, who were dear to him and still dearer to Monseigneur. No one but a madman, I said, could think of such a thing; and it would be madder still to talk about it openly, as I was supposed to have done. Dumont shrugged his shoulders, and agreed that the story was palpably absurd; nevertheless, it had been told and believed. I did not like to say much about Monseigneur's credulity, but I could see that Dumont thought as I did on that subject. When I had recovered from my first astonishment I saw clearly what a pitfall had been dug for me, and I asked Dumont what he advised me to do. "Nothing at all for the present," he said: "I did not venture to warn you sooner, because, as I was the only witness of the scene with the Princess of Conti, I wished to let a little time go by. The time for action is not yet come; wait till I tell you, which I will not fail to do." "But," I said, "what is to become of me in the meanwhile, meeting Monseigneur as I do every day, except when he is
at Meudon? How am I to face him in the saloon, in his present state of fury? how can I go to pay my court to him? and yet how can I leave off doing so, till such time as you can devise some means of making him listen to reason?—if, indeed, he ever can listen to it, surrounded as he is by demons who presume on his credulity to such an extent that they have made him believe a story which would not have deceived a child six years old!” “It is certainly embarrassing,” said Dumont. “My advice is this: do not ask for invitations to Meudon; do not go near Monseigneur more than you can help in the saloon; continue to go to his rooms; not very often, but still, go there sometimes. You have not as yet perceived any change in his manner towards you; if you do as I advise he will not show his anger openly. That is all I can tell you.” He reminded me again of my promise, received my thanks hurriedly, and went off as quickly as he could, in terror lest any one should see him.

I remained for some time, walking among the arbours, thinking what would become of me under a King surrounded by such a devilish clique, and ready to swallow any absurd story they chose to invent. I returned home in a state of uneasiness which may be easily imagined; but I took no one into my confidence except Madame de Saint-Simon, who was as much astonished and alarmed as I was. With regard to Monseigneur, I followed Dumont’s advice exactly. I had never been in the habit of going much to his rooms; and even at Marly I rarely approached his person, because the cabal which surrounded him was composed of persons who hated me; I went still more rarely to Meudon; consequently I had not to make any change in my behaviour which would attract notice. I never found out, and I am thankful I did not, which member, male or female, of the cabal had made Monseigneur believe this ridiculous story. But I knew they all hated me, and were beginning to be afraid of me. Although the details remained unknown, they were quite aware that I had been the prime mover in the matter of the recent marriage; but what alarmed them more than anything, as I perceived from what Monseigneur let fall to the Princess of Conti, was the growing intimacy between the Duke of Burgundy and myself, which had not escaped their sharp and watchful eyes.

Towards the end of this visit to Marly I took Dumont aside in the saloon one morning and asked him to tell
Monseigneur that I had heard of the calumnious story which had been imputed to me, and begged him to grant me an audience of a quarter of an hour that I might clear myself. Dumont could not blame my impatience, and said he would speak to Monseigneur; but he did not say it very cordially. I could see that he was embarrassed by the fact that he had been the only witness of the scene with the Princess of Conti; for he was not a clever man, and very timid. In the end, he said the time had not yet come, but he would take advantage of the first opportunity; in the meantime he reminded me of my promise of secrecy. Monseigneur crossed the saloon as I was talking to Dumont, and saw us; I was glad of it, for I hoped he would ask him what I had been saying, and so give him the desired opportunity. The King's Mass put an end to our conversation.

This visit to Marly, which came to an end on the 15th of September, was, as I have said, the second since the marriage. The King was to return thither on the 8th of October; but as this visit was to last only a few days, Madame de Saint-Simon determined to ask the Duchess of Burgundy to obtain leave for her to spend those days at La Ferté. She had been promised a certain amount of liberty in the performance of her duties, and we thought it as well not to let that promise drop out of mind; besides, our position at Court was extremely unpleasant. We put little faith in Dumont's assistance, in spite of his good-will; and we thought a few quiet days at La Ferté would enable us to consider what further steps we should take to extricate ourselves. The required permission was granted without any difficulty; but this distinction aroused a good deal of jealousy, for hitherto no Lady of Honour had been allowed to absent herself even for two days. We returned to Versailles on the same day as the King, namely, on the 13th of October.

On the 3rd of November the King went again to Marly, for the last time this year. When he had been there about a week Dumont again asked me, with the same precautions, to meet him at the arbours. I did so; and he said he thought sufficient time had now elapsed, and I might get some one to speak to Monseigneur; for suspicion would not necessarily fall upon him, since it was quite possible for some one else to have warned me; as the only eye-witness of the scene, however, he thought, on reflection, that he had better not speak himself, but if Monseigneur mentioned
the subject first he would stand up for me. I took no notice of his weakness and timidity, for one cannot get more out of people than they have in them, and after all he had rendered me a very great service. I reminded him, however, that I had kept my promises loyally in my very unpleasant position; and, to act in concert with him to the end, I asked him what he thought about getting the Duchess of Burgundy to speak to Monseigneur. He approved warmly of this plan, and assured me that I could not find a mediator more agreeable to Monseigneur. I promised to let him know how we succeeded; and so we parted, with mutual assurances of friendship, and fresh injunctions to secrecy on his part.

Accordingly, Madame de Saint-Simon asked for an audience with the Duchess of Burgundy, and told her what had occurred, without mentioning Dumont by name. She ventured to point out that Monseigneur's extraordinary credulity was not without peril even to herself and the Duke of Burgundy, considering the wickedness of the clique which surrounded him, and begged her to undeceive him in this particular matter. The Duchess of Burgundy was much disturbed by Madame de Saint-Simon's story, for she perceived the danger; she acceded to her request in the kindest possible manner, and promised to be on the watch for an opportunity of speaking to Monseigneur at leisure. A fortnight or so later she had the thoughtful kindness to tell Madame de Saint-Simon, who had not mentioned the subject again, that she must not be impatient. No opportunity had as yet arisen for talking to Monseigneur, but she had not forgotten her promise, and would most assuredly find one before long.

It did not present itself, however, till after the return of the Court to Versailles on the 15th of November. A few days later Monseigneur went to Meudon, taking the Duchess of Burgundy with him to dine tête-à-tête. She contrived to lead the conversation to the subject of Madame de Saint-Simon, of whom Monseigneur spoke in terms of high praise. The Princess then said that, nevertheless, he was giving Madame de Saint-Simon a great deal of pain and anxiety. He asked, in great surprise, how that could be; whereupon she told him frankly the whole story. He admitted that it was true, and began to speak angrily about me; she let him talk till he had quite finished, and then asked him whether he really and seriously believed that I had made
the speech imputed to me. With great adroitness, she told him that, although she was very fond of Madame de Saint-Simon, she did not care much about me; but she could not allow him to be taken in by a story so palpably absurd. She asked him whether it was conceivable that any man with the slightest knowledge of the Court and its ways could imagine such a senseless project as that of banishing two Princesses so dear to himself and the King, their father; much less that he should talk about it openly; and it was too ridiculous, she said, to suppose that I, who had always been represented to him as a dangerous man, on account of my cleverness and knowledge of the world, could have been guilty of such a thing.

That was quite enough to convince this poor Prince of the absurdity of the story, and make him feel ashamed of having been so grossly taken in. He at once admitted, quite frankly, that she was right; and said he had been so angry that he had not considered the matter properly. She took occasion to caution him against believing all that he heard, and especially against the persons who had been so wanting in respect as to tell him such falsehoods. She did not like to ask who they were; but contented herself with warning him that all the members of his circle hated me, for various reasons. After this, she let him change the conversation, which he was glad enough to do. That evening, at Versailles, she told the whole story to Madame de Saint-Simon, who thanked her most warmly for the service she had so adroitly and successfully rendered to us. As soon as I could see Dumont, I told him, without going into details, that the Duchess of Burgundy had succeeded in undeceiving Monseigneur; and he seemed highly pleased. M. de Beauvilliers and the Chancellor also rejoiced to hear of my escape; they agreed with me that I had better make no change in my conduct towards Monseigneur, so that the worthy people who had dug this pitfall for me might think that I was still in it; otherwise they might be tempted to invent some fresh calumny, and I might not extricate myself so easily a second time.

About this time the Pope issued a Bull which finally decided the disputes between the Jesuits and the other missionaries in China about the ceremonies of Confucius; he pronounced them to be idolatrous; condemned the Jesuits for allowing their converts to take part in them;
approved the conduct of the late Cardinal de Tournon,\(^1\) speaking in high praise of his constancy, his sufferings, and his death, and rebuked the Jesuits severely for their disobedience and intrigues. This Bull infuriated, rather than disappointed, them; they began by evading it, and ended by defying it openly. So much has been written about these matters that I will say no more on the subject; I merely mention this Bull because it was the source of all the disturbance which has since arisen, and of the persecution which still continues. I shall have more to say about this finishing stroke of the evil spirit of Jesuitism, and of Father Tellier in particular.

The Grand Prior, when obliged to leave the kingdom, as I have elsewhere narrated, had settled down at Venice after various wanderings. This winter he set out for Lausanne, in Switzerland. A sort of brigand named Massenar, holding a commission from the Emperor, lay in wait for him on the road, and carried him off to one of the Emperor's castles on the other side of the Rhine, in revenge for the imprisonment of his son, who had been confined at Pierre Encise for various crimes, his father's as well as his own. Massenar announced that, according as his son was treated, so would he treat the Grand Prior. News of his capture was brought to the King by a courier from Count de Luc, our Ambassador in Switzerland. The King did not seem disturbed by the news, nor did any one trouble himself much about it.

The Duke and Duchess of Berry, having no officers of their own, had continually to borrow those of the King, and the Duchess of Burgundy; this became tiresome, and the King, contrary to his original determination, decided to give his grandson an apanje at once, instead of waiting for the declaration of peace, which seemed to be still remote. The Duke of Berry's pensions were regulated on the same scale as those of the late Monsieur; but his apanages were very inferior. The Queen-Mother, who was Regent at the time, had regulated Monsieur's apanages on a most extravagant scale; in this instance they fell into the other extreme; the apanje of the Duke of Berry did not yield revenue enough to suffice for the ordinary expenses of his house-

---

\(^1\) He was appointed Legate in the East by Clement XI. The Jesuits, infuriated at his condemnation of their laxity with regard to the Chinese rites, threw him into the prison of the Inquisition at Macao, where he died.
hold; and he had no residence either in town or country, for it was not till later that they gave him the Palace of Luxembourg at Paris. The apanage assigned to him consisted of the duchies of Angoulême and Alençon, with the district of Ponthieu. When this had been settled the citizens of Abbeville, who, in consideration of their ancient services and fidelity, have been granted the privilege of exemption from the passage of troops through their town, and furnish their own guards for the King when he goes there, sent a deputation to ask that Abbeville might be excluded from the apanage, and continue to be immediately under the Crown. The King was much surprised when he heard that Abbeville formed part of the apanage, and asked how it was. The question seemed strange, but it was stranger still when he admitted that he did not know where Ponthieu was, nor that Abbeville was its capital. He added that those districts smelt too strongly of gunpowder to be made into an apanage, and substituted the county of Gisors and some adjacent country. This affair having been concluded, the offices in the households of the Duke and Duchess of Berry were offered for sale; but, as they wished to have persons of distinction, the arrangements took some time. However, the affair is of so little importance that I may as well make an end of it at once.

The office of First Gentleman of the Chamber, which was now duplicated, was at the disposal of the Duke de Beauvilliers, as ex-Governor to the Duke of Berry. He made a present of one appointment to his brother, the Duke de St. Aignan; and sold the other to M. de Béthune, Desmaret's son-in-law, who afterwards became Duke de Sully. The distinguished appointment of First Equerry was given for nothing to Rasilly; though many persons of the first quality applied, and were willing to pay a high price for it. Rasilly was formerly sub-Governor to the Duke of Berry, and had since, by the King's express orders, been in constant personal attendance on him; a very fatiguing employment, for which he received no pay; this appointment was given to him as a recompense. The Duchess of Berry, who wanted a man of more distinguished name, shed tears when she heard of it, and made no attempt to conceal her vexation. It must be said, however, that Rasilly was a gentleman of good and ancient family, whose forefathers
had been Lieutenant-Generals of their province, in days when these appointments were not sold for money, nor given to the first comer. She was not so particular in the case of La Haye, for whom she procured the office of First Chamberlain, carrying with it the right of entering the Duke of Berry’s coach and eating at his table. La Haye drew himself up, and looked complacently at himself in the glass in consequence. He was tall and well-made, though his carriage was stiff and constrained, and his face was not very attractive. He was fortunate in more ways than one, and more attached to his new mistress than to his master. The King was angry when he heard that the Duke of Berry had allowed this present to be foisted on him.

Voysin did not know what to do with his eldest daughter, of whom he was extremely fond; for, having married a man of the gown, she was excluded from all court entertainments. He now caused La Rochefort, his son-in-law, to purchase the office of Chancellor to the Duke of Berry, and persuaded the King that he might, in consequence, do his daughter the favour of admitting her to the carriage and table of the Duchess of Burgundy, and consequently to Marly. This seemed a very extraordinary concession.

At the same time the King did for the Duchess of Burgundy what he had never done for the Queen or the Dauphiness: he gave her the entire control of her household, including the disposal of vacant offices, saying that he had complete confidence in her, and knew she was to be trusted in more difficult and important matters than that. This favour was quite spontaneous; the Duchess of Burgundy would have lost his good graces for ever if she had given the slightest hint that she wished for it. She used her new authority with tact and discretion. She knew the King too well to do anything of the smallest importance without consulting him; but she also knew that he would be pleased with the deference shown to him, and would let her do what she liked.

The Duchess of Mantua died at Paris on the 16th of December, in the flower of her age and beauty. Her life had been very unhappy since her strange marriage; none of the Duchess d’Elbœuf’s fine schemes for her had come to anything. Since her return to Paris she had led a melancholy existence. She had no children, and her husband gave her nothing. He had the honour of being
distantly related to the King, who consequently wore black mourning for a few days.

During the last days of the year one of those rascally adventurers turned up who profess to have the secret of making gold; and Boudin, First Physician to Monseigneur, set him to work in his own house, under lock and key. Since I have occasion to mention this Boudin I may as well say a little more about him, for we shall see him before long playing a bold and mischievous part for a man of his class. His name suited him, for in shape he was exactly like a black-pudding. He was the son of one of the King’s apothecaries, whom nobody thought much of; he himself took to the study of medicine; and, as he was hard-working and eager to acquire knowledge, he soon became very learned. Besides his professional science, he was well acquainted with literature and history; and, if he had kept up his industrious habits and applied his mind only to serious objects, he would have been an extremely cultivated and clever man. His conversation was lively, witty and agreeable; he said things in such a funny, simple way that nobody was more amusing, though he never laid himself out to be so. He was at the head of the faculty of Paris; and had been one of the King’s Physicians before he was appointed to Monseigneur, with whom he was on the best of terms. He subjugated M. Fagon, the tyrant of the medical profession, to such a degree that his doors were always open to Boudin, though trebly barred to any one else. Fagon detested snuff, and believed it to be a poison; Boudin once wrote a thesis against tobacco, which he dedicated to him; and expounded it in his presence, holding his snuff-box in his hand the whole time, his face all smeared with the snuff which he kept cramming into his nose. Fagon would have been furious with any one else, but nothing came amiss from Boudin.

A man so agreeable in society soon made his way at Court, especially as in his position nobody could be jealous of him. He was admitted to the private suppers of M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti; gentlemen and ladies of the highest position used to vie with each other for his company, the old ones for their dinners, the younger for their parties and entertainments; and he did not accept invitations from everybody. He was very licentious and debauched, and so greedy that it was delightful to watch him at table;
but, with all that, his wit and natural, unaffected manner were irresistible. It was not long before he was spoiled. He was a pushing, audacious fellow; who seldom put himself out for other people, and never denied himself the pleasure of saying a sharp thing, if he thought he could do it safely; in short, he became familiar, presumptuous, and impertinent. Having obtained admission to the most select circles, he began to engage in intrigues, and knew many of the most important secrets of the Court. Marshal Villeroy, when at the height of his brilliant favour, began bantering him one day in the presence of Monseigneur Boudin, who did not like his air, made a curt reply. The Marshal still went on; whereupon Boudin spoke to him so insolently that the company were stupefied, and the Marshal was speechless with fury. Monseigneur, who disliked him, and was amused by his doctor, said not a word; after a short silence the Marshal left the room, and Monseigneur burst out laughing. The story got about, but nothing came of it.

Although Boudin was fond of his profession he became rusty in it, because he never would take the trouble to go about and see sick people; but he was always intensely interested in secret remedies. He believed in them thoroughly, and used to declaim against the Faculty; which disapproved of them, and liked people to die according to strictly orthodox rules. He was fond of chemistry, in which he was very learned and skilful; but he went further, and became addicted to alchemy. He took it into his head that it was possible to discover the Philosopher’s Stone; and, in spite of his learning and cleverness, he was taken in over and over again. He spent a good deal of money in this way; as a rule, he was close with it, but he never grudged it for these pursuits. He would leave the most agreeable parties and the best society to return to his alembics, and to a set of rogues who swindled him. He used himself to laugh at this weakness; and made fun of his own terrors, for he was always frightened of his experiments, and told many comical stories about them at his own expense. This new transmuter of metals took him in just as the others had done, and got a good deal of money out of him; to his great regret.

From the beginning of December the King announced that he wished to have plays and appartements at Versailles,
even when Monseigneur was absent at Meudon, which was unusual. Apparently he thought it his duty to keep up entertainments in his Court in order to conceal from foreigners the terrible extremities to which we were reduced. He would have concealed it from his own subjects had it been possible. With the same object the Carnival amusements began very early; there were many balls at Court throughout the winter; and the wives of Ministers entertained the Duchess of Burgundy in a very magnificent manner. But none the less Paris remained gloomy and depressed, and the provinces were in despair.
CHAPTER VI

1711

The Elector of Cologne visits Paris—Anecdotes about him—A German joke—Death of Fouquière—Of Estrades—D'Antin claims the dukedom of Épernon—He contrives to get the King on his side—Some Dukes resolve to oppose him—I join them, but refuse to take the lead—Treachery of the Duke de Mortemart—The King attacks the Duke de Villeroi—Dignified reply of the latter—Capture of Gerona—The Duke de Fronsac—An interesting marriage—Jeannette and Villefort—Lawsuit in the House of Condé—Decision adverse to Madame la Duchesse—Death of Marshal Choiseul—Intrigues against Cardinal de Noailles—Two mitred animals set on to attack him—Father Tellier lets the matter drop for a time—Guiscard attempts to kill the English Prime Minister—Lassé and Madame la Duchesse—My gloomy anticipations—I spend Easter at La Ferté—News of Monseigneur’s illness.

The year began with the ceremony of reception as Knights of the Order of the Prince of Conti, Médavid and Du Bourg, who had long been Marshals of France, Albergotti, and Goesbriant. The Prince of Conti had not completed his fifteenth year; the proper age for a Prince of the Blood to receive the Order is twenty-five; but, as the King had conferred it on the Count de Toulouse before he was fourteen, he could not refuse it to the entreaties of the Princess of Conti, backed up as she was by M. du Maine, whom their common interest in the lawsuit about M. le Prince’s inheritance had brought into close alliance with her. Thus, thanks to the bastards, who by degrees upset everything, the Princes of the Blood were declared capable of receiving the Order at any age, like the sons of France; that is, the legitimate offspring of the Crown and the sons of adultery having been placed on an equal footing in this respect, the Princes of the Blood could no longer be excluded from the same advantage. As for the other four, we have seen on what occasion they were nominated, and to what a degree the Order, which was intended to be a court decoration, given only to persons of the highest dignity and the noblest
birth, has been converted since the promotion of 1688 into a reward for military services.

The Elector of Cologne arrived in Paris during the first few days of the year 1711. He had an audience of the King incognito, and also saw the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy. After spending a few weeks in Paris, amusing himself, he came to dine with Monseigneur at Meudon. Monseigneur sat in his usual place, in an arm-chair, without a cadenas (for he never had one at Meudon), but having his napkin folded under his plate; he was served by Dumont, with a salver under his drinking-cup. The Elector sat opposite Monseigneur among the courtiers, on a seat in no wise distinguished from theirs; like them, he was served by an officer of the mouth; he had no napkin under his plate, and no salver. Monseigneur took him over the house, going before him through all the doors without any apology, the Elector standing on one side with an air of respect, and always addressing him as “Monseigneur.” Two days later he said Mass before the Duchess of Burgundy; he asked to be allowed to do this as a particular favour, and gave her to understand that he would be hurt if she refused. He liked saying Mass, and performing ecclesiastical functions generally. He said a Low Mass at the grand altar of the chapel, like an ordinary Bishop. The Duchess of Burgundy was upstairs in the tribune, to avoid kissing the corporal, which the priest used to bring to her when she was below, and also to give this Mass the appearance of being merely an ordinary function; but the Elector made her a low bow when he went to the altar, and another when he came away, both of which she received standing up, and returned with a low curtsy. He also bowed like an ordinary chaplain at the Deus vobiscum and the benediction. Madame was very angry about this Mass, and would not attend; and indeed it would have been better if the Elector had dispensed with it; but it was he who made a point of it. He was particularly fond of officiating at all sorts of ceremonies; he even liked preaching, and I will give a specimen of his sermons. One first of April, at Valenciennes, he took it into his head to appear in the pulpit; and, as he sent notice of his intention to everybody in the town, the church was crowded. Having ascended the pulpit, he cast his eyes round the congregation and suddenly shouted out: “April fools! April fools!” and his band responded
with a loud flourish of trumpets and kettle-drums, during which he vanished. This was a truly princely, and truly German, joke; and, though his audience laughed heartily, it astonished them considerably.

Feuquières died about this time. He was a Lieutenant-General of old standing, a man of cool and steady courage, and abilities considerably above the average; his knowledge of the art of war would have brought him to great distinction if his spiteful disposition had permitted him to throw some little disguise over the fact that he had neither heart nor soul. He never served in an army without trying to gain such influence over the General as would enable him practically to command it himself, and to ride roughshod over the other Generals and officers; when he found a General unwilling to submit to his yoke, he became his enemy, and did all in his power to thwart his enterprises. His treacherous dealings in this way would fill a volume. He had not been on active service for many years, because no General would have him in his army. He published a book of Memoirs on the science of war which would be a masterpiece, for it is most ably and clearly written, if he had not gone out of his way to attack the reputation of every General he ever served under; often without the slightest reason. Accordingly he died poor, without rewards, and without a friend in the world.

His name was Pas; he came of an ancient and noble family in Picardy. He married a daughter of the Marquis d'Hocquincourt, who inherited the wealth of all her brothers; his son died childless, and his only daughter carried all this wealth to a Seiglière, whose disgraceful life eclipsed even the lowness of his birth. The mother of this Seiglière was a daughter of the Marquis de Soyecourt; and she was also a rich heiress, both her brothers having been killed at the battle of Fleurus. So it is that young ladies of quality are given to men of low birth, who are willing to take them without a dowry; and then they frequently bring their husbands all the wealth of their families! This sham Soyecourt died a refugee at Venice, and his wife soon followed him; Cardinal Fleury has given their son a regiment though persons of the highest qualifications cannot get one from him. But simulis simili gaudet; the truth of the proverb is demonstrated every day. The Hocquincourts are extinct, and so are the Pas. Feuquières' brother, Rébenac,
left only a daughter, Madame de Souvré; a third brother died at a great age, leaving no children by the beautiful daughter of Mignard, the famous artist, who painted her likeness in several places in the Gallery of Versailles.

Estrades died almost at the same time; he was the eldest son of Marshal d'Estrades, so well known as a soldier and diplomatist. It was the Marshal who signed the peace of Nimeguen in 1678; he sent the son to bear the news to the King, but he lingered at Brussels with a mistress, and so gave time to the Prince of Orange to attack M. de Luxembourg and fight the battle of St. Denis. M. de Luxembourg was expecting nothing less, for he reckoned that peace was assured; but it was not till next day that he received the official notification from the King. The Prince of Orange had the notification in his pocket before the battle, but he was furious at the peace, and hoped to break it off by a victory; if he lost the battle he trusted to the announcement of peace to save him from any evil consequences.

This Estrades was an illustration of the truth of the proverb, *filii heroum noxæ*: he always led an obscure life, had few friends, and was little respected. His younger brothers were better; one, the Chevalier d'Estrades, was killed at Steinkirk in 1692, at the head of his regiment. I shall have occasion to mention the other, the Abbé d'Estrades, elsewhere. Nothing is known of the Estrades family beyond the Marshal's grandfather. His father was a brave and able man, who served under Henry IV against the League; but his grandmother was the daughter of a counsellor in the Parliament of Bordeaux, by a Spanish Jewess of the name of Jeanne, who called herself Mendoza. There is an absurd custom in Spain by which the godfather of a converted Jew confers on him, not only his baptismal name as elsewhere, but his family name and arms, which descend to the posterity of the Jewish godson. The father or grandfather of this Jeanne Mendoza had received the arms of Mendoza in this fashion; and M. d'Estrades quartered them with his own, as did his posterity after him. Marshal d'Estrades left some excellent Memoirs.

I must now relate the story of d'Antin's absurd claim to the ancient dukedom and peerage of Epernon. It will necessarily be rather long, and parts of it may perhaps be tiresome; but it is not without interest as illustrating the interior life of the Court. The late M. de Montespan
had inherited the property of Epernon from Mademoiselle de Rouillac, who was descended from a sister of the first Duke d'Epernon; together with her claims to the dukedom. He even ventured to call himself Duke d'Epernon in Guyenne, where he lived; but was only laughed at for his pains. He retained these visionary notions, however, to the day of his death; and d'Antin had always built his hopes upon them.

Having now attained a position of favour and intimacy with the King, thanks in a great measure to the guilty profligacy of his mother, d'Antin thought the time had arrived when he might push his claims with some prospect of success. He watched his opportunity, and spoke to the King in his private room at Marly on the 10th of January. He said that, being already loaded with favours, it would ill become him to ask for fresh ones; but he ventured to appeal to His Majesty, as the most just of monarchs, to do him an act of justice which he would not refuse to the humblest of his subjects. It was the King's custom, he proceeded, to allow all his subjects free access to the courts of law, and not to interfere in disputes between private persons; nevertheless, there was a legal question on which his fortune depended, the settlement of which was prevented by the King's sole authority, although it did not affect the prerogatives of the Crown in the slightest degree. That question was the succession to the dukedom of Epernon which the last Marquis de Rouillac had claimed, like his father before him; and it had never been brought before the proper court because the other Dukes, seeing that they would lose their case, had induced His Majesty to put a stop to the proceedings. His Majesty had subsequently given his gracious permission to Mademoiselle de Rouillac to prosecute her claim; but, owing to her great piety and the disabilities of her sex, she had not done so. At her death, d'Antin continued, he had inherited her property and her claims, but it was at a time when he hardly liked to ask for favours. Now, however, he was happy to think that times were changed in that respect, and he ventured to ask, as a favour, what His Majesty never refused to any one, simply to be allowed to bring forward his claim in the usual manner. It would be an ordinary suit before the Grand Chamber, which would not inconvenience His Majesty in any way. D'Antin went on to say that he had made a study of his
case, and taken legal opinion upon it, and he thought it
was incontestable. He hardly expected any serious op-
position; for, though the other Dukes would each lose a
step in precedence, this would be but a trifling loss to them;
whereas the gain to him would be enormous; he would at
one stroke become not only their colleague, but their senior.
He added that if he became a Duke and peer in this manner,
as a matter of right, his case could not be drawn into a
precedent by other people who might wish to importune
His Majesty for favours; and he had sufficient confidence
in His Majesty's kindness towards him to feel sure that he
would not be sorry for his elevation, if it entailed no incon-
venience to himself.

Throughout this discourse d'Antin displayed all the wiles
of a cunning and experienced courtier; every one of his
statements of facts was a lie, but in his conclusion he touched
the King on his weak spot. He knew the King would be
reluctant to confer a dukedom upon him; partly for fear
of similar requests from others, but chiefly, as d'Antin
very well knew, because he did not like people to think
that he was under the influence of his favourites—a point
on which he was always very sensitive. But, by the adroit
way in which he submitted his petition, d'Antin contrived
to get the King entirely on his side; to such a degree,
indeed, that he could hardly restrain his partisanship within
decent limits. The whole conversation became known
immediately. At Marly the King had only two private
rooms, and a considerable portion of the inner one had
been cut off to make a place for a close-stool; in the remain-
ing portion the King used to sit after supper with his family.
These rooms, thus reduced, were full of the Valets of the
Household; and, as the doors were always open, they could
see and hear everything that went on. Bloin, who did not
like d'Antin, heard every word of his discourse, and im-
mediately reported it to his friends the Dukes de Villeroy
and de la Roche Guyon, who supped with him nearly every
evening.

Next day, which was a Sunday, I entered the saloon
about the time when the King usually went to Mass. I
went up to one of the fireplaces, where La Vrilliére was
standing warming himself; and he at once told me the
news. I shrugged my shoulders in silence; he asked me
what I thought about it, to which I replied that I thought
d’Antin would have an easy triumph over such victims as we were. Just then I saw the Dukes de Villeroy, Berwick, and de la Roche Guyon in conversation on the other side of the saloon; they beckoned me to them, and asked what I thought of the latest news. I replied as I had done to La Vrillière; but, to my surprise, they seemed annoyed, and asked whether I did not mean to stand up for my interests. I answered coldly that I would do as others did; for my previous experience had really taught me that it was best to let things take their course. But they seemed so warm about it that I felt my own zeal revive, though I was still determined not to go beyond the bounds which prudence dictated. They reported that d’Antin had just told them what the King had promised him, with expressions of the utmost politeness and deference; assuring them that, if it were possible to claim the dukedom of Epernon without the seniority attaching to it, he would think himself only too highly honoured by becoming the junior of us all. To this they replied with due politeness, but at the same time let him see unmistakably that they intended to oppose his claims. They came to me, they said, as the person who knew most about affairs of this kind, begging me to join them and tell them what to do. There could be no doubt, they added, that the King was on d’Antin’s side, and would be glad to see no opposition; but if we held together, and acted in unison, he would not venture to show his displeasure openly; for he would not care to annoy the holders of all the principal offices about his person, merely to please d’Antin. They asked me most urgently to let them know my opinion about the matter, and especially to tell them how to set about the task of defending their rights.

I could see from what they said about the King that they were really acting in good faith; so I told them, still speaking very calmly, that I was glad to hear such sentiments expressed by them. From the tenor of my whole life they could not doubt that I shared them; but I must tell them frankly that my former experience had been such that only their zeal could have aroused my own. With regard to our plan of action there were two things, I said, which ought to be done without losing a moment: the first, to sign a protest against any one being received in Parliament as Duke and Peer for the dignity of Epernon;
the second, to employ counsel; and with regard to this I suggested that we should engage such as remained of the lawyers who had acted for us in opposition to M. de Luxembourg. I offered to arrange for these preliminary steps; and they begged me to do so, with renewed assurances of their zeal for the common cause. I went accordingly to my own quarters, and wrote the necessary letters. When I returned to the château I met M. de Beauvilliers, who took me aside and begged me not to separate myself from the other Dukes, but to do all I could against d'Antin; at the same time not to make myself too prominent, and to keep up appearances of politeness and moderation. He said he had given the same advice to his brother and son-in-law. That was the line of conduct which I had already decided on; but I was not a little surprised and encouraged by receiving such advice from a man usually so cautious, especially in affairs of this sort.

In the saloon I found the three Dukes who had already spoken to me, and they asked me to meet them in Marshal Boufflers' rooms in half an hour. There I found the Dukes de Tresmes and d'Harcourt; I told them what I had done, and they were extremely glad to hear that the Dukes de St. Aignan and de Mortemart would act with us. We then proceeded to discuss our future conduct. It was decided, on the motion of M. d'Harcourt, that we should meet d'Antin's advances cordially and politely; but at the same time tell him candidly that we intended to oppose his claims; that we should appear to ignore the possibility of the King having any personal feeling about the matter, for if we persisted in this wilful blindness he could not support d'Antin without taking more active measures; and this we knew d'Antin, with all his favour, would not induce him to do. We then talked over the management of the business in the law-courts; and it was decided to proceed in exactly the same manner as in our suit against M. de Luxembourg. M. d'Harcourt urged the necessity of appointing one or two of our number to manage our case, with power to sign documents on behalf of the rest in cases of emergency, so as to avoid loss of time; and he moved that I should be requested to do so. I could easily see that they had talked this matter over before my arrival at the conference; they all joined in the invitation with the most flattering speeches.
But I had foreseen that such an appointment would be necessary, and that it would be offered to me; and I was quite determined not to accept it. I said my constant attendance at Court would not allow me to spend sufficient time at Paris to superintend the business as I should wish; and when I saw that excuse would not do, I told them frankly that the part I had played in former affairs of this sort had not turned out so favourably for my personal interests as to tempt me to take the lead again; moreover, having already had private differences with M. d’Antin on more than one occasion, I did not care to go out of my way to quarrel with him again. I begged them not to attribute my refusal to indolence or indifference, but to circumstances which were too strong for me. We then separated, satisfied with the progress we had already made in such a short time; but the others, though extremely polite and complimentary, were by no means pleased at my refusal.

I was surprised to find so much firmness and resolution among courtiers usually so grovelling, especially as they perceived clearly that the King was opposed to them; but each of them had his own private motives. The Dukes de Villeroy and de la RocheGuyon had always treated d’Antin with marked contempt; it was his policy to live on good terms with everybody if possible, and he had often got his friends to remonstrate with them; he had even spoken to them himself. As these remonstrances had produced no effect, an open enmity had sprung up between them, which was fomented by the jealousy of Monseigneur’s private circle. Harcourt was a great friend of these two Dukes; and also of the First Equerry, who hated d’Antin, and had never forgiven him for obtaining the office of Buildings, which he had made sure would be given to himself. Harcourt had espoused their sentiments the more readily because he looked upon d’Antin as an obstacle to his admission to the Council. Boufflers, a very straightforward man and very proud of his dignity, had not forgotten the ill-turn d’Antin had served him after the battle of Malplaquet; and Villars, who for the same reason should have been d’Antin’s ally, felt that his common interest with the other Dukes conferred such prodigious honour on him that he could not separate himself from them. Tresmes, who had a high natural sense of dignity, had, I do not know why, taken Harcourt as his
guiding star. Finally, Berwick, like a thorough Englishman, could not bear any confusion or disturbance of existing ranks.

Within twenty-four hours our counsel had been engaged, and our formal protest drawn up and returned to me for the signatures. It so happened that d'Antin's counsel were those employed by Madame la Duchesse in the lawsuit about M. le Prince's inheritance, and ours were the same who acted for her sister-in-law, in opposition to her. I told my friends that I had the protest; and when the King went into Madame de Maintenon's room after Mass, M. d'Harcourt and M. de Tresmes caused every one to leave the antechamber and had the doors closed. There we discussed what had already been done, and it was decided to submit the protest for signature to all the Dukes who happened to be at Marly. There was dancing there; and for that reason the King had invited a number of young people, among whom was the Duke de Brissac. I suggested that the signature of a man of his age would not carry much weight; that he might possibly ask the advice of his uncle Desmarets; and he, in his turn, might consult the King; if, after that, he refused to sign it might be embarrassing. It was decided, therefore, not to ask him.

After this, the question again came up of who should manage the business on our behalf; and I was entreated, even more urgently than on the previous day, to undertake the task myself. But the interval of reflection had confirmed me in my resolve to take no open part in the business, merely to pull the strings behind the curtain. I suggested that the Dukes de Charost and d'Humieres should be appointed managers, for I felt sure that through them I could conduct the business just as well as if I had been appointed myself; and the suggestion was adopted; the chief reason which induced the others to accept it being, I must confess, the influence which I was known to exercise over those two Dukes. Neither of them was at Marly, and it was resolved not to speak to them about the matter till the Court returned to Versailles; it was also decided that the protest should be signed that very day. It was dated from Paris, to enable those Dukes who were there to sign it before it was formally presented to Daguesseau, the procureur-général, and to the Chief Registrar of the Parliament, which was done next day. Sixteen signatures
were appended to it, and we reserved the right of obtaining more.

The Duke de Villeroy asked me to go to the Duke de la Roche Guyon's rooms that evening to discuss some point or other. When I went there, it was proposed that we should wait for the Duke de Mortemart. Since his behaviour to me in connection with Madame de Soubise I knew him too well to discuss anything in his presence, and I said as much to those present; I was unwilling to speak too strongly about the son-in-law of M. de Beauvilliers, so I contented myself with warning them that he was not to be trusted. La Roche Guyon and Villeroy, the latter of whom ought to have known better, treated this as prejudice; and maintained that, foolish and changeable as Mortemart was, he would not do anything to injure a cause in which his own interests were involved, and which he had taken up of his own accord. Thereupon he came in; the others got him to sign the protest, and gave it him to obtain Villars' signature, with the strictest injunctions to secrecy about the whole affair; and he was to give me back the protest privately in the saloon that same evening. I remonstrated against taking it back in so public a place; however, it was hastily settled that it should be so; and Mortemart was sent out of the room, ostensibly to obtain Villars' signature, but in reality to enable me to speak freely.

When we had finished our business I returned to the saloon; the first thing I saw was Mortemart in the midst of a group of young people, in earnest conversation with M. de Gondrin, d'Antin's eldest son. I approached them quietly from behind, heard some complimentary expressions exchanged, and withdrew. Shortly afterwards the Duke de Mortemart came up to me with the document in his hand, and said out loud, before everybody, that he returned it to me, as he had been unable to find Marshal Villars. The trick he played us was complete; we were particularly anxious that d'Antin should not know of our formal opposition till he received notice of it from the lawyers, and that he should be kept in ignorance of the names and number of his opponents; all this had been carefully explained to the Duke de Mortemart, with strict injunctions to secrecy. Worst of all, there was I, who had more serious reasons than any of the others for keeping in the background, publicly singled out in the full saloon, and close to the lansquenet
table! I beat a hasty retreat, Mortemart pursuing me with
the paper in his hand, crying, “Take it, take it!” I took
it roughly from him, without saying a word; and I had the
further trouble of obtaining Villars’ signature that same
evening.

An hour later everybody had heard from Gondrin about
our opposition, and the polite speeches made to him by the
Duke de Mortemart. The Duke de Villeroy was more
angry with Mortemart than any of us; for he was conscious
that he ought to have known him better, after what he had
heard of him from me. We all spoke our minds freely about
his conduct, and it was resolved to exclude him from all our
meetings in future. D’Antin, on his side, scolded his son
for having compromised their cousin; just as if their con-
versation had been held privately! In this way he found
out that his claims would be formally opposed; and though
he knew only the names of the few Dukes who were at Marly,
he was very much surprised that any one should venture to
oppose him, especially persons in high favour with the King
and holding offices of distinction. This unexpected decla-
ration of war made him think that he had better silence the
enemy’s fire, by getting the King to give such open mani-
festations of his partiality for him as would terrify his
opponents, and prevent them from going on with their legal
measures.

My friends urged me to say something civil to d’Antin, as
others had done who had the same interest in opposing his
pretensions; I could hardly bring myself to comply, but I
did it. I never could make out what his motive was; but
if I had been the King’s favourite, instead of himself, he
could not have received my advances with more deference
or with warmer thanks for the politeness I had been kind
enough to show him; not content with that, he came to
call on me, though I had not gone to his rooms, to repeat his
acknowledgements. He went out of his way to tell people
how politely I had treated him, and how much gratified he
felt; he even boasted about it to the King, as I heard
immediately afterwards. I was extremely astonished, and
so were a good many other people.

In the meantime our formal protest was served upon him;
the sixteen names he found appended to it hastened his
determination to make the most of his influence. The King,
while out walking, alluded to d’Antin’s absence; and then
went on to speak of the affair which had caused it. Singling out the Duke de Villeroy, who he apparently thought would be the person most easily embarrassed, he asked him, with an air of some displeasure, whether he intended to oppose d'Antin; though no doubt he knew well enough that he did. Villeroy replied that there were already many opponents, he thought there would be more, and the affair concerned him too closely for him not to make one of their number. The King rejoined that d'Antin had taken very good opinions respecting his claims, and thought they were incontestable; then, without addressing himself to any one in particular, he went on to discuss the question, apparently in hopes of getting up an argument. But Villeroy, content with having held his ground, turned a deaf ear, and said not a word. Next morning the Duke de Tresmes had to submit to the same question, and gave a similar answer; whereupon the King said that, at any rate, he hoped the case would not drag on for any length of time, but would soon be decided one way or the other. On a third occasion he alluded to the subject, addressing himself again to the Duke de Villeroy; he could not understand, he said, how any one could oppose d'Antin's claims, for they injured nobody, only a few of the senior Dukes would lose a step in precedence; and a step more or less could be of very little consequence. Villeroy replied that we were all interested in the question, the Dukes of the latest creations as much as the seniors, and a step more or less in rank was a consideration which at all times touched men most nearly; moreover, he said, the success of d'Antin's pretensions would open the door to a number of other claimants; and, as people appealed to the law about the most trifling matters, he did not see why they should not do so in a question affecting the first dignity of the kingdom. The King was rather taken aback by this dignified answer, and had nothing to say in reply. He even gave up showing his partiality in the affair; he could not, indeed, refrain from alluding to it now and then, but only vaguely, and without giving any opinion. We realised how salutary the resolution was to which we had come with regard to him; for if the persons whom he attacked had replied like timid, fawning courtiers we should have been helpless; whereas, by ignoring the possibility of his having any personal bias in the matter we disarmed him; and, as he was always sensitive on the point of being managed by his favourites, he very soon gave
but openly that he took neither one side nor the other. D'Antin had artfully contrived to make the Parliament believe that the King favoured his claims; Boufflers and larcourt went together to the King to complain of this, speaking to him as men of their quality ought to speak; and the end of it was that he informed the First-President that he wished to remain absolutely neutral, and desired him to convey this declaration to his colleagues. M. de Charost, M. d'Humières, and I, took care to see that the King's injunctions were carried out; we called on the First-President, and afterwards on several of the judges, who assured us that the First-President had signified the King's wishes to the company in clear and unmistakeable terms.

Besides the fundamental weakness of d'Antin's claims, we discovered that the estate of Épernon had formerly been sold to Armenonville; but d'Antin had brought so much pressure to bear on the latter through Monseigneur, that he had consented to sell it back to him. This sale had been concealed by every sort of artifice; even the deeds conveying and reconveying the property had been withdrawn from the lawyers' hands and destroyed; because a dukedom becomes extinct at once if the land originally erected into duchy is sold; the next heir cannot claim the dignity unless the land has come to him by inheritance. D'Antin was very much surprised at our discovery of the sale, and his Armenonville were not a little alarmed at the prospect of being cross-examined on oath, to which we declared we would make them submit.

Besides this, the patent of the dukedom of Épernon contained a clause by which all persons not of gentle birth were excluded; that is, if the dignity fell to an heiress and she married a roturier, neither her husband nor her descendants could succeed to it. Now d'Antin claimed it through his grandmother, M. de Montespan's mother, who was a Zamet, daughter of the famous Sebastian Zamet, so well known under Henry IV, who used to call himself in joke the Seigneur of 1,700,000 crowns; for in those days that was a prodigious fortune for a private person. This rich financier had married a Goth, sister and aunt of the Rouillac; and her mother was sister to the famous Duke d'Épernon; though she died before he was created a Duke. Now these Zamets sprang from the lowest class of the people at Lucca; they enriched themselves by banking, but never pretended to
be of gentle birth. I wrote to Cardinal Gualterio asking him to use his influence with the Grand-duke of Tuscany to procure evidence of the low birth of the Zamets, to have the documents authenticated by the Republic of Lucca, and to send them to me. Only four or five of us knew about this; and we kept our design very secret for fear of its transpiring, in which case d'Antin might have induced Torcy, or possibly the King himself, to interfere and put a stop to the inquiries; moreover, we looked forward to the pleasure of exploding this bomb in full court. However, as will be seen hereafter, the claim never came on for trial.

After the victory of Villaviciosa the Duke de Noailles had laid siege to Gerona; the siege was interrupted by a furious hurricane accompanied by floods, which destroyed the camp and trenches; nevertheless the lower town was carried sword in hand on the 23rd of February; and the upper part, with the two forts, agreed to capitulate if not relieved at the end of a week. Staremberg made no attempt to raise the siege, and the garrison marched out with the honours of war. The Duke de Noailles then broke up his army into detachments and went to the Spanish Court at Saragossa, where he remained several months. Strong reinforcements were sent to Spain, and it was intended that the King should take the field early, the Duke of Noailles commanding a separate corps, but acting under the command of Vendôme. But the efforts of the previous year had exhausted the resources of the Spanish Government; everything was wanting, and it was not before the end of August that the troops could be set in motion.

About this time the Duke de Fronsac, eldest son of the Duke de Richelieu, married the only daughter of the late M. de Noailles, brother to the Cardinal. This little Duke de Fronsac, who was only just sixteen, was the most charming creature imaginable, in body and mind. His father had already introduced him to the Court, where Madame de Maintenon, an old friend of M. de Richelieu, treated him like a son; he was consequently made much of by everybody, including the Duchess of Burgundy and the King himself. He showed himself so clever and witty, and behaved with so much modesty and good-breeding, that he became the pet of the Court. The ladies were enchanted by his good looks; unfortunately his wife, though by no means ugly, had no charms for him. Thrown upon the
A PRETTY LITTLE CHILD

world in this way, he committed a good many follies; and three months after his marriage his father committed that having him sent to the Bastille— a place with which he had good opportunities of making acquaintance, for we all see him there more than once.

A little marriage took place at this time which deserves attention for its singularity: it was that of Villefort and Jeannette. That does not sound promising, but it will turn out to be not devoid of interest. I must explain who the personages were. Villefort's mother was a handsome, dignified-looking person, who was left a widow with several children, and very little means of providing for them. She contrived to obtain an introduction to Madame de Maintenon, who, like the King, was very much influenced by her. She was touched by the sad, modest countenance of Madame de Villefort, and took her under her protection. She always spoke of her as her beautiful widow. Madame de Villefort was of gentle birth, as was her husband; Madame de Maintenon obtained for her an appointment as one of the four sub-governesses to the Children of France.

Jeannette's name was Pincré; her father, a gentleman of Brittany, died and left his wife penniless, with a troop of little children. Being literally reduced to beggary, she came, with her children, and threw herself on her knees before Madame de Maintenon's carriage as she was driving to St. Cyr. Madame de Maintenon was charitable; she made inquiries about this unfortunate family, gave them some money, and found homes for the children as she could. She quite little girl she took for herself, giving her into the care of her attendants till such time as she should be old enough to go to St. Cyr. The child was very pretty, and amused Madame de Maintenon by her prattle; the King sometimes saw her, just as they were sending her out of the room, and caressed her. She was not shy, and the King was delighted at finding a pretty little child who was not afraid of him. He got into the way of playing with her; and became so fond of her that, when the time came to send her to St. Cyr, he would not hear of it. As she grew older she became still prettier and more amusing; she

Madame says he was sent there for boasting of the Duchess of York's favours: a horrible lie, she adds. This was the Duke de Richelieu who took Minorca from the English in 1756, when Byng failed to relieve the island. He did not die till 1788, on the eve of the French revolution.
talked to the King about everything, used to ask him questions, and pull him about, when she saw that he was in a good humour; she used even to play with his papers while he was at work; but all this with wonderful tact and discretion, never letting her familiarity become troublesome.

Latterly the Duchess of Burgundy was rather afraid of her, and suspected her of tale-bearing; but, as a matter of fact, she never did any one any harm. Madame de Maintenon herself began to think that she was rather too clever, and that the King was becoming too fond of her; so she determined to get rid of her honourably by finding a husband for her. She proposed several, but the King always found some objection to them, which made her all the more eager about it. At last she arranged a marriage for her with the son of the beautiful widow; the King gave Jeanette a dowry, with the Governorship of Guérande in Brittany for her husband; and Madame de Maintenon thought she had seen the last of her. She was quite mistaken, however; when all the arrangements for the marriage were complete the King announced that he only consented to it on condition that Jeanette should continue to live with her on the same footing as before; and she had to give in. Who would have thought that a year later, and up to the time of the King's death, Jeanette would be their only consolation in their hours of solitude? The wedding took place in the chapel by night; Madame Voysin gave the supper; the newly married pair slept at Madame de Villefort's, where the Duchess of Burgundy handed the chemise to Madame d'Ossy, as Jeanette was called officially.

All attempts to arrange a compromise in the lawsuit about the inheritance of M. le Prince failed, and the case was to come on for trial. As may be supposed, the best lawyers had been engaged on both sides, and each party made it a point of honour to win the case. The King forbade any of the litigants to appear in court accompanied by a troop of friends; he also forbade them to solicit the judges. The first order was obeyed, and the second was evaded by secret solicitations on both sides. Madame la Duchesse, playing the part of a poor widow persecuted by her sister-in-law, who, she said, wanted to ruin her children, visited the judges several times at their own houses. She went modestly, accompanied only by her daughter and her Lady of Honour, at the hours which suited the convenience
her judges; paid them many compliments, and, without doing much into the merits of her case, tried to arouse their compassion by complaining of the exorbitant demands made upon her, in defiance of her marriage-contract and of the last will of M. le Prince, whose honour she was defending single-handed against these brutal attacks. M. le Duc, accompanied by his brother, M. de Charolais, who was then child, and an extremely beautiful one, also visited the judges. They were less moved by his words, which indeed ever came very readily to him, than by the spectacle of that house of Condé, once so formidable to the Parliament and to the State, now abasing itself before them as the sole arbiters of its fortunes.

At Court nothing was heard of but the undoubted rights of Madame la Duchesse, and the certainty that she would succeed in maintaining them. People could not understand how any one could have the audacity to oppose the favourite sister of a Dauphin so near the throne who had declared himself on her side so openly. The Princess of Condé was looked upon as a violent and unreasonable woman; she was spoken of as a town Princess, to whom nobody would take the trouble to talk; her children, it was said, were growing up obscurely with their mad mother in the depths of the Faubourg St. Germain, and would never have chance in life if Madame la Duchesse, in her generosity, did not overlook their conduct; which might possibly be excused to a certain extent on account of their youth. M. du Maine, being more feared, was treated more leniently; was said that in this affair, as in everything else, he was ragged along by his wife, who hated Madame la Duchesse too much to be capable of listening to reason. Their mode of life at Sceaux, their oddly assorted guests, the festivities and theatricals which went on there, were plastered with ridicule; and lampoons were published making fun of Madame de Vendôme's solitary matrimonial life, not sparing even her personal appearance. Such was the tone of fashion at Court, and in those circles of town society which aped the Court ways. All Monseigneur's friends, and all those who hoped to be admitted to his circle, spoke the same language; all loudly proclaimed themselves on one side of Madame la Duchesse, and tried to ingratiate themselves by doing so. Even Monseigneur himself, accused as he was to obey the slightest hint of the King's
wishes, forgot his usual prudence, and rendered her the service of allowing his august name to be whispered in the ears of her judges.

But the men of the gown who belong to the Parliament are not governed by the same ideas as those of the Council; they do not associate with the Court, and have nothing to hope from Court favour. They are not eligible for the lucrative appointments, the prospect of which keeps the members of the Council subservient; they cannot become Intendants or Conseillers Éditat; and they console themselves for their limited sphere of ambition by entertaining a profound contempt for the dispensers of Court favours. Opportunities for showing this contempt are rare; but for that very reason they never let them slip when they do occur. Such an opportunity presented itself now; and the supporters of the Princesses did not fail to arouse the jealousy and stimulate the courage of the judges by exaggerated reports of the boasts of Madame la Duchesse and her party over their anticipated triumph. The Princesses were also assiduous in their visits to the judges, sometimes remaining with them for hours; but they had the advantage over Madame la Duchesse of having got up their case carefully, and being able to explain it clearly, to the great satisfaction of their auditors. M. du Maine also visited them, and used his pen very effectively in the cause. The mental condition of M. le Prince was discussed with a freedom which was almost indecent; but the public was not much scandalised by it, for the fact is that his conduct during his last years had thrown a good deal of light on his whole life, and people were fully persuaded that he was mad. It is surprising how few people refrained from taking sides in this business; the King himself, though he wished to appear neutral, could not refrain from letting fall expressions which showed his real sentiments, and this only made Monseigneur express himself still more strongly on the opposite side.

At last the case came on for trial, and judgement was given against M. le Duc, almost unanimously, only four judges, whose opinions were not considered as carrying much weight, deciding in his favour. The rage of Madame la Duchesse may easily be imagined; she took to her bed at once, and refused to see any one for a whole day. D'Antin, who had remained perfectly neutral, not so much because
he was the brother of the chief litigants on either side as because he was a clever courtier, kept the King informed of the progress of the trial by special messengers; so that he was the first to hear the result. He restrained his feelings as well as he could; but, in spite of the impenetrable mask which he was accustomed to wear, his satisfaction betrayed itself, even through his expressions of good-will towards both the contending parties. Monseigneur showed as much displeasure as was possible for him; he asked everybody what they thought of the judgement, which for his part, he said, he considered to be bad law; he spent much time in talking over the names of the principal judges; sent a message of condolence to Madame la Duchesse, and took care to let M. du Maine feel his displeasure for several days in succession. M. du Maine told me shortly afterwards that the partisans of Madame la Duchesse were showering insults upon him everywhere: they gave out that he had set mistresses and confessors in motion, and had even appealed to the old memories of the Hôtel de Conti to arouse the sympathy of the Jansenists. It was some time before Madame la Duchesse could appear in public after a judgement which she considered a personal affront; her only consolation was in looking forward to a day when Monseigneur would be able to avenge her for the insults of the bar.

On the 15th of March I lost a friend whom I shall never cease to lament, for such friends are not to be found nowadays: I mean Marshal de Choiseul, senior Marshal of France, Knight of the Order, and Governor of Valenciennes. He was of most distinguished birth, but poor and without near relations; and he owed his advancement solely to his merit and force of character. These were sufficient to enable him, in spite of abilities rather below the average, to withstand successfully the persecution of Louvois and his son, whom he treated with a haughty contempt which he never showed to any one else, and with a steady courage which never failed him at any crisis. Truth, justice, dignity and honour, and equability of mind, were the qualities which distinguished him throughout his life; though very poor, he was absolutely disinterested; and he was rewarded by the veneration of the public and the affection of his many friends. He was looked up to by everybody, though known to be without influence; for the King, while he
treated him with respect and consideration, never showed him any special marks of favour. Though not amusing in society, he was welcomed everywhere; his only enemies were those who were secretly jealous of his merit, and the Ministers, who hated and feared him, as they always hated and feared men of capacity, courage, and noble birth. Poor as he was, he never asked for anything; he was jealous of nobody, never said an ill-natured thing to any one, and contrived to make both ends meet at the end of the year without ever getting into debt. His equipage and table were simple and modest; but the most distinguished personages of the Court felt themselves honoured by his invitations, and gladly accepted them. He did not make himself too common, either at Court, where he only showed himself occasionally from motives of respect, or in society, where his appearances were equally rare; but he saw good company in his own house. It may be said of him that he taught a corrupt society to reverence virtue and merit in his person, rather than the pleasures and petty distinctions which it usually prizes. He died at the age of seventy-seven, after a very brief illness, having received all the sacraments with great piety.

About the same time died Boileau-Despréaux, so well known for his witty writings, especially his satires, in which he surpassed himself, though in reality the most kind-hearted of men. He had been engaged to write the history of the King's reign, but it was found that he had hardly worked at it at all.

A few days later a cruel misfortune befell Marshal Boufflers. His eldest son, a promising and handsome boy of fourteen, was at the Jesuits' College. He got into some boyish scrape with d'Argenson's two sons. The Jesuits, wishing to show that they were no respecters of persons, flogged the boy; but they took care not to treat the other two lads in the same way, though equally guilty, if guilt there was. The fact is, that they had nothing to fear from Marshal Boufflers; whereas they were brought every day into contact with d'Argenson, the very influential Lieutenant of Police, in connection with books, the Jansenists, and various other matters of great concern to them. Little Boufflers took it so much to heart that he fell ill, and had to be conveyed to his home; but nothing could save him. His blood was corrupted, a rash broke out, and in four days
all was over. The grief of his parents may be imagined. The King was sorry for them, and, without waiting to be asked, sent one of his gentlemen to express his sympathy, and tell them that their younger son should have the reversions formerly conferred on the elder. There was a prodigious outcry against the Jesuits, but nothing came of it.

This same month of March saw the first beginnings of the affairs which eventually led to the publication of the "constitution" 1 Unigenitus, so disgraceful to Rome, so fatal to Church and State in France, so advantageous to the Jesuits, Sulpicians, Ultramontanes, and rascals of all sorts. In carrying it out they took, so far as lay in their power, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes as their model; and now, after more than thirty years of persecution, the kingdom is still groaning under their violence and oppression. I certainly shall not undertake to write a theological history; but I wish some one else would write that of the birth and progress of this terrible affair, describing the consequences of the opening of this Pandora's box. One of them has been the silencing of our laws and tribunals to make way for a military inquisition, which still inundates France with lettres de cachet, and has put an end to all justice. For my part, I shall content myself with relating those parts of the story in which I took an active part or which I witnessed myself; dealing with this affair, in short, as I have tried to deal with all others, leaving such parts of it as I neither saw nor learnt directly from the actors to more skilful and less indolent pens than mine.

Father Tellier's mind at this time was set upon two objects: the first, to do something to distract attention from the rebuff experienced by the Jesuits in the condemnation by the Holy See of the practices of their missionaries in China; and, secondly, to destroy the influence of Cardinal de Noailles. He took only two persons into his confidence: Fathers Doucin and Lallemant, Jesuits as artful and false as himself, and as zealous for the advancement of their Society. Father Doucin had also personal reasons for hating Cardinal de Noailles, who for some excesses had caused him to be deprived of a pension which he had contrived to extort from

1 A "Constitution" is a pontifical decree, relating to some question of faith, of morals, or of ecclesiastical discipline; promulgated either by a Bull or by a Brief.
MEMOIRS OF SAINT-SIMON

the weakness of Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, during the last shameful years of his life.

Having laid their plans, they determined, without appearing to take any part in it, to raise a storm about a book called "Moral Reflections on the New Testament," by Father Quesnel, singling out an edition which had been approved by Cardinal de Noailles when Bishop of Châlons. This book has received the approbation of many prelates and theologians, among them the celebrated Vialart, the Cardinal's predecessor at Châlons. For more than forty years it had been studied with edification by the whole Church, without the slightest sign of disapproval. Bissy, when Bishop of Toul, had advised all his clergy to procure copies; assuring them that, if they could not afford to buy many books, they would find in that one sufficient piety and sound doctrine to enable them to instruct their flocks. Father de la Chaise always had it on his table; and, when some one expressed surprise that he should have a book by such an author, he replied that he liked what was good, no matter where it came from; this book he considered to be a storehouse of piety and learning; and, as his occupations allowed him but little leisure for study, he kept it by his side to dip into; for he was sure to light upon something edifying and instructive. It would seem that a book approved by so many eminent authorities might have been safe from attack; but Father Tellier was encouraged by the recollection of the successful onslaught directed against a work by a more illustrious author, and even more highly esteemed, namely, M. Arnauld's book on "Frequent Communion." He did not doubt that he could bring about its condemnation; and at the same time impair the influence of Cardinal de Noailles, who had given it his approbation.

For this purpose he employed two men who were absolutely unknown, but completely under his influence. Champfleur, Bishop of La Rochelle, was utterly ignorant and uncultivated, but ultramontane to the last degree; he had indeed been sent into banishment on that account at the time of the propositions of the clergy in 1682; and the Sulpicians and Jesuits, uniting in defence of this martyr to their common cause, had eventually succeeded in thrusting him into the see of La Rochelle. The second was Valderies de Lescure, less ignorant than the other, but equally boorish and ultramontane; an impetuous firebrand, whom the
Jesuits had made Bishop of Luçon. He was a gentleman by birth, of a poor and insignificant family; the other was of the lowest extraction; both were perfectly obscure, and lived altogether apart from the world. To instruct them in what they were expected to do, Father Tellier sent them a priest named Chalmet, a harsh and pedantic man of some ability, brought up in the extremest ultramontane principles of St. Sulpice. He went secretly to Saintonge; and, paying visits alternately to Luçon and La Rochelle, brought the two Bishops together, and gave them his instructions. He made them publish an address to their clergy, signed by both of them, which condemned Father Quesnel's book, and especially the edition approved by Cardinal de Noailles, and contained a censure of that prelate, in terms unmistakably meant for him, as a favourer of heretics. This document, which was in reality a tocsin, was never intended to remain buried in the dioceses of Luçon and La Rochelle; it was not only brought to Paris, where it was spread broadcast, but it was affixed, contrary to all rules ecclesiastical or civil, to the doors of the churches and the archiepiscopal residence. It was in that way that Cardinal de Noailles and the Parisian world first became aware of its existence.

These two Bishops had each a nephew at the seminary of St. Sulpice: very stupid young men, as incapable as their uncles of doing anything on their own initiative, far less of taking such a daring step as the dissemination of this address; indeed, from the prompt manner in which it was done, it was evident that several persons must be acting in concert. Cardinal de Noailles, however, in his wrath at the insult offered him by two rural Bishops, committed a gross blunder; he imitated a dog which bites the stone thrown at him instead of the hand which threw it. He sent for the Superior of the seminary of St. Sulpice and ordered him to turn these two young men out of the house immediately. The Superior remonstrated, pointing out what a scandal their expulsion would cause, for they were worthy ecclesiastics, and their reputation would be injured; but the Cardinal was inflexible. The rector of St. Sulpice, hearing of the affair from the Superior, hoped that his influence would produce more effect, and went to the Cardinal at once; but all in vain; the two young priests were expelled. Madame de Maintenon was highly offended at the want of deference shown to her
The Cardinal complained to the King of the insult offered to him, and appealed to him for justice. The King sympathised with him, but pointed out that he had already taken the law into his own hands. After this, the affair dragged on slowly for a considerable time; for the Cardinal, confident that the King would take his part, did not think it necessary to see him except on his usual day for an audience; and that came only once a week.

In the meantime Father Tellier did all he could to set the King's mind against the Cardinal; and a letter was composed and sent to the two Bishops for their signatures. It was intended for the King's eyes, and was presented to him by the confessor, to whom it was addressed as the natural channel of communication between a Bishop and his Sovereign. This letter was extremely clever. It was supposed to be written by the two Bishops conjointly; but it was published immediately, and a glance at it was sufficient to make it clear that those two mitred animals had no share in its composition beyond affixing their signatures. After praising the King for his watchful care over the Church, and comparing him to Constantine and Theodosius, they implored him to punish Cardinal de Noailles for his act of injustice; not for their own sake, they said, but in the interest of the Church and sound doctrine; for what had happened to their nephews, who had nothing to do with the publication of the address, showed how men might be persecuted if they ventured to defend the good cause. After a long argument directed against Father Quesnel and his book, they went on to denounce Cardinal de Noailles as an enemy to the Church, the Pope, and the King, comparing him with those Bishops of the Imperial city who, under Constantine and his successors, made everybody tremble before their authority, and were the terror of the orthodox Bishops.

The style of this long and artful letter, and especially the description of the Cardinal, so ludicrously unlike him in every respect, clearly unmasked the mystery of iniquity, and showed that it had been composed, not at La Rochelle or Luçon, but by persons who took advantage of the expulsion of the two young priests to arouse the King's jealous sensitiveness on the subject of his own authority, and so
divert his attention from the unprovoked nature of the original attack, by throwing the Cardinal on the defensive. They succeeded in their object; the Cardinal, at his first interviews with the King, had been kindly received, and his expulsion of the two nephews had been mentioned rather by way of reminder than in terms of rebuke; but by the time that he attempted to complain of the second letter the King's mind had been poisoned against him, and he was drily told that, having begun by taking the law into his own hands, he must get out of his difficulties as well as he could.

Two days later the Cardinal published a brief but strongly worded address, in which he pointed out some errors in the letter of the two Bishops. He treated it as a libel composed in their names, saying, rather maladroitly, that he did not think them capable of writing it; he complained of the readiness of certain Bishops to interfere in other dioceses, and forbade his flock to read their publications. The King had told him, rather ungraciously, to take what steps he pleased to defend himself; it would seem that he was quite within his rights in publishing this manifesto; nevertheless, it was looked upon as a fresh offence, and he was forbidden to appear at Court unless sent for.

The controversy continued to rage for some time. Hébert, Bishop of Agen, formerly parish-priest of Versailles, wrote an admirable letter to the two Bishops, remonstrating with them for troubling the peace of the Church, and making personal attacks on Cardinal Noailles. On the other side, Berger de Malissoles, Bishop of Gap, issued a mandate in the same sense as that of the two Bishops; less vulgar indeed than theirs, but equally pungent; to which the Cardinal replied. Finally, he wrote an admirable letter to the Bishop of Agen, recapitulating the whole story in a spirit of the greatest modesty and moderation. This letter was looked upon as a manifesto on his part, and it was widely distributed. The whole affair had disgusted everybody except the devoted slaves of the Jesuits; and this manifesto enlisted the sympathies of the public to such a degree that the Cardinal's opponents thought it wise to let the matter drop for a time, while they considered their plans for attacking him at the first favourable opportunity. Here I must leave this affair, to mention other matters.

I have spoken elsewhere of the Abbé de la Bourlie, Guiscard's brother; who, though he held several benefices and
had no reason to be disaffected, deserted to England, and spread seditious libels in Languedoc. A traitor to his own country, he was not more loyal to his new friends. He was mixed up in some plot or other against the Ministry; but, however that may be, he was arrested in St. James's Park in London, towards the end of March, for suspicious practices. Having been brought before Harley and St. John, Secretaries of State, he stabbed the former twice with a penknife which he had taken unperceived from a table in the antechamber. Fortunately Harley's wounds were not serious; but in the struggle which ensued the gallant Abbé received three sword-thrusts, from the effects of which he died in prison a few days later.

About this time Lassé arranged a marriage between his sister and his son. Lassé had tried all sorts of trades in his time; and Madame la Duchesse had described some of them in a set of very amusing, but very unflattering, verses. She did not foresee at that time what was to happen to her in connection with his son. This son had served with some distinction as Brigadier of infantry. Through his father's influence he became a follower of the House of Condé. He was a well-made man, and, though his face was like a monkey's, he found favour in the sight of Madame la Duchesse. About the time of this marriage with his aunt a liaison sprang up between him and Madame la Duchesse which soon became notorious. Some flimsy veil was thrown over it during the remainder of the King's life, but after his death there was no more attempt at concealment; Lassé was her master, and managed the whole of her affairs. The King saw what was going on; but towards the end of his life he shut his eyes to many things, for fear of giving himself trouble.

Easter Sunday this year fell on the 5th of April. On the 8th Monseigneur went to Meudon, to stay there for a week, till the Court went to Marly on the following Wednesday, and the courtiers submitted their names to be asked there. These visits to Meudon were a cause of great embarrassment to me. Since the extraordinary instance of Monseigneur's credulity which I have mentioned, I had not dared to go there; the place seemed to me to be infested with devils. Madame la Duchesse, d'Antin, Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and her sister, and all the rest of the cabal, were my personal enemies; it was certainly one of them
whom I had to thank for the attempt, so nearly successful, to poison Monseigneur's mind against me; I could not doubt that they would play me some other trick of the same kind; in short, Monseigneur's Court to me was a place full of traps and pitfalls. I filled up the time as well as I could during these visits to Meudon, never sending in my name for an invitation, much less venturing to present myself there uninvited. If the present state of affairs was embarrassing, it will be easily understood with what dread I looked forward to the time, rapidly approaching, when Monseigneur would ascend the throne, and the cabal which surrounded him would have the power, as they most certainly had the will, to ruin me completely. However, it could not be helped; I could only keep up my courage by reflecting that things never turn out so badly or so well as one anticipates; and I continued to hope against hope that, in the uncertainty of all human affairs, something might turn up to save me.

Accordingly, during this fortnight of Easter I had gone to La Ferté for rest and meditation, far from the world and the Court. The latter, with the single exception of what related to Monseigneur, was now a place where everything smiled on me; but that exception was a cruel thorn in my flesh; and it seemed as if there was no remedy, when it pleased God to deliver me from it in the most unexpected manner. My only guests at La Ferté were a Norman gentleman who had been a Captain in my regiment, and was much attached to me, and M. de St. Louis, that old and distinguished Brigadier of cavalry, who had been living for the last thirty years in the precincts of La Trappe. I had been out walking with them all the morning on Saturday, the 11th of April; when I returned to my room shortly before dinner I found that a courier had arrived from Madame de Saint-Simon, bearing a letter in which she informed me of Monseigneur's illness.
CHAPTER VII

1711


As Monseigneur was on his way to Meudon on the Wednesday after Easter, accompanied by the Duchess of Burgundy, they met a priest bearing the Host to a sick person; and got out of the carriage to adore it on their knees. He asked who the sick man was, and was informed that he was suffering from small-pox, which was very prevalent at the time. Monseigneur had had small-pox as a child, but very slightly, and he was much afraid of it; that evening he said to Boudin, his physician, that he should not be surprised if he had caught it. Next morning he got up, intending to go out wolf-hunting; but while dressing he became faint, and fell back in his chair. Boudin made him go to bed again; and the state of his pulse gave the greatest uneasiness all day. The King was informed by Fagon that Monseigneur was not very well, but thought nothing of it, and went after dinner to Marly, where he took a walk. The Duke and Duchess of Burgundy dined at Meudon, and would not leave Monseigneur for a moment. The Princess performed the duties of a daughter-in-law with the grace which she showed in everything she did; she could not feel much real grief at the thought of the event which might
possibly be impending; but she was assiduous in her attentions, though quite natural and unaffected. The Duke of Burgundy had never had small-pox; but, although the nature of Monseigneur's complaint was strongly suspected, he insisted on remaining with him, and only left him, with the Duchess, to attend the King's supper.

On hearing their report the King announced that he should go to Meudon next morning, and remain there during Monseigneur's illness; he forbade his grandchildren to go there, and was thoughtful enough to extend the same prohibition to everybody who had not had small-pox. To those who had had the disease he gave permission to pay their respects at Meudon or not, as they pleased; that is, according as their fears or their sense of propriety prevailed. Most of the guests staying at Meudon were sent away; the only ladies remaining there were Madame la Duchesse, the Princess of Conti, Mademoiselle de Lislebonne, Madame d'Espinoy, Mademoiselle de Melun, and Mademoiselle de Bouillon; the last because she never left her father, who accompanied the King as Grand Chamberlain. Mademoiselle Choin was also there; and Madame de Maintenon arrived after dinner, but the King would not allow her to go near Monseigneur's room. Matters were in this state when Madame de Saint-Simon sent off the courier to La Ferté.

I shall continue to speak of myself as truthfully and candidly as I try to speak of other persons. In my present situation with regard to Monseigneur the first impression made on me by the news of his illness may be easily understood. From what Madame de Saint-Simon told me, I saw the result would be quickly decided, one way or the other. I was enjoying myself at La Ferté, and I determined to stay there and await the next day's news. I spent the day distracted by conflicting thoughts and emotions; trying as a Christian to keep down the feelings of a courtier, but unable to dismiss altogether from my mind the prospect of a deliverance so sudden, so unexpected, and so full of hope for the future.

The next day was Sunday; early in the afternoon another courier arrived, whom I had been awaiting impatiently. He brought the news that Monseigneur's complaint was ascertained definitely to be small-pox, and that he was going on as well as could possibly be expected; I was the
more inclined to believe this because I also heard that Madame de Maintenon had gone to Versailles, to dine with Madame de Caylus, and had not returned to Meudon till late. I thought Monseigneur would recover, and determined to stay where I was; nevertheless, I listened to the advice of Madame de Saint-Simon, as I have done all my life, and always with good results. Very reluctantly I gave orders for my departure, and started early next morning. When I arrived at La Queue, about six leagues from Versailles, I met a financier named La Fontaine, whom I knew; and he came up to my carriage while we were changing horses. He had just seen some of Madame la Duchesse’s people, who reported that Monseigneur was going on well, with details which made me look upon him as practically out of danger. This view of the case was confirmed on my arrival at Versailles by Madame de Saint-Simon and everybody I met; the general opinion was that there was no ground for uneasiness, except, of course, the treacherous effects of such an illness on a man of fifty, of a full habit of body.

The King held his Councils and did business with his Ministers as usual. He saw Monseigneur several times a day, remaining some time by his bedside. On this Monday, the day of my return, he went to walk at Marly, where the Duchess of Burgundy joined him. As he was passing the outskirts of the gardens at Versailles he saw the Princes, his grandsons; but would not let them come near him, merely calling out “Good-day” to them. The Duchess of Burgundy had had small-pox, though it had left few marks. The King was never really happy out of his own houses; for this reason his visits to Meudon had always been brief and infrequent, and merely to please Monseigneur. Madame de Maintenon felt herself still more out of her element there, for wherever she went she always required some entirely private place of retreat, inaccessible to anybody except the Duchess of Burgundy; such were St. Cyr when she was at Versailles, her house in the town of Fontainebleau, and she had a similar place of refuge at Marly. Seeing the probability of a long stay at Meudon, the King’s upholsterers received orders to furnish Chaville for her, a house which Monseigneur had bought from the representatives of the late Chancellor, Le Tellier, and enclosed in his park.

On my arrival at Versailles I wrote to M. de Beauvilliers
at Meudon, asking him to explain to the King that I had come back on hearing of Monseigneur’s illness; and that I would have gone to Meudon, only, as I had never had small-pox, I understood that it was forbidden. He wrote back to say that I had done well in returning, and that the King had taken my explanation in good part, sending express injunctions that neither I nor Madame de Saint-Simon was to go near Meudon. I cannot say that I was much distressed by this prohibition.

There were some queer contrasts at Meudon. The Choin was there in her garret; but Madame la Duchesse, Made-moiselle de Lislebonne, and Madame d’Espinoy hardly stirred out of Monseigneur’s room, and the concealed lady could only enter when neither they nor the King were present. The Princess of Conti was also assiduous in her attendance; but she felt that she would be very much in the way if she did not set Monseigneur at liberty on this point, and she did it with a very good grace. She told Monseigneur that she had long known who was at Meudon; that she had not been able to keep away while so uneasy about him; but she did not mean her affection to become troublesome, so he must treat her without ceremony, and send her away when he did not want her; and she would take care not to go into his room without finding out whether it would be convenient for him to receive her. He was very much pleased by this attention on her part; and she carried out her agreement without a sign of ill-humour. Her conduct in this respect was worthy of the highest praise.

Father Tellier’s position at Meudon was as strange as that of Mademoiselle Choin. Both were supposed to be there incognito; they lived in their respective garrets, waited on only by a few confidential servants; yet everybody knew they were there. The only difference between them was that the damsels saw Monseigneur both by day and night, but never went anywhere else; whereas the confessor went to the King’s room, and wherever else he pleased; Monseigneur’s room being the only place he never visited. The King did not see Mademoiselle Choin; he thought Madame de Maintenon saw her, and was rather displeased when he found out, rather late in the day, that she did not. Thereupon Madame de Maintenon sent her a message of apology by Madame d’Espinoy, saying she
hoped they would meet—rather a strange message to pass from one room to another, between two persons living under the same roof! They never did meet again.

Versailles presented a very different scene. The Duke and Duchess of Burgundy were openly presiding over the Court; and it seemed like the first beams of the coming dawn. The whole Court was assembled there, and many visitors from Paris flocked to join it; people even came from Meudon; and, as prudence and precaution are not French qualities, they were admitted on giving their word that they had not entered Monseigneur's room that day. The rooms could hardly contain the crowds who came to pay their respects to the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy; their lever and coucher, their dinner and supper hours, and when they went out walking, were the favourite times for doing so. The young Prince and Princess bore themselves with an air of dignity and cheerful gravity; they were accessible to all, and careful to talk to everybody; there was no one in the crowd who was not anxious to please them, and all were gratified by their reception. The Duke and Duchess of Berry, on the other hand, were almost like nonentities. Every quarter of an hour or so a courier arrived from Meudon bringing the latest bulletins; Monseigneur was reported to be going on as well as possible, and everybody was ready to take a favourable view of his case. Five days went by in this way, every one thinking incessantly of what the near future might bring forth, and endeavouring beforehand to accommodate himself to circumstances, whichever way they turned out.

On Tuesday the 14th of April, the day after my return to Versailles, the King, who, as I have already mentioned, was bored at Meudon, held the usual meeting of the Council of Finance in the morning, and, contrary to his usual custom, the Council of Despatches in the afternoon, to pass away the time. I went to see the Chancellor on his return from this last Council, and asked him how Monseigneur was; he replied that Fagon had just told him that "the patient was going on as well as possible, far better than they could have expected." He seemed very sanguine; I trusted his report the more readily because he was on friendly terms with Monseigneur; and also because he admitted that in an illness of that kind it was too soon to feel absolute confidence of recovery.
Monseigneur’s faithful friends, the Paris fishwives, who had come forward in such a remarkable way when he had that serious attack of indigestion, which was mistaken for apoplexy, now gave a second example of their zeal. They arrived at Meudon in several hired carriages. Monseigneur wished them to be admitted; they threw themselves on their knees at the foot of his bed and kissed it, and, in their delight at hearing that he was progressing so favourably, declared that they would have a Te Deum sung when they returned to Paris. Monseigneur, who was not insensible to such marks of affection from the common people, told them it was too soon for that; he thanked them warmly, however, and gave orders for them to be shown over his house, entertained at dinner, and dismissed with presents of money.

As I came back to my rooms, after seeing the Chancellor, I saw the Duchess of Orleans walking on the terrace of the new wing; she called to me, but I pretended not to see or hear her, because Madame de Montauban was with her; and I regained my quarters, my mind full of the good news about Monseigneur. My rooms opened on to the upper gallery of the new wing, only separated by it from the rooms of the Duke and Duchess of Berry, who were to entertain the Duke and Duchess of Orleans to supper that evening. Some ladies also were invited; but Madame de Saint-Simon had excused herself, as she was not very well. I had not been long in my room when the Duchess of Orleans was announced; she had come for a chat till it was time to go to supper. I went to receive her in Madame de Saint-Simon’s room; she was out, but soon came back and joined us.

The Princess and I had been longing to see each other and talk over the present conjuncture of affairs, respecting which she felt exactly as I did. It was now eight o’clock in the evening of this Tuesday, the 14th of April; she had returned not an hour before from Meudon, where she had seen the King. She repeated Fagon’s opinion, which I had already heard from the Chancellor, and told me how hopeful everybody was at Meudon. She spoke of the assiduity of the doctors, who left nothing untried, not even the homely remedies which they usually despise; and which, according to her, had produced the very best effects. To speak candidly, and confess our shame, I must admit that we consoled with each other over our bad luck in seeing
a man of Monseigneur's age and bodily habit escape so easily from such a dangerous complaint. As she reflected mournfully, with all the wit and indescribable way of putting things peculiar to the Mortemarts, after such a purification of his constitution there was not a chance left, not a poor little shred of a chance, of an apoplectic stroke; and all hopes of a fit of indigestion had been destroyed long ago, for his former illness had frightened Monseigneur, and made him very obedient to his doctors' orders. We came sadly to the conclusion that we must resign ourselves to the prospect of seeing him live and reign for many years; and we made many sage reflections on the vanity of all human hopes, even those apparently the most solidly founded, when a Prince, whose life gave so little promise of usefulness, could gain fresh health and vigour from an illness which brought him to the very gate of death. In short, we let ourselves go; not without scruples of conscience which, from time to time, interrupted this extraordinary conversation; but the Duchess, in her funny, plaintive way, always brought it back again to the same point. Madame de Saint-Simon, like a pious woman as she was, did all she could to keep us within bounds; but her interference only served to stir up a very singular conflict in our hearts; for though the sentiments we continued to express so freely were, humanly speaking, only natural to persons in our situation, we were reminded that they were certainly not in accordance with religion. Two hours passed away in this fashion; they seemed short to us, but our conversation was brought to a close by supper-time. The Duchess of Orleans went to her daughter's rooms; and we returned to mine, where in the meanwhile a pleasant party had assembled to sup with us.

While things thus went on so quietly at Versailles, a change was coming over the scene at Meudon. The King had been several times during the day to see Monseigneur, who was much touched by these marks of affection. When he saw him early in the afternoon, before the meeting of the Council of Despatches, he had been so much struck by the extraordinary swelling of Monseigneur's face that he cut his visit short, and shed a few tears as he went out. The attendants reassured him as well as they could, and when the Council was over he went for a walk in the gardens. In the meantime, Monseigneur had mistaken the Princess of Conti for some one else; and Boudin was much alarmed at it. The
Prince had been alarmed about himself from the first; he kept asking his attendants whether he was in the same state as people with small-pox usually were. He confided to the Princess of Conti on one occasion that he had felt very unwell for some time, though unwilling to show it; and so weak that, during service on the Thursday before Easter, he had been unable to bear the weight of his prayer-book.

Towards four o'clock in the afternoon he felt worse, and Boudin suggested to Fagon that they should call in some other doctor; for he said that, as court physicians, they were not in the habit of attending patients with infectious diseases, and had little experience of them; he begged that another doctor might be sent for from Paris. Fagon, however, was very angry, and scouted the suggestion; he said a consultation would only give rise to disputes and arguments, and they could manage the case perfectly well themselves; he also insisted on keeping Monseigneur's condition secret, although he was becoming worse every hour, so much so that about seven o'clock the servants, and even some courtiers, began to notice it. But every one trembled before Fagon; he was present, and nobody ventured to warn the King or Madame de Maintenon. Madame la Duchesse and the Princess of Conti, as helpless as the rest, tried to reassure themselves. The strangest thing was that the doctors would not even try a more energetic treatment till the King had sat down to supper, for fear of frightening him, and let him finish his meal without interrupting him by any message; and, though he had been alarmed by Monseigneur's appearance in the afternoon, he still believed, relying on Fagon's assurances, that all was well; especially as he heard nothing further.

While the King was thus quietly at supper, Fagon and the others who were in the sick-room began to lose their heads; they tried remedy after remedy, without waiting to see whether they took effect or not. The priest, who came every night before retiring to inquire after the patient, found all the doors wide open, contrary to the usual custom, and the valets in despair. He entered the room; and, seeing what they were thinking about, though rather too late, ran to the bedside, took Monseigneur's hand, and began talking to him of God. Seeing that he was quite conscious, though almost speechless, he got something out of him which passed for a confession, and suggested to him some ex-
pressions of contrition. The poor Prince repeated some of the words distinctly, others in a confused manner, beat his breast, and pressed the priest’s hand; he seemed to be in a very excellent frame of mind, and received the priest’s absolution with humility and gratitude.

While this scene was going on the King left the supper-table, and almost fell to the ground when Fagon suddenly made his appearance in violent agitation, crying out that all was lost. The terror of every one at this sudden transition from complete security to utter despair may be easily imagined. The King, hardly conscious of what he was doing, instantly set off for Monseigneur’s rooms; some indiscreet courtiers tried to prevent him, but he rebuked them sharply, saying that he insisted on seeing his son again, and perhaps some remedy might yet be found. As he was going into the sick-room, the Princess of Conti met him, and stopped him, pushing him back with her hands, saying that henceforth he must think only of his own preservation. The King, almost fainting, fell back on a sofa, asking everybody who came out of Monseigneur’s room for news; but hardly any one dared answer him. He had already sent for Father Tellier, who had gone to bed, but quickly dressed and went into the sick-room. It was too late, according to the report of the servants; but the Jesuit, perhaps with the object of calming the King’s mind, assured him that he had given Monseigneur a well-founded absolution. Madame de Maintenon had hastened to the King’s side; she sat by him on the sofa, endeavouring to weep. She tried to induce him to come away, and the carriages were all ready in the court-yard; but he would not move till all was over. Monseigneur was unconscious, but the last struggle went on for nearly an hour. Madame la Duchesse and the Princess of Conti divided their attentions between the dying man and the King, often coming back to the side of the latter; while the helpless physicians, the despairing valets, and a buzzing throng of courtiers kept elbowing each other, moving about in a purposeless sort of way. At last the fatal moment arrived; Fagon came out, and announced that all was over.

The King was deeply grieved, and shocked that Monseigneur’s confession should have been put off till too late. He spoke rather roughly to Fagon, and then went out, accompanied by Madame de Maintenon and the two Prin-
cesses. As he was about to get into the carriage, he found that Monseigneur's berline had been brought round for him; he made a sign with his hand that another carriage should be sent for, the sight of that one being too painful. Nevertheless, he was not altogether absorbed in grief; for, happening to see Pontchartrain, he called him, and told him to warn his father and the other Ministers to be at Marly next morning, rather later than usual, for the meeting of the Council of State, which was held every Wednesday. I refrain from any comments of my own on this instance of coolness and presence of mind; I will only say that those who witnessed it, and those who heard of it afterwards, were equally astonished. Pontchartrain replied that the business of the Council was merely formal; and suggested that it would be better to postpone the meeting for a day, to which the King assented. He then got into his carriage with some difficulty, supported on both sides; Madame de Maintenon got in next, and sat down beside him; Madame la Duchesse and the Princess of Conti followed, taking the back seats. A crowd of officials of Monseigneur’s household were on their knees on each side of the courtyard as the King drove out; imploring him, with strange bellowings, to have compassion on them, for they had lost everything and would die of hunger.

Meanwhile all was quiet at Versailles, where no one had any suspicion of the horror which prevailed at Meudon. Our guests had left us after supper, and I was chatting with Madame de Saint-Simon, who was going to bed, when an valet of ours, for whom she had obtained a situation in the Duchess of Berry’s household came in, looking quite frightened. He told us that some bad news must have arrived from Meudon, for the Duke of Burgundy had sent a whispered message to the Duke of Berry, who immediately left the supper-table, his eyes full of tears; a second message had arrived shortly afterwards, whereupon the whole company had hastily left the room. I was much startled by this report, and went immediately to the Duchess of Berry’s rooms; there was no one there; they had all gone to the Duchess of Burgundy’s rooms, whither I followed them. There I found all Versailles assembled, or just arriving; the ladies in déshabillé, for most of them were just going to bed; every door was open, and all was confusion. I heard that Monseigneur had received Extreme Unction, and was in a hopeless condition; also, that the King had sent word to
the Duchess of Burgundy that he was going to Marly, and wished her to wait for him in the Avenue, between the two stables, to see him as he passed by.

My mind was distracted by conflicting emotions; nevertheless, I observed the scene as attentively as I could. The two Princes and Princesses were in the little room opening out of the bed-chamber, where the usual arrangements had been made for the Duchess of Burgundy's toilet before going to bed; it was now filled with a confused crowd of courtiers. She went backwards and forwards from one room to the other, waiting till the time came for her to meet the King. Her bearing, always graceful, betrayed signs of trouble and compassion, which people were good-natured enough to ascribe to grief; now and then she said a few words to one person or another as she passed by. It was easy to see what every person in the room was thinking about; to do so it was not necessary to have any intimate knowledge of the Court; all one needed was a pair of eyes; for every countenance was expressive. One could see who were the outsiders, with no special interests of their own at stake; these stood quietly looking on; as for the others, some were overwhelmed with grief, the rest visibly striving to keep up an appearance of gravity, to conceal their real joy and sense of emancipation.

My first impulse was to ask over and over again for information; for I could hardly believe that the scene before me, and the words I heard, were real. I was afraid all this alarm might have been caused by exaggerated reports; then better feelings asserted themselves. I reflected on the common lot of mortals, and reminded myself that the day would come when I, too, should find myself at the gates of death; but, notwithstanding my efforts to bring my mind to a sense of religion and humanity, feelings of relief and joy would keep breaking in; my own personal deliverance was so great and unexpected that I could not help thinking, perhaps even more strongly than the facts warranted, that Monseigneur's death would be an immense gain to the State. Amidst all these reflections a lingering fear would obtrude itself that perhaps, after all, the sick man would recover; and I felt heartily ashamed of myself. While thus absorbed in my own thoughts I did not forget to send word to Madame de Saint-Simon that she had better come down; in the meantime I employed myself in watching every face and
every gesture, not only to gratify my curiosity, but to compare each person's behaviour with the judgement I had already formed of his character, in which I have rarely been deceived. I wished also to observe closely those first movements which people can seldom control in moments of emotion; for, to any one who knows the world in which he lives, they often betray leanings and connections which might long remain unsuspected in quieter times, and so enable him to form a more correct forecast of the future.

I saw the Duchess of Orleans come in; but her dignified and reserved demeanour betrayed no emotion. She went into the inner room, from which she soon returned in company with the Duke of Orleans; he seemed excited and discomposed, but more by the surrounding scene than by anything else. They went away; I note this particularly, on account of what happened shortly afterwards in my presence. A few minutes later I saw the Duke of Burgundy in the distance; I looked sharply at him, but perceived no signs of grief; only the preoccupation of a mind disturbed by a sudden shock. Valets and waiting-women were already crying loudly, without much regard for propriety; their excessive grief showed how much people of their class were losing. About half an hour after midnight news came that the King was approaching, and the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy came out of the inner room; he seemed more deeply moved than on the previous occasion, and went back at once. The Princess took her scarf and head-covering from the toilette-table with a deliberate air, crossed the room, and, accompanied only by her ladies, went down the great staircase to her carriage. Her eyes were slightly wet with tears; but the furtive glances of curiosity which she cast on all sides betrayed her.

I took this opportunity to go out in search of the Duchess of Orleans, for I was longing to see her. I heard that she was with Madame, to whose rooms I went. The Duchess of Orleans was just returning to her own rooms, and asked me, with a very serious air, to come with her; the Duke of Orleans stayed behind. She sat down on reaching her room; the Duchess de Villeroy, the Maréchale de Rochefort, and five or six other ladies, were there. I was annoyed at finding so many people; the Duchess of Orleans, who also found them very much in the way, took a candle and went into an inner room. I then went to say a word in the ear of
the Duchess de Villeroy, whose feelings with regard to the passing event were identical with my own; she nudged me, and whispered to me to be very careful, and keep myself under control. I sat silent, very ill at ease, listening to the narrations and lamentations of the ladies; at last the Duke of Orleans appeared at the door of his room and called me. I followed him into his innermost room; he was almost fainting, and my own knees were trembling under me from the excitement of the scene and my own emotions. It chanced that we sat down facing each other; what was my amazement at seeing tears fall from his eyes! "Good God, Sir!" I exclaimed, starting to my feet in astonishment. He understood me at once; in a broken voice, and weeping in good earnest, he said: "I do not wonder that you are surprised; I am so myself; but I cannot help it. He was a good-hearted man, and I have known him all my life; he always treated me kindly and affectionately, so long as other people let him alone, and he followed his own impulses. I know my grief will not last; people had poisoned his mind against me, and in a day or two I shall feel his death as a relief; but just now my heart is touched." I praised these sentiments, still expressing my surprise, considering the position he was in with Monseigneur. He buried his face in a corner, sobbing and weeping bitterly; I could not have believed it, if I had not seen it myself. After a short silence, I begged him to calm himself, reminding him that he would have to go back to the Duchess of Burgundy's rooms directly, and that if people saw him with red eyes they would sneer at him as a hypocrite; so he did his best to check his tears, and dabbed his eyes carefully. He was still engaged in this way when a message came to say that the Duchess of Burgundy had returned, and that the Duchess of Orleans was going to her rooms; he went to rejoin her, and I followed them.

The Duchess of Burgundy's carriage had stopped in the Avenue, between the two stables; she had not long to wait for the King. As soon as he drew near she got out and went up to his carriage; Madame de Maintenon, who happened to be sitting on that side, called out: "Do not come too near, Madame; we are full of infection!" The King made some motion; but did not embrace her, for fear of infection; the Princess immediately regained her carriage and drove back to the château. Fagon's absurd reticence
about Monseigneur’s condition had taken everybody in so completely that the Duke de Beauvilliers had returned to Versailles, after the meeting of the Council, intending to sleep there, which he had not done previously since Monseigneur’s illness. As he always rose very early, he was in the habit of going to bed about ten, and did so on this occasion without any misgivings. He was aroused by a message from the Duchess of Burgundy, and arrived in her rooms shortly before her return. She found him, with the two Princes and the Duchess of Berry, in the little room where she had left them.

The first embraces after a return so full of significance having been got over, the Duke de Beauvilliers, seeing that they were suffocating in that little room, induced them to go through the large room into the saloon¹ which separates it from the Gallery. Some windows were thrown open; and the two Princes, each with his wife by his side, sat down on a sofa near the window, their backs turned to the Gallery. A number of other persons were in the saloon, sitting or standing in confused groups, the ladies most familiar with the Princes sitting on the ground near their sofa. There, and in the other rooms, one could read people’s faces easily. Monseigneur was no more; everybody knew it, everybody was saying so; nothing more was to be feared or hoped from him; and amid the crowd, the agitation, and the confusion of this eventful night one could, from his first natural, unconstrained actions, see clearly what was passing in each person’s mind.

From the more distant rooms could be heard the stifled bellowing of the valets, lamenting the death of a master so exactly suited to them, and the advent of another to whom they looked forward with trembling. Among them were to be seen some of the leading personages of the Court, who had hurried in to obtain news; and it was easy to tell from their demeanour which shop they belonged to.* In the nearer rooms was the general crowd of courtiers of all sorts. The majority—that is to say, the fools—were heaving sighs, pumped up from the heels of their boots; with dry and wandering eyes they praised Monseigneur; but it was always the same thing they praised him for, namely, his kind heart; and they pitied the King for losing so good a son. Those

¹ The room now called the Salon de la Paix.
* “De quelle boutique ils étaient balayeurs.”
among them who thought themselves cleverest expressed anxiety for the King's health; they were pleased with themselves for thinking of it, amid such a scene of confusion; and took care to make other people aware of their loyal sympathy by repeating the same thing over and over again. Others, really grieved, either on their own account or because of the ruin of their cabal, wept bitterly; or restrained themselves with an effort so perceptible that it drew attention to them as much as if they had sobbed outright. The most courageous, or the cleverest politicians, among these afflicted ones, sat in corners, their eyes fixed on the ground, meditating on the probable consequences of this unexpected event; especially as affecting their own prospects. Little or no conversation passed between them; only from time to time an expression of grief would be responded to by a neighbour; with haggard and sombre eyes they sat motionless, save for an involuntary twitching of the hands. Those, on the other hand, who were already thinking hopefully of their future prospects assumed a look of gravity verging on austerity; but it was all in vain, the veil was too flimsy to conceal their thoughts from any one with good eyes. They, also, sat motionless, keeping watch over themselves lest their satisfaction should be perceived; but the quick glances of the eyes made up for the immobility of their bodies. An occasional fidgety change of posture, as of a person seated uncomfortably, a careful avoidance of each other's eyes, and a certain indefinable air of recovered liberty, perceptible in spite of all their efforts to conceal their feelings, marked out these persons in an unmistakeable manner.

The two Princes, with their Princesses seated by their sides and taking care of them, were exposed to full view. The Duke of Burgundy was quietly shedding genuine tears, prompted by nature and religion. The Duke of Berry was also shedding tears; but, so to speak, they were tears of blood, so bitter did they seem; he did not sob, he cried and howled. Sometimes he stopped, almost suffocated; but broke out again so noisily that it seemed like a trumpet of despair, and roused others to demonstrations of grief, either genuine or assumed from a sense of propriety. He was in such a state that it became necessary to undress him where he was, and send for medical aid. The Duchess of Berry was beside herself—we shall soon see why; horror and despair
were imprinted on her countenance, with grief, not springing from affection, but from self-interest. At intervals she shed floods of tears, and involuntary gestures betrayed the bitterness of her spirit. Frequently aroused from her meditations by her husband's cries, she was prompt to assist him, embraced him, gave him smelling-salts; but immediately afterwards she fell back on her own thoughts, and her outcries were only smothered by fresh torrents of tears. The Duchess of Burgundy also consoled her husband; but that task was comparatively easy. Her great difficulty was to feel as if she required consolation herself. One could see that, without pretending an emotion which she did not feel, she was doing her best to acquit herself with propriety. She responded to the cries of her brother-in-law by blowing her nose frequently; she managed to pump up a few tears, which she sedulously encouraged, and by a judicious application of her pocket-handkerchief contrived to make her eyes red and her face smeared. But all the while she was casting furtive glances round, and observing the behaviour of the bystanders.

Meanwhile, the Duke de Beavilliers, standing near them, was calmly giving orders for the relief of the Princes: such as to keep people from entering the room (though the doors were left open); in short, he saw after everything, without the slightest flurry or mistake; any one would have thought he was performing his usual duties at the King's lever or dinner. His sense of religion would not allow him to rejoice at Monseigneur's death, and his love of truth prevented him from feigning a grief which he did not feel.

Madame, who had dressed herself again in full dress, arrived on the scene shrieking; really hardly knowing why she shrieked, or why she had dressed. She inundated the Princes with tears in embracing them, and presented the curious spectacle of a Princess dressed up in clothes of ceremony for the purpose of coming to scream and cry among a crowd of women in their dressing-gowns; it was almost like a masquerade.

The Duchess of Orleans had withdrawn from the neighbourhood of the Princes, and sat near the fireplace with her back towards the Gallery. Most of the ladies had left her, to her great joy, and there were round her only the Duchess de Sforza, the Duchess de Villeroy, Madame de Castries, and Madame de Saint-Simon. They gathered in a group
close to one of the watch-beds; and, as they all thought alike concerning the event of the night, they began talking it over freely in low tones. Here and there, all along the Gallery and the great suite of rooms, were watch-beds, with curtains, in which the Swiss on duty used to sleep, for the sake of security; and this night they had been placed as usual before the bad news arrived from Meudon. While these ladies were conversing, Madame de Castries, who was leaning against the bed, felt something move, and was very much frightened; for she was frightened of everything, though in a very amusing way. A moment later they saw a huge naked arm lift up the curtain, and it revealed a great honest Swiss, in bed, only half awake and thoroughly amazed; he stared first at one, then at another, hardly knowing where he was; finally, not thinking proper to get up in such a numerous assemblage, he sank back into his bed and let fall the curtain. He had apparently gone to bed before any news came, and slept so soundly that he had only just awoke. Something ridiculous often happens in the midst of the most solemn scenes. This adventure made some of the ladies laugh; nevertheless they, and the Duchess of Orleans also, were rather alarmed lest their conversation should have been overheard. However, they took courage when they reflected on the sleepiness and lumpishness of the person concerned.

Though everything seemed to prove that Monseigneur was dead, I could not make up my mind to believe it, till I should have been assured of the fact by some one worthy of credit. I happened to meet M. d’O, and put the question to him; he assured me positively that it was so. I tried not to be too glad; I do not know that I was altogether successful; but it is certain that neither joy nor grief blunted my curiosity. Though careful not to behave in an unseemly way, I saw no reason why I should wear a long face. I had now nothing to fear from the fire of the citadel of Meudon, or the sorties of its implacable garrison; and I gave myself up more freely than I had yet done to the pleasure of studying the behaviour of the crowded assemblage.

It must be confessed that, to one initiated into the secrets of a Court, the first scenes after an unexpected event of this sort are interesting in the extreme. Each face recalls the labours and intrigues which have been devoted to building up individual fortunes, or to the formation and growth of
cabals. One thinks of the friendships, the hatreds, the calumnies, the meannesses, the tricks, in which all these persons have been engaged; one sees the stupefied disappointment of those who thought their fortunes assured, and the satisfaction of their enemies in the opposite cabal; the delight of the latter at their unexpected triumph (and among them I myself was not the least interested person), the rage and despair of the others, and their vain efforts to conceal them. To cast one's eyes rapidly round the throng, taking advantage of the trouble and confusion of a first shock to penetrate the hidden depths of each soul; the surprise with which one finds that, owing to some lack of feeling or intelligence, some individuals do not come up to one's anticipations, while in others one finds more than could have been expected,—all this, I say, affords to any one capable of enjoying it one of the keenest pleasures which can be found in a Court. I gave myself up to it the more freely, because, in my great deliverance, I found myself associated with some of the principal personages present. I rejoiced in their satisfaction, and at the same time felt that I could now look forward to a quiet future of which I had for some time despaired. On the other hand, the chief losers by this event were not only members of a hostile cabal, they were to a certain extent my personal enemies; my first glance at them showed me how much they were losing, and how completely they were overwhelmed; and I saw it with indescribable pleasure. The whole story of the various cabals, their subdivisions, ramifications, and overlappings; the persons who composed them, and the motives by which each was actuated—all these were so firmly imprinted on my memory that a meditation of several days could not have revealed more to me than did this first glance at the faces which surrounded me; I could even imagine the faces of those who were not present; and the thought of what they must look like was not the least savoury of the pleasures I was tasting.

I spent a good hour in gazing on the tumultuous scene presented by each room in this vast suite. At last M. de Beauvilliers thought it was time to deliver the Princess from this irksome publicity; he suggested that the Duchess of Burgundy's apartments should be cleared of the crowd, and that the Duke and Duchess of Berry should retire to their own rooms. This advice was at once adopted. The
Duke of Berry went away, supported at times by his wife, and attended by Madame de Saint-Simon and a few other persons. I followed them at a distance; being unwilling to risk the exposure of my inquisitive looks any longer to the public eye. The Duke of Berry wished to sleep in his own room, but the Duchess would not leave him; both were so overcome with emotion that it was necessary to have medical assistance at hand. Their night was spent in cries and tears. The Duke of Berry kept asking for news from Meudon; he would not understand the cause of the King's withdrawal to Marly, but persisted in asking whether there was not still hope. It was not till the morning was well advanced that the sad truth came home to him, and his grief when it did is indescribable. The Duchess was hardly less afflicted, but she did her best to comfort her husband.

The Duke and Duchess of Burgundy passed a quieter night. Madame de Lévi whispered to the Princess that, as she had no real reason to be afflicted, she hoped she would not think it necessary to act a part. She replied, quite simply, that without any acting she was really moved by the scene, and by a natural feeling of pity; but she did not intend to do more than common propriety required; and in fact she did behave accordingly, decently, and without affectation. They insisted on some Ladies of the Palace spending the night in their room, in arm-chairs; their bed-curtains remained undrawn, and the room quickly became the temple of Morpheus. The Prince and Princess were soon asleep, and only woke up once or twice. It is true that they got up rather early. The fountain of tears was dried up in them; only a few scanty drops flowed after this, as occasion required. The ladies who kept watch or slept in the room told their friends what occurred there. No one was surprised to hear their report; and, as Monseigneur was now no more, no one was scandalised by it.

Madame de Saint-Simon and I spent two hours together after leaving the Duke and Duchess of Berry, at last we went to bed, rather as the most reasonable thing to do than because we were tired; but we slept so little that at seven I was up again. It must be confessed, however, that sleepless nights such as this are sweet, and such awakenings delicious.
View of Mons
During all this time horror reigned at Meudon. As soon as the King had started all the courtiers there followed him, crowding into such carriages as were ready, and others which were hastily sent for. In an instant, Meudon was a desert. Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and Mademoiselle de Melun went up to Mademoiselle Choin’s garret, where she was only just beginning to feel seriously uneasy. She had known nothing of what was going on; nobody had thought it worth while to tell her the sad news; only the distant cries had warned her of some misfortune. Her two friends got her into a hired carriage which happened to be still there, and took her off to Paris.

The crowd of subordinate officers of Monseigneur’s household wandered about the gardens all night; the dispersion was universal. One or two valets remained with the corpse; but, to his great praise, La Vallière was the only courtier who did not abandon his master after his death. With some difficulty he procured the attendance of a Capuchin or two to pray by the body. Decomposition set in so rapidly that the opening of the windows was not sufficient, and La Vallière, with the priests and the few valets, had to pass the night outside on the terrace. Dumont and his nephew Casau were shut up in their own rooms, plunged in the deepest grief; they had lost in a moment all the fruits of a life of toil and assiduous devotion. Dumont was hardly capable of giving the necessary orders next morning. I felt most truly sorry for him.

So little uneasiness had been felt about Monseigneur’s condition that the possibility of the King’s going to Marly had never entered anybody’s head. The consequence was that when he arrived there nothing was ready; the keys of the rooms could not be found; it was with difficulty that a few candle-ends could be scraped together, supplemented by tallow-dips. The King remained for more than an hour in Madame de Maintenon’s antechamber while things were in this condition, their companions being Madame la Duchesse and the Princess of Conti. Madame de Dangeau and Madame de Caylus, the latter of whom had hastened from Versailles to be with her aunt, were also there; but these two ladies, from motives of discretion, only went now and then into the antechamber. The courtiers as they arrived from Meudon congregated in the saloon, not knowing where they were to sleep. There they
remained for a long time, with no fire and hardly any light, the keys being still missing; for the servants had quite lost their heads. The bolder of these courtiers ventured by degrees to poke their noses into the antechamber; before long all had crowded in, anxious to see what was going on, and hoping that their zeal would be observed. The King, sitting in a corner between Madame de Maintenon and the two Princesses, was weeping bitterly. At last Madame de Maintenon's room was opened, and he was delivered from this importunity; he remained there about an hour longer, and went to bed about four in the morning, leaving Madame de Maintenon free to breathe, and compose herself. The courtiers found out at last where they were to sleep; and Bloin received orders to give out that those who wished to stay at Marly were to send in their names to him, and the King would make his choice out of the list.
CHAPTER VIII

1711

Description and character of Monseigneur—Mademoiselle Choin—Wife or mistress?—Monseigneur's sloth and indifference to public affairs—His likes and dislikes—His relations with his two sons—The Duchess of Berry schemes to set the brothers at variance—Explanation of her frantic grief at Monseigneur's death—Summary of his character

Monseigneur was rather above the middle height, very stout, but not unwieldy. His air was dignified and haughty, though not offensively so. His face would have been handsome if the late Prince of Conti had not accidentally broken his nose while they were playing together as children. His complexion was fair; his face very red and sunburnt. He had remarkably well-shaped legs; his feet were singularly small and meagre. He fumbled in his walk, always putting his foot down twice in the same place; he was afraid of falling, and, if the ground was not perfectly smooth and level, he always required support. He looked well on horseback, but was not a bold rider; Casau always gave him a lead out hunting, and if he lost sight of him he stopped at once. He seldom went beyond a canter, and would often wait under a tree, not knowing what had become of the hounds; if he could not find them after a leisurely search he would return home. He had formerly been very fond of eating, though never to excess; since his violent attack of indigestion, which was mistaken at first for apoplexy, he had made only one real meal in the day, and carefully restrained his appetite; though, like all the Royal Family, he was naturally a great eater. Almost all his portraits resemble him.

As for his character, it cannot be said that he had any. He had a certain amount of sense, as he showed in the affair of the King of Spain's will, but no sort of ability. He looked proud and dignified, and he really was so by
nature; but his portly presence and his habit of imitating
the King had something to do with it. He was extremely
obstinate; his whole life was taken up with a series of
petty observances. His indolence and dullness made
people think him good-natured, but in reality he was hard.
It is true he was kind to valets and persons in subordinate
positions, but it was only a show of kindness, and never
grew beyond asking them familiar questions. He was,
indeed, prodigiously familiar with such persons; but on
the whole quite indifferent to the grief or misfortunes of
others. This insensibility arose, however, more from want
of thought, and the effect of evil examples, than from a
bad disposition. He was extraordinarily silent, and con-
sequently could be trusted with secrets. It was generally
believed that he never talked about the affairs of the State
to the Choin; possibly because neither was capable of
understanding them. Dullness and timidity combined
made him reticent to a degree which has seldom been
equalled; at the same time he had a most exaggerated
sense of his own position (a strange thing to say of a
Dauphin), and at all times and in all places was most
punctilious in exacting what he considered his due. Made-
moiselle Choin once made some remark to him about his
silent ways; to which he replied that the words of persons
in his position carried great weight, and if not carefully
considered might do mischief not easily repaired: for that
reason he usually preferred remaining silent to talking.
Silence was also easier for a man of his sluggish disposition
and perfect indifference to what was going on; however,
his maxim was undeniably excellent, though he rather
overdid it. Of all the lessons he had received from the
King and the Duke de Montausier this was apparently the
one he best remembered.

He was extremely business-like in his private affairs,
and always kept accounts in his own hand. He could tell
exactly what everything cost him, down to the merest
trifles, though his expenditure was enormous, chiefly on
building, furniture, and jewels of all kinds; also on his
visits to Meudon and his pack of wolf-hounds, for he
allowed himself to be persuaded that he really enjoyed
that sport. He had formerly played high; but, since he
took to building so much, had restricted himself to low
stakes. In other respects he was miserly to a very un-
becoming degree; only on rare occasions he gave a pension to some valet or servant; he did, however, give alms pretty liberally to the priest and Capuchins of Meudon. It is inconceivable how little he gave to his dearly beloved Choin; it amounted only to 400 louis every quarter, paid in gold coins, whatever their current value might be. He gave them to her himself, always the exact sum without a pistole more or less; and that was all he did give her, except that he made her a present once or twice a year at the outside; and he thought twice before he made those.

To do this woman justice, it is hardly possible to be more disinterested than she was; partly, perhaps, because she knew it was useless to expect much from Monseigneur; but really, from the whole tenor of her life, it would seem that she was so by nature. Whether she was married to him or not still remains a mystery. All the persons who knew them most intimately have always stoutly denied the marriage. She had never been more than a plain, dark-haired, pug-nosed woman, with the air of a servant-girl, in spite of an intelligent face; and long before Monseigneur’s death she had become fat, old, and stinking. Nevertheless, considering how she used to sit in an armchair in the parvulos of Meudon, while the Duchesses of Burgundy and Berry had only tabourets; how she used to speak familiarly of these ladies, in Monseigneur’s presence, as the Duchess of Burgundy and the Duchess of Berry, without the prefix of Madame; how curtly she used to address them, and find fault with their dress, their manners, and their conduct,—considering all this. I say, it is difficult not to think that she was really their mother-in-law, and on the same footing as Madame de Maintenon. It is true that she did not call the Duchess of Burgundy “darling,” and that Princess, in addressing her, called her “Mademoiselle,” and not “Aunt”; but in other respects she treated her exactly as she treated Madame de Maintenon. But the intimacy between them had never been great; Madame la Duchesse, the two Lislebonnes, and all that clique stood in the way. The Duchess of Burgundy did try to overcome the obstacle; but she was timid, and at Meudon

1 Madame says she was short and fat, with a face like a pug-dog; but, she adds, very intelligent and clever. She says Monseigneur first took to snuff on account of the unpleasant smell from Mademoiselle Choin’s decayed teeth.
she felt herself fettered and constrained; whereas with the King and Madame de Maintenon she was free and at her ease.

Again, when we consider that during Monseigneur's illness Mademoiselle Choin visited him several times a day, and that the King, who knew it, so far from turning her out of the house, as is usual under such circumstances, was actually displeased with Madame de Maintenon because she had not been to see her, it seems to me strong evidence in favour of a marriage. Madame de Maintenon, herself a married wife, always made a great parade of prudery and religion; neither she nor the King had any particular reason to show consideration towards Mademoiselle Choin, if her connection with Monseigneur was not authorised by the Sacrament; yet Mademoiselle Choin's presence at Meudon never caused the smallest embarrassment. This incomprehensible attachment, so similar to the King's, except in so far as the beauty of the beloved object was concerned, was perhaps the only point of likeness between the father and son.

Monseigneur's understanding being such as I have described it, he was unable to derive much profit from the excellent instruction which he received from the Duke de Montausier, and from Bossuet and Fléchier, Bishops of Meaux and Nîmes. On the contrary, such little intelligence as he had was extinguished by a harsh and austere education, which increased his natural timidity, and gave him an extreme aversion, not merely for work and study, but for any kind of intellectual amusement. By his own confession, from the day that he was emancipated from his masters, he never in his whole life read anything but the Paris letter in the Gazette de France, to see the deaths and marriages. His dullness and ignorance combined with his natural timidity to make him tremble before the King, who, for his part, did all he could to keep up this feeling of terror and make it last as long as he lived. He was always the Sovereign, never the father; or if, by some rare chance, he did allow a sign of paternal affection to escape him, it was never quite unalloyed by the royal authority, even in the privacy of their domestic circle. It was, indeed, very seldom that they found themselves alone together; the bastards and confidential valets were nearly always present; and Monseigneur felt himself ill at ease.
Constrained by the bonds of respectful attention, he never dared to express an opinion or assert himself in any way; though he saw the Duke of Maine doing both with complete success, and the Duchess of Burgundy joking and taking all sorts of liberties with the King, sometimes rather daring ones. He felt a secret jealousy of them in consequence, but it produced no effect on his own conduct. He had not the natural cleverness of M. du Maine, who was moreover the son of the person, not of the Sovereign, so that the King was not on his guard against him; and he had not the advantage of youth like the Duchess of Burgundy, whose childish tricks the King did not mind because he was accustomed to them, and because of her graceful ways.

Monseigneur had nothing to recommend him to the King except that he was his son and future successor; and it was precisely for that reason that the King kept him at arm's length. He had not the smallest influence; in fact, if he showed a liking for any one it was enough to put an end to all that person's hopes of advancement. The King was so jealous of him that he never could procure any marks of favour for the members of his household; not even for his menins, although they were selected by the King himself, who would have been much displeased if they had not performed their duties with the utmost assiduity. D'Antin was an exception, but his position was quite unique; and Dangeau was another, but he was only nominally a menin, and was brought into close contact with the King in other ways; besides that, his wife was the intimate friend of Madame de Maintenon. The Ministers never dared go near Monseigneur, and it was very seldom that he asked them to do anything for him. If one of their number, or any courtier of distinction, was on good terms with him—like the Chancellor, the First Equerry, Harcourt, or Marshal d'Huxelles—he concealed the fact most carefully; with Monseigneur's full approval, for if the King found it out he at once suspected a cabal. That was the cause of his extreme coldness to M. de Luxembourg, which neither his victories nor the servile means he employed to ingratiate himself could ever overcome.

Accordingly, when Monseigneur was asked to use his influence on behalf of any one, he used to reply candidly.
that it would only ruin his chances. ¹ He sometimes expressed himself rather bitterly on this point, in his monocyllabic way, when the King had refused him some favour, which he always did very ungraciously. The very last time Monseigneur went to Meudon he arrived there in great indignation at being refused some trifling favour for Casau, who told me the story; he was so much annoyed that he protested he would never again expose himself to such a rebuff, and consoled Casau with the hope of more favourable times in the ordinary course of nature. An expression of this sort from him may be looked upon as nothing less than a prodigy. It may be observed, in passing, that the deaths of both Monsieur and Monseigneur occurred at moments when they were furious with the King.

For many years Monseigneur had been kept fully informed of all the secrets of the State, but his knowledge of them never had the smallest influence on the Government; he knew them, but that was all. His consciousness that he had no influence, perhaps also his limited intelligence, made him hold aloof as much as possible from public affairs.² He was, it is true, an assiduous attendant at the Council of State; but he hardly ever went near the Councils of Finance or Despatches, though he had an equal right to do so. As for his being present during the King’s hours for private work, there never was any question of it; and, except when very important news arrived, no Minister ever went to him with reports; Generals and diplomatists still more rarely. The coldness with which the King treated him, and the feeling that his wishes were never consulted, made Monseigneur uncomfortable at Court, though to the day of his death he never ventured to stir away from it without first informing the King, which was equivalent to asking permission. He fulfilled the duties of a son and a courtier with the most punctilious exactitude, never falling short, but never exceeding them in the

¹ Madame says, however, that the King offered more than once to assist his friends in any way he pleased, and that if he had chosen he might have had great influence.

² Madame says he refused to have anything to do with public affairs, lest they should interfere with his hunting. Some people, she says, thought he acted in this way from prudence, for fear of making the King think he was ambitious, and arousing his jealousy. “But for my part,” she adds, “I am convinced that it was nothing but pure sloth on his part, and a wish to lead an idle life, free from worries of any kind.”
slightest particular; none of the King's subjects was ever more respectful and deferential in his manner. Consequently, he found Meudon and the liberty he enjoyed there delicious; and, though he must have seen that the King did not like his going there so often, he never appeared to notice it, or reduced his visits either in number or duration. The King disapproved of these visits chiefly because they drew away a large number of courtiers; and this was especially noticeable in summer, when the Court was scanty owing to the number of men absent with the army. Monseigneur spent very little time at Versailles; and even when the Court was at Marly, if the visit was to last any time he used to break it by going to Meudon for a few days. From all this it may be supposed that he felt little affection for the King; but he never ceased to revere and admire him; he did his best to imitate him in such ways as came within his scope; and the cautious restraint he put upon his conduct showed to the last how much he feared him.

It has been said that he looked forward with apprehension to the death of the King, and no doubt he may have expressed that sentiment; but it is not easy to reconcile it with what I have already said about their relations to each other. One thing is certain: a few months before his death, the Duchess of Burgundy, accompanied by Madame de Nogaret, went into his room, and found him, with Mademoiselle Choin, Madame la Duchesse, and the two Lislebonnes, busily engaged in looking through a volume of engravings representing the coronation. He was explaining them to the others, and listening with much complacency to their remarks, such as: "That is the man who will buckle on your spurs; this one will put on your royal mantle; there are the Peers who will place the crown on your head," and so on. The arrival of the Duchess of Burgundy did not put a stop to this singular amusement, which did not seem to indicate any serious uneasiness at the prospect of losing his father and becoming King in his place. I heard the story two days afterwards from Madame de Nogaret.

He never liked Madame de Maintenon, nor would he ever condescend to obtain any favour through her influence. He paid her a formal visit on his return from each of his few campaigns, and on one or two other rare occasions, but
he never saw her in private; occasionally he went into her room for a few minutes before supper when he intended to accompany the King. On the other hand, her behaviour to him was marked by complete indifference, and let him perceive clearly that she considered him of no account. The common hatred of the two Sultanas for Chamillart, and the difficulty of overthrowing him, brought them together, as I have mentioned already; and effected the miracle of making Monseigneur bestir himself zealously in their cause; but he would never have dared to do so if he had not been urged on by Mademoiselle Choin, and felt sure of Madame de Maintenon's co-operation. When its original cause was removed their alliance cooled, and was gradually dropped.

Except Mademoiselle Choin, the only persons he really trusted were Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and Madame d'Espinoy. Almost every morning he used to go to the former's rooms to take his chocolate; and no one but her sister was admitted at this hour, which was the time for secrets. It was owing rather to their influence than to any feeling of his own that he still kept up some remains of his old affectionate intercourse with the Princess of Conti; even his affection for Madame la Duchesse was due in some measure to the same influence, though assisted by the amusements which he found in her company. They were also the cause of his preference for M. de Vendôme over the Prince of Conti; a Prince of the Blood of his superior ability, who had been brought up with Monseigneur from childhood, would have had too much influence over him if their old friendship had remained unimpaired; and the two sisters, who wanted to govern him themselves, quietly pushed the Prince of Conti into the background.

The terrible cabal against the Duke of Burgundy also sprang from the same origin. But, in spite of the ascendancy which the two sisters had acquired over Monseigneur, he did not lend himself to all their fancies; influenced either by Mademoiselle Choin, who knew them well and distrusted them, or by Madame la Duchesse, who certainly trusted them no better than Mademoiselle Choin, and had no sympathy with their pretensions to rank. Feeling uneasy on this point, I once got the Bishop of Laon to find out from the Choin what Monseigneur thought of the dispute between the Dukes and the foreign Princes. The
Bishop was brother to Clermont, who had got into trouble about Mademoiselle Choin at the time when the Princess of Conti turned her out of her house; and she always kept up her intimacy with both brothers. She said Monseigneur sometimes used expressions showing that he was not so favourable to the rank of the two sisters as they could wish, and had said openly that he thought the Dukes had been unjustly treated. This reply of the Bishop of Laon reminds me of Monseigneur's answer to the King, when he expressed himself well satisfied with me after my audience on the subject of the church collections; he said he had known all along that I was in the right.

Since Monseigneur's death (for during his life-time she never repeated anything he said to her), Mademoiselle Choin has given out that he was as strongly opposed to his son's marriage with Mademoiselle de Bourbon as with Mademoiselle, because he could not bear the thought of a strain of bastard blood being intermingled with his own. Very possibly this may be true. He never concealed his disapproval of the honours showered on the bastards; nor did he ever give any positive sign of preference for Mademoiselle de Bourbon. But Madame la Duchesse had so much influence over him, and she was so powerfully backed up by the whole cabal, that she would no doubt have brought him round to her side. The Choin has since declared that she was herself opposed to either marriage because of the taint of bastardy. There can be no doubt that she opposed Mademoiselle, for we have seen, from what Bignon told me, that she held the Duke of Orleans in aversion. It is also very possible that she may not have wished to see the influence of Madame la Duchesse increased by the marriage of the Duke of Berry with Mademoiselle de Bourbon; but it is not easy to believe that she would have ventured openly to oppose the whole clique which surrounded Monseigneur, especially as she herself was frequently absent from him.

I must not omit a story which is highly creditable to this woman, whether mistress or wife. When Monseigneur was about to take command of the army in Flanders, in the campaign which followed that of Lille (the order appointing him was afterwards cancelled, and he did not go), he made a will, in which he left a large legacy to Mademoiselle Choin. He told her so, and showed her a sealed letter
mentioning the fact, which was to be delivered to her in case of his death. She was extremely grateful, as may be supposed, for this mark of his foresight and affection; but she gave him no rest till he put both letter and will into the fire, in her presence, declaring that she had saved enough to give her an income of 1,000 crowns, and that would be quite sufficient for her if she had the misfortune to survive him. After this, it seems rather surprising that no mention of any provision for her should have been discovered among Monseigneur's papers.

Harsh as may have been his bringing-up, he always retained some affection for the celebrated Bishop of Meaux, and a feeling of true regard for the memory of the Duke de Montausier, which he delighted to manifest towards all the members of his family, and even to such of his old servants as he remembered. Perhaps the chief reason why d'Antin, amidst all the vicissitudes of his fortunes, always found a friend in Monseigneur was that he had married a granddaughter of the Duke de Montausier. Sainte-Maure was another instance of this feeling; he was engaged to be married, and his affairs were very much embarrassed. Monseigneur of his own accord gave him a pension, with these words, as creditable to himself as they were kind to the recipient, that he would always be a friend to a nephew of the Duke de Montausier, or to any who bore his name. Sainte-Maure showed himself worthy of such a favour; his engagement was broken off and he never married; as the pension had been granted only on consideration of his approaching marriage, he refused to accept it. Monseigneur acquiesced in his refusal; I will not say that he would have done better if he had insisted on his taking the pension.

Sainte-Maure was perhaps the only man of quality whom he ever assisted with money; it is true that he was his confidant so long as he kept any mistresses. The King, however, disapproved of his doing so; and his amours were rather passing dissipations than intrigues of gallantry, of which indeed his nature was hardly capable. Dumont and Francine, who managed the Opera-house for so many years in partnership with his father-in-law, Lully, used to provide actresses for him. The Raisin, a famous and very beautiful actress, was the only one with whom he had anything like a lasting liaison. People used to
treat her as a person of influence; and old Marshal de Noailles, with all his parade of piety, was not ashamed to call on her, and sent her the best dishes from his own table. Monseigneur had a daughter by her, the only child he had by any of these creatures; she was brought up in a rather humble way in the Augustine convent at Chaillot. After his death the Princess of Conti took care of the girl, and married her to a gentleman; but she died soon afterwards. His great attack of indigestion put an end to Monseigneur's liaisons of this sort. From his strong repugnance to bastardy it is probable that he would not have recognised any illegitimate child of his own. He never could endure M. du Maine, who had treated him with little respect in his younger days, but who was in great fright later on when he reflected on the probable consequences of his imprudence. The Count de Toulouse, on the other hand, always behaved to Monseigneur with deference and attention, and was treated kindly enough in return.

There were only two men about the Court whom Monseigneur regarded with aversion, and this aversion had not been instilled into him from outside, as in the case of Chamillart and some others: I mean, Marshal Villeroy and the Duke de Lausun. He was always delighted when he heard some good story at their expense. He was, indeed, a little cautious in his behaviour to the Marshal, though he often made him feel extremely uncomfortable; but with regard to the other he put no restraint upon himself. The Duke de Lausun, however, unlike the Marshal, never took the slightest notice of anything he said. I never discovered the origin of this aversion. He had also a strong dislike for the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers; but that was caused partly by the influence of the cabal, partly by the dissimilarity between their code of morals and his own.

The story I have already told about Monseigneur's credulity with respect to me, and the ease with which the Duchess of Burgundy undeceived him, is a sufficient illustration of his acuteness and strength of mind. The clique who had got him in their clutches had no difficulty in making him believe anything they chose to tell him; one may easily imagine what his reign would have been like under such influences. Their great object was to sow dis-
cord between him and the Duke of Burgundy, and they succeeded completely; the coldness between the two Princes was a subject of general remark in the Court. The piety, virtues, and ability of the son, and his strong desire to cultivate his talents, were demerits in the eyes of the cabal, because they were so many reasons for admitting him to a share in the Government, if his father had known how to appreciate them. His rising reputation with the public was also a source of alarm to the cabal, as was the respect which the King was beginning to show for his opinions; and they made good use of them to arouse Monseigneur’s jealousy. The young Prince behaved to him with a modest respect which would have mollified any father but one incapable of seeing or judging anything for himself.

The Duchess of Burgundy shared her husband’s disfavour; it is true that she treated Monseigneur with more freedom and familiarity than he did, but she also came in for snubs and rebuffs which the young Prince, by his more guarded behaviour, escaped. She did her best to row against the current, with a grace and charm capable of disarming prejudices better founded than Monseigneur’s were, and she did succeed in winning him back from time to time; but the people who surrounded him looked upon this melting of the ice as too dangerous for their future projects, and took care not to let the daughter of the house regain the good graces of her father-in-law. The Duke of Burgundy was therefore deprived of her assistance, and their situation became worse from day to day. Shortly before Monseigneur’s death he accepted an invitation from them to dine at the Menagerie, and threw them over. This brought matters to a crisis; the Duchess of Burgundy thought it was time to have recourse to other weapons than patience and forbearance; she gave the two Lislebonnes to understand that she would hold them responsible for any rudeness shown to her by Monseigneur. The threat struck terror into the whole cabal, not so much with regard to the future as to the present; for the King’s health was still good, and there was no immediate prospect of a change. The two sisters begged for an interview, which was refused. Even Madame la Duchesse was alarmed, and d’Antin had some uncomfortable moments. Monseigneur tried to make up for what he had done by
civilities and attentions, which were obviously forced; and, after a short period of rather unnatural calm, things resumed their former course, though the cabal were a little more cautious for the remainder of the time.

As I mentioned when speaking of the campaign in Flanders, the same clique who laboured with such audacity and perseverance to ruin the Duke of Burgundy, and alienate him and the Duchess from Monseigneur, were no less anxious to strengthen the affectionate relations between him and the Duke of Berry, from whom they had nothing to fear in the future. Angry as they were at the Duke of Berry's marriage, they made Monseigneur treat his bride with kindness, and even procured her admission at once to the sanctuary of the parvulo. In this way they sought to clear themselves from the suspicion that they wished to alienate both Monseigneur's sons from their father; they also hoped to sow jealousy between the two brothers, and put an end to their close fraternal union. Their design was partly successful; but they failed completely in their principal object, for, in spite of all their artifices, the mutual affection of the two brothers remained absolutely unchanged.

But the Duchess of Berry turned out to be as ambitious and wicked as themselves. The Duke of Orleans often called his wife Madame Lucifer, and she accepted the name with a complacent smile. He was right; she would have been a marvel of pride, never surpassed, if she had not had a daughter; but that daughter went far beyond her. This is not the place to draw either of their portraits; with regard to the Duchess of Berry I will only say what is necessary to explain the affairs which I am now relating. She was a prodigy of cleverness, pride, ingratitude, and folly; and, in no less a degree, of self-will and debauchery. She had hardly been married a week when she began to show herself in her true colours on all these points; with the extraordinary falseness and duplicity which were ingrained in her nature, and on which she prided herself as a useful talent, she did conceal her real character as much as possible; that is, so long as her ill-temper would allow her, but then she often let her temper get the upper hand. The consciousness that her mother was a bastard was galling, and the thought that she had been in subjection to her intolerable; though her mother had always been
careful to put as little constraint upon her as possible. She despised her father's weakness, while exulting in the ascendancy she had acquired over him; she hated every person who had been concerned in bringing about her marriage, because it hurt her pride to think that she could be under an obligation to any one. These sentiments were soon apparent; indeed, she had the folly not only to confess them, but to boast of them. And so it is that, where worldly objects are concerned, one works in the dark; and all human foresight and wisdom are confounded by the discovery that the success for which one has laboured turns out to be, not merely unprofitable, but positively mischievous.

All the schemes and intrigues connected with the marriage were directed to two objects: first, to prevent the choice of Mademoiselle de Bourbon, for many important reasons which I have fully explained; secondly, to confirm and strengthen the bond of union between the two Princes and the Duchess of Burgundy; not only for the sake of peace in the Royal Family and harmony in the Court, but to provide some sort of counterpoise to the influences which surrounded Monseigneur, in view of his approaching reign. As it turned out, it seems, from what has been reported of Mademoiselle Choin, that very possibly Mademoiselle de Bourbon would not have been chosen in any case for the Duke of Berry; and the substitute we provided for her was a Fury, who did all she could to ruin those who had worked for her, to sow discord between the two brothers, and to injure her benefactress, for no other reason than that she was her benefactress. She threw herself into the arms of her own enemies because they were also enemies of the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, thinking that she herself would be able to govern Monseigneur by means of persons who were furious at her marriage, and detested the Duke and Duchess of Orleans. The object of these persons was to govern Monseigneur themselves; most certainly they had no intention of giving up the fruits of their toils, their plots, and, I may say, their crimes, for the benefit of the Duchess of Berry. Such, however, was the sagacious, honourable, easy project which that Princess took into her head immediately after her marriage.

We have seen that during the intrigues which led to
the marriage the Duke of Orleans kept nothing concealed from her; consequently she thoroughly understood the hidden forces which moved the Court; she knew all about the cabal which surrounded Monseigneur, and the unpleasant relations between him and the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy. She was quick to perceive his very different feelings towards her husband; the warm manner in which she was welcomed in the parvulo, and the caresses showered on her, contrasted with the snubs and chilly treatment which the Duchess of Burgundy received there, inspired her fine design, and determined her to work at it without loss of time. As may be supposed, she had not received the counsels which the Duchess of Orleans thought fit to give her in a meek and docile spirit; on the contrary, she replied tartly and angrily; and, as she was confident that she could do what she liked with her father, she did not scruple to assume the airs of a Daughter of France with her own mother. A quarrel ensued between them, and only became more bitter as time went on. She behaved in much the same way to the Duchess of Burgundy, who had looked forward to treating her and advising her like a daughter; but who, seeing her advances so ill received, wisely determined to have nothing more to do with her. She was afraid of a quarrel, especially with the Duke of Berry, whom she had always loved and treated like a real brother, and who treated her in return with the most sincere confidence and respect. This fear was only too well founded, though the Duchess of Burgundy was most careful to avoid giving any pretext for a quarrel.

The schemes of the Duchess of Berry required a breach between the two brothers, and to effect this she had to begin by making one between her husband and his sister-in-law. It was a very difficult task, for everything combined to make such a quarrel distasteful to the Duke of Berry; his close union with his brother, his affection for his sister-in-law, which was of long standing; the amusements he found in her company, and the assistance she gave him in his dealings with the King and Madame de Maintenon. But, being himself honest and truthful, he was not quick at detecting artifice and falsehood; he was not clever, and had little knowledge of the world; and, lastly, he was madly in love with his wife, and in a state of perpetual adoration of her cleverness and wit; conse-

iv—11
quently she succeeded in alienating him from the Duchess of Burgundy. That rendered the breach between the sisters-in-law complete: a sacrifice very agreeable to the cabal, to please which the Duchess of Berry was now ready to go all lengths.

Matters had reached this stage when Monseigneur died; and this explains the frantic grief shown by the Duchess of Berry, which no one except those behind the scenes could understand. In an instant all her schemes fell to dust, and she saw herself at the mercy of a Princess whom she had treated with the basest ingratitude. Her husband would no longer be on a footing of equality with his elder brother, now the Dauphin; the cabal to which she had sacrificed her soul was powerless; she could expect no help from her mother, who was justly offended with her; nor from her weak and unstable father, for his own reconciliation with the King was not very sincere, and Madame de Maintenon had never forgiven him. For the future she would be entirely dependent, for her pleasures and amusements as well as for things of greater importance, on the Dauphin and Daphiness; she had no one to take her part with them except her husband; and him she had just forced into a quarrel with the Princess whose influence was all-powerful with the King, with Madame de Maintenon, and (in everything except public affairs) with the Duke of Burgundy. She felt that it would be easy for them to show favour to the Duke of Berry without extending it to her; she was, moreover, conscious of certain things in her own conduct which, if reported to her husband by any one who owed her a grudge, would make her position extremely dangerous. Hence the affectionate attention which she lavished on him in the moment of her own deepest despair; in this way she contrived to turn their common grief to good account. The grief of the Duke of Berry was sincere; it arose from filial tenderness and gratitude towards Monseigneur, increased, perhaps, by regret for his recent quarrel with his sister-in-law; perhaps, also, he had imbibed sufficient worldliness from his wife to be conscious of the change in his own position since he had become merely the younger brother, instead of the favourite son, of the future King. He also felt that he would miss Meudon and those parties with Monseigneur which were the chief amusement of his life.
The King of Spain always retained his place in Monseigneur's affections; it is not uncommon for people to feel the greatest love for those on whom they have conferred the greatest benefits, especially when the nature of the case precludes any possibility of ingratitude. The cabal, having nothing to fear from Spain, and being, moreover, in close alliance with Madame des Ursins, did their best to encourage Monseigneur's affection for this Prince; by thus taking the part of his younger sons they prevented him from suspecting their designs against the eldest.

From this long and curious analysis of his character it results that Monseigneur had neither vices nor virtues; he was utterly devoid of knowledge or attainments of any kind, for he had not sufficient natural intelligence to obtain them; indolent in the extreme, without imagination, without taste, without discernment, he was doomed to be bored throughout his life, and to bore all who surrounded him. Like a ball rolling from side to side, he obeyed the impulse given by the hand which guided him; obstinate, and full of petty punctilio, he was yet absurdly credulous and easily prejudiced. As we have seen, he fell into the power of a most pernicious clique; and, absorbed as he was in sloth, fat, and ignorance, he was as incapable of perceiving his position as of extricating himself from it. On the whole, without any but the best intentions, he would have proved a bad and dangerous King.
CHAPTER IX

1711

Monseigneur's body removed to St. Denis—Further traits in his character—Madame de Maintenon's feelings—The King soon consoled—Arrangements for Mademoiselle Choïn and others—The new Dauphin and Dauphiness—The Duke and Duchess of Berry—Designs of the latter—Her insane pride—Her notorious escapades—A storm brewing—Madame de Saint-Simon speaks to Madame de Maintenon, and administers a rebuke to the Duchess of Berry—The latter severely reprimanded by the King—Reconciliation between the Duchesses of Burgundy and Berry—The Duke of Berry's good heart—Presenting the service—The Duchess of Berry refuses, but is eventually compelled to give way—The King orders the Duchess of Burgundy to wear jewels during his presence—Dispute about Monseigneur's wardrobe—The Dauphin insists on being addressed simply as "Monsieur."—Marly reopened—The courtiers compelled to visit the bastards.

Owing to the infectious nature of Monseigneur's illness, and the rapid advance of decomposition, the opening of his body was dispensed with. It was placed in a coffin; an old pall belonging to the parish was thrown over it, and it was watched by the few persons who had stayed by it from the first, namely, by La Vallière, a few subordinate officers of the household, and some Capuchins who took it in turn to pray by the corpse. Monseigneur died on Tuesday night; on Thursday he was taken to St. Denis in one of the King's carriages, without funeral trappings, the front window having been removed to make room for the end of the coffin. Another carriage followed, in which were the Duke de la Trémouille, First Gentleman of the Chamber; the Bishop of Metz, First Almoner, Dreux, Grand Master of Ceremonies, and the Abbé de Brancas, Monseigneur's Almoner on duty. The escort consisted of a detachment of Body-guards, with footmen and twenty-four of the King's pages bearing torches. This very simple procession left Meudon between six and seven in the evening, crossed the bridge at Sèvres, and proceeded to St. Denis by the Bois de Boulogne and the plain of St. Ouen.
coffin was at once lowered into the royal vault, without any ceremony whatever.

Such was the end of a Prince who, during his life of nearly fifty years, was never anything but a tool for carrying out the plans of others; and whose existence, on the very steps of the throne, was always retired, not to say obscure. Absolutely the only thing by which he can be remembered is his purchase of the Meudon property, and the improvements he made there. He hunted, but he never really enjoyed the sport; he had some inclination for women, but his tastes were coarse. At one time he played high, for the sake of winning; but after he took to building, he gave up cards, and used to stand in a corner of the saloon at Marly, whistling and rapping his snuff-box; turning his round, unmeaning eyes from one person to another, yet without really noticing anything. He had no conversation, no amusements, I might almost say no feeling and no mind; and yet, owing to the greatness of his position, he became the centre and keystone of the most profound and terrible cabal which has existed in France since the Peace of the Pyrenees brought the troubles of the King's minority to a close. I have dwelt at some length on the description of this Prince, because it is impossible to describe him except by an accumulation of petty details. But the subject is, I think, sufficiently curious to absolve me from the charge of saying too much about this Dauphin, of whom so little is known; who, throughout his long life of vain expectation of the Crown, was absolutely null, and took part in nothing of importance, and whose death put an end to so many hopes, and fears, and projects.

From what I have already said it will be easy to surmise the impression made on the various personages of the Court, royal or otherwise, by the death of this Prince; whose only distinction was that of birth, and who never carried any weight, except that of his own body. I never could understand how he had won the affection of the fish-wives and the populace of Paris, unless he owed it to that gratuitous reputation for kindness to which I have alluded.

1 People who dislike hunting but go out because it is the fashion are not unknown in our own days; but it is hard to believe that Monseigneur would have gone on for so many years if he did not like it. His whole time was spent in hunting.
If Monsieur's death had come as a relief to Madame de Maintenon, that of Monseigneur did so to an infinitely greater degree, for she had always looked with suspicion on his private Court. They had always been on distant terms with each other; but she was careful to watch him, and try to discover his secret thoughts; or, rather, the thoughts which other people suggested to him. She used to employ Madame d'Espinoy as a spy for this purpose; possibly the lady was a double spy, and acted for both of them. She had become much more intimate with the Duke of Burgundy since the campaign of Lille; for the Duchess of Burgundy she had all the feelings of a good and tender mother, and found in her a grateful and affectionate daughter; consequently she looked upon their elevation as assuring the peace of the remainder of her days, and the security of her position, whatever events might happen.

As for the King, there never was a man whose tears flowed more readily; at the same time there never was one less capable of feeling real grief, or who fell back into his usual habits with greater promptitude. One might have expected him to be deeply grieved at the loss of a son, whom, in spite of his fifty years, he had always treated like a child of six. Tired out by his harassing night he lay long in bed next morning. The Duchess of Burgundy came over early from Versailles, and waited with Madame de Maintenon till they heard that he was awake, when they both went to see him in bed. He then got up in the usual way. As soon as he went into his room he drew the Chancellor and the Duke de Beauvilliers aside to a window, shed a few more tears, and then settled with them that the name, rank, and honours of the Dauphin should pass immediately to the Duke of Burgundy, whom I shall accordingly call by that name in future. He then gave orders about the funeral; and made other arrangements about the property and household of the late Prince, going so much into detail that he ordered the establishment of the wolf-hounds to be reduced to its original footing. He gave orders that no one should be admitted to Marly till the following Sunday, to give time for the persons who had accompanied him from Meudon to obtain fresh clothes, and become free from infection; only the Dauphiness was allowed to come, but not to dine or sleep there. At the
same time he sent the Duke de Bouillon, Grand Chamberlain, to St. Germain, to announce Monseigneur's death officially to the King, Queen, and Princess-Royal of England. After giving these orders he walked in the gardens and the Dauphiness came back to spend part of the evening with him and Madame de Maintenon, as she did on the following days. On Thursday he amused himself by writing out a list of persons to be invited to Marly.

He sent d'Antin to Mademoiselle Choin to assure her of his protection, and gave her a pension of 12,000 livres, though she had asked for nothing and had forbidden her name to be mentioned to him. The Dauphin and Dauphiness also sent her kind messages, and did her the honour of writing to her. Her grief was not so intense as might have been expected, nor did it last so long. She had led a life of great constraint; she could hardly see any one without permission; she never had a carriage, and only five or six servants; she never appeared in any public place; she only visited a few intimate friends, and then only when she was sure of finding no one else there; and she had to be always ready to start for Meudon at a moment's notice, not only when Monseigneur intended to spend some days there, but even when he went merely for dinner. She always went there with her maid after dark, in a hired carriage, the night before Monseigneur's arrival; and returned in the same way the evening after his departure. At Meudon she used, at first, to sleep in the entresol of Monseigneur's rooms; but afterwards in the large upstair rooms which the Duchess of Burgundy used when the King was staying at Meudon. But, wherever she lodged, she never left her rooms, except early in the morning to go to Mass, and sometimes about midnight in summer-time, to get a little fresh air. At first she saw only three or four persons who were in the secret; by degrees this was considerably extended; but, even when her presence had become merely a stage mystery, her mode of life remained unaltered; she was still shut up, hidden, and secluded. Besides this bodily constraint she had to be most circum- spect about her relations with the Royal Family, with the private Court of Monseigneur, and even with Monseigneur himself; for her intercourse with him was often tiresome and thorny. I have heard friends of hers describe her as a clever person, without ambition and perfectly disinterested,
quiet in her manner, but cheerful and open-hearted, fond of good dinners and good conversation. With such a disposition her almost life-long constraint must have been a great trial to her, and it is not surprising that she was soon consoled for the breaking of her fetters. She had always been an intimate friend of Lacroix, Collector-General of Taxes at Paris, a very rich man, honourable and modest for a publican of his distinction; she used to lodge in a portion of his house, and continued to live there, keeping the same number of servants, and going no more into society than before Monseigneur’s death. If the Dauphiness had had her own way, her pension would have amounted to 20,000 livres. Madame la Duchesses, Mademoiselle de Lislebonne, Madame d’Espinoy, the Noailles, and a few other friends, made a point of going to see her frequently up to the time of her death; which did not occur till ten or twelve years later. She continued to lead a very quiet life, and was extremely reserved about the past.

The Governorship of Meudon was continued to Dumont with a pension which made up his income to over 30,000 livres, a poor consolation for the failure of such high, and apparently well-founded, expectations. Casau was given the office of First Quartermaster to the Duke of Berry; which, luckily for him, had not yet been sold. Dumont, like a man of honour as he was, had always regretted Monseigneur’s alienation from the Duke of Burgundy; and had tried, at some risk to himself, to bring them together. The new Dauphin had not forgotten this; he condescended to thank Dumont in a very obliging manner, and made him a present of a ring worth 2,000 pistoles, which Monseigneur had worn habitually. He gave another valuable ring to Lacroix, who had lent large sums to Monseigneur; and he took upon himself to obtain a settlement of these debts.

On Thursday, the day of Monseigneur’s funeral, the King received, without ceremonial, the visit of the Queen of England. She came from Versailles, where she had paid a similar visit to Monseigneur’s sons, and accompanied them to the service of the Benediction of the Host. At this service she made the Princess Royal of England sit below the Dauphiness, as being merely heiress-presumptive to the Crown, whereas the Dauphin was heir-apparent. The Princess Royal did not leave the Queen’s carriage at Marly, for
fear of infection; and for the same reason the King of England remained at St. Germain. On Friday the King went out shooting in his park; on Saturday the Council of Finance met and he afterwards reviewed the Gendarmes and Light Horse on the heights of Marly. I have now followed him through his hours of solitude up to Saturday, when Marly again became populous as usual. It will be interesting to see what went on at Versailles during these same days.

As may be supposed, there was not much sleep at Versailles during the first eventful night. The Dauphin and Dauphiness heard Mass together at a very early hour. I arrived when it was nearly over, and followed them back to their rooms; there were few other persons present, for no one had expected them to be about so early; but the Princess wished to be at Marly by the time the King was awake. Their eyes showed no trace of tears; they did, indeed, keep their glances under severe restraint, but their whole bearing showed that they were thinking less of Monseigneur's death than of their new position; a surreptitious smile exchanged between them as they whispered to each other was sufficient to convince me of their sentiments, if indeed I had needed any additional proof. These sentiments were natural and unavoidable; and veiled as they were under a careful regard for decency and propriety, nobody could find fault with them. Their first care was to put an end to the coolness between the Duke of Berry and themselves, to restore the old affectionate intimacy between him and the Dauphiness, and, by the most generous and engaging advances, to make the new inequality of her position more tolerable to the Duchess of Berry, and let her see that her conduct towards them had been forgotten. They spared no pains to carry out this amiable intention; and went to see the Duke and Duchess of Berry in bed as soon as they knew they were awake, which was very early; and the Dauphiness went to see them again in the afternoon. The Duke of Berry's affection for his brother had never been shaken for a moment; in the midst of his own grief he was deeply touched by the kindness which prompted these marked advances, especially coming from the Dauphiness; for his good sense, and his heart, which was better still, told him that of late he had not entirely deserved them.
The Duchess of Berry did her best to respond to them with plenty of tears and words, but her proud heart (if indeed she had a heart at all) was torn by the emotions which I have already described and explained; and it almost burst when she found herself compelled to accept advances made to her out of pure generosity. A sort of perverted courage, verging on madness, and entirely unrestrained by any sort of religious influence, deprived her of all feelings except that of furious anger. To keep her within bounds while she was a girl, she used to be told that she must put some constraint on herself in order to make a great marriage; after which she would be her own mistress, and free to do as she pleased; and she had taken these assurances rather too literally. Her father had always been her slave, so was her husband in the first transports of his passion; and she had no difficulty in shaking off the authority of a mother, who, from long experience, was too wise to expose herself to the consequences of opposing her. Her grandmother, Madame, was quite without influence; her father-in-law, so long as he lived, was rather favourable to her than otherwise; and she had a Lady of Honour who, when forced to accept that appointment, had declared most positively that she would not be held responsible for her conduct. The Duchess of Burgundy was therefore the only person who could become her adviser; and she, delighted to find herself at her age in the position of chaperon, undertook the task readily; she looked forward to making a pet of the Duchess of Berry, and thought she would be more docile because it was mainly her influence which had brought about the marriage.

But the Duchess of Burgundy soon found that she had made a great mistake. I could give many details respecting the relations between the two sisters-in-law; but, though curious at the time, such things lose their interest for posterity. It is enough to say that the elder, gentle and good-hearted as she was, was perhaps herself rather too young to hold the leading-strings; and the other, who was neither good nor gentle could not endure control, however light and easy it might be. She was mortified to find herself playing a secondary part in another person's Court, and irritated by having to keep regular hours; these things, and the necessity for showing deference, and
more especially gratitude, were a disappointment to the notions of complete emancipation which she had imbibed from her education; nor were they at all in harmony with her irregular tastes, or with her natural disposition, which had been made even worse than it otherwise would have been by pernicious reading.

Her design to abandon herself to the clique of Meudon, and so not only make herself independent of the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, but play a leading part at their expense, put the finishing touch to the ill-feeling between the two sisters-in-law; they could not bear each other; and the outbreaks of the Duchess of Berry's ill-temper and ill-nature became so frequent that, when the two households were separated, both considered it a relief not to be obliged any longer to meet at dinner. The King's servants were also delighted at being relieved from attendance on the bride. I could give many examples of her conduct, but one will serve as a specimen. A newly appointed usher of the King's chamber was on duty in her rooms one morning towards the end of her toilet, when the Duchess of Orleans arrived. Taken by surprise, and new to his functions, he threw open both leaves of the door. The Duchess of Berry became crimson, and trembled with anger; she received her mother very ungraciously, and, as soon as she had gone, called Madame de Saint-Simon, asking whether she had noticed the usher's impertinence; and ordered her to dismiss him on the spot. Madame de Saint-Simon admitted that he had made a mistake; she said she would speak to him, and see that in future both leaves of the door should be opened only to Sons and Daughters of France; for that is the rule, and no other person thinks of claiming the distinction. But as for dismissing one of the King's ushers, who was only lent to the Duchess of Berry, and that for doing too much honour to her own mother, Madame de Saint-Simon said it was out of the question, and she must be content with the reprimand which she would at once administer to him. The Duchess of Berry insisted, wept, and stormed; Madame de Saint-Simon paid no attention; but merely gave the usher a mild rebuke, and explained how he was to perform his functions in future.

When the two households were separated the courtiers continued to frequent the Duchess of Burgundy's apart-
ments, where they found gaiety and amusements; and the Duchess of Berry was left solitary in hers, where there was nothing of the sort. She made a grievance of this, and complained of it so bitterly that she got her husband to take it up, and made him quarrel with the Duchess of Burgundy. Nothing ever hurt the Duchess of Burgundy so much, she confessed herself, as being treated in this unreasonable way by a brother-in-law with whom she had always lived on terms of the closest and most affectionate intimacy.

About this time some escapades of the Duchess of Berry, of a very outrageous kind, and unfortunately too notorious, came to the ears of the King and Madame de Maintenon; the latter, indignant at having been so grossly deceived about the Duchess of Berry, could not refrain from speaking about them; and the Duchess of Burgundy, losing all patience when she saw herself driven into a groundless quarrel with the Duke of Berry by his wife’s spitefulness, broke the silence which she had hitherto maintained about her. Matters seemed to be drawing to a crisis; but the King, who wished to have peace in his family, hoped that a good fright would be enough for the Duchess of Berry; so he contented himself with letting her know that he was aware of her conduct, although he would take no serious notice of it this time. This lenient treatment, however, only had the effect of convincing the Duchess of Berry that she was too great a personage to be interfered with; or, at any rate, that the King did not know how to set about it. Instead of amending her ways she behaved with greater licence than ever, so that at last the combustible materials which she had been piling up caught fire all of a sudden; and while the Court was at Marly there was a great explosion.

I had gone by myself for a visit to La Ferté, Monseigneur at this time being still in good health. Madame de Saint-Simon knew that a storm was brewing, and was afraid lest she might be blamed for keeping silence. She spoke to the Duchess of Burgundy, and by her advice asked for an interview with Madame de Maintenon. She found, to her surprise, that Madame de Maintenon was aware of nearly all that had been going on, and left her well satisfied with her reception. After this she thought it advisable to say a word to the Duchess of Berry. That Princess, furious
at the unpleasant position in which she found herself, and being under the impression that Madame de Saint-Simon had something to do with it, tried to make a rude answer. I say expressly, tried to do so; because Madame de Saint-Simon would not let her finish her sentence. She interrupted her by telling her that she had never reported anything about her conduct, and indeed only knew what was notorious to everybody; but that, fearing lest her silence might involve her in blame, she had spoken to the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon. She went on to tell the Duchess of Berry that, as she was perhaps unaware of the manner in which her appointment had been forced upon her, and how unsuitable it was to persons of our birth and dignity, she thought it as well to let her know, once for all, that she had only accepted it after many refusals; to which the Duchess of Burgundy and the Duchess of Orleans could testify; and that she would be only too willing to resign it at once if such was her wish. She added that, as a matter of fact, she had within the last twenty-four hours told the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon that she wished to resign; and they both had begged her not to think of it. At this point the Duke of Orleans came in, and did his best to smooth matters over.

The Duchess of Berry had allowed Madame de Saint-Simon to speak without interruption; the words to which she was forced to listen were very offensive to her pride, and she was bursting with vexation at the prospect of having to submit to a reprimand. However, she replied, with a sort of forced politeness, that, since Madame de Saint-Simon assured her that she had not reported her conduct, she was bound to believe it. Madame de Saint-Simon then left her with the Duke of Orleans; she was very much annoyed that I should happen to be absent, for she longed to throw up her appointment, in spite of the flattering opposition of the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon. She went to speak to Madame, who had always been kind to her, and also to the Duchess of Orleans; after which she waited to see what would come of the threatened storm. It burst next morning; the King sent for the Duchess of Berry before dinner and gave her a long reprimand, of the sort which a man gives when he does not wish to have to speak a second time.
After dinner she had to go to Madame de Maintenon, who, if she did not speak quite so loud, spoke with equal firmness. It is easy to conceive the impression made on the Duchess of Berry; all her resentment fell on the Duchess of Burgundy. She soon saw that Madame de Saint-Simon had nothing to do with the affair, and spoke to her in a manner which was a sort of apology for having suspected her. What annoyed her most about this reprimand was that it was immediately known, and talked about everywhere. Her apartments became more deserted than ever; and she had to put up with a good many mortifications. She made some efforts to regain the ground she had lost; but her attempts at conciliation were made with such bad grace, and were so clearly against the grain, that they were not cordially received, and only had the effect of increasing her solitude.

Such was the situation of the Duchess of Berry at the time of Monseigneur’s death, and it explains her despair at his loss. In her excessive grief she forgot her self-restraint so far as to confess to Madame de Saint-Simon the designs already explained, which she was pursuing in conjunction with the terrible cabal which surrounded Monseigneur. Amazed at such an extraordinary avowal, Madame de Saint-Simon tried to open her eyes to the absurdity and wickedness of such projects; and begged her to avail herself of this opportunity to make friends with a sister-in-law who was gentle, good, and easy to get on with; who had arranged her marriage; and who, in spite of all that had occurred since, would be only too glad to meet her half-way if approached in a proper manner. But the necessity for making the first advances, and for making them with a good grace, was a bitter mortification to her proud and daring spirit; she knew she was in the wrong, and that the comfort of her future life depended on her making amends, but she could not bear the idea of stooping in ever so slight a degree. Accustomed as she was to being on an equal footing with her sister-in-law, the thought that henceforth the rank of Dauphiness would make a distinction between them was intolerable; for she was incapable of looking back and considering what she was before her marriage had raised her to her present position; nor did it occur to her that the change must have come sooner or later, and that eventually her sister-in-law would be the
Queen, to whom she would be a subject. However, pressed by Madame de Saint-Simon’s unanswerable arguments, and feeling, in spite of herself, how necessary it was for her own prospects, she did eventually promise, after many tears and outbursts of rage, to ask an audience of the Dauphiness next day; and do her best to make up the quarrel.

This next day was Thursday; the day on which Monseigneur’s body was consigned to the vaults of St. Denis, and with it all the fine schemes devised by the Duchess of Berry. She kept her word, and really acquitted herself very well. Her amiable sister-in-law met her more than half-way; and, from the accounts given by both Princesses of this private conversation, talked and acted as if the Duchess of Berry had been the offended party. The Duchess of Berry also behaved better than could possibly have been expected of her. After an interview of more than an hour’s duration they came out with an air of mutual satisfaction, which pleased all right-minded people as much as it disappointed those whose interest it was to foment quarrels and disorder. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were much pleased at their reconciliation; and the Duke of Berry was so delighted that his grief for his father was considerably mitigated. He was extremely fond of his elder brother, and still retained so much affection for the Dauphiness that it had been very painful to him to treat her in the manner insisted upon by his wife. He embraced this opportunity of making friends with all his heart, like a good fellow as he was; when the Dauphiness went to see them the same afternoon she drew him aside, and they shed tears of joy together over their reconciliation. She did all she could to confirm what had passed in the morning, in the graceful way which came naturally to her; but, on the side of the Duchess of Berry, a fresh stumbling-block was soon discovered: it was the necessity of presenting the service to the Dauphin and Dauphiness.

In their household it was expected that this duty would be performed without delay; and, indeed, after the reconciliation, and the attention shown by the elder brother to the younger in visiting him so often, any unnecessary postponement seemed ungracious. Nevertheless, when Madame de Saint-Simon ventured to hint that it would be advisable for the Duke and Duchess of Berry to go next
morning and present the chemise to the Dauphin and Dauphiness respectively, the Duchess flew into a passion, declaring that such menial services were not required from one brother to another, and that they did not intend to follow the precedent set by Monsieur and the King. The Duke of Berry, knowing that it was a duty which ought to be performed, and feeling warmly disposed towards the Dauphin and Dauphiness, did all he could to bring her round by arguments and caresses. She lost her temper, overwhelmed him with reproaches, told him she would despise him for ever if he consented so to degrade himself, and then went off into a fit of weeping, sobbing, and screaming; so that the Duke of Berry, who had intended to be present at the Dauphin's lever next morning, dared not go there, for fear of quarrelling with her. This dispute was so noisy that it was overheard, and public curiosity aroused; its cause soon became known, for the Duchess of Berry was so full of her grievance that she could not keep it to herself. All the ladies of the Dauphiness' household were immediately up in arms, as if they had sustained some personal affront.

The Duke of Orleans hastened to the rescue of the Duke of Berry, who was so overwhelmed by his wife's impetuosity that he dared hardly say a word. They were both well aware that the duty was an old-established custom, and ought to be performed; they feared lest a fresh quarrel might put an end to the reconciliation, in which they both rejoiced; and they saw that the Princess was exposing herself to the disgrace of being again reprimanded by the King, and ordered to present the service. The whole of Friday was spent in reasoning with her; at last the fear of a fresh reprimand prevailed, and she allowed the Duke of Berry to say that they consented to present the service, on condition that she might have a little time to overcome her repugnance. She wanted to make the same condition for the Duke of Berry; but he was so delighted at recovering his freedom that he insisted on serving the Dauphin next morning. But that Prince, out of consideration for his brother, declined to be served by him till after they had seen the King; so it was not till Monday that the Duke of Berry went to the Dauphin's couche and handed him the shirt. As soon as the Dauphin received it he embraced his brother affectionately.
It took some days more for the Duchess of Berry to make up her mind, but she had to give in at last. She attended the *toilette* of the Dauphiness, and handed her the chemise, and the *sale* ¹ towards the end of the function. The Dauphiness had purposely ignored all that was going on, and took no notice of the very uncalled-for delay in presenting the service; she received it with all the grace imaginable, and the most natural marks of friendliness. Her strong desire for family concord made her overlook this last freak; and with her generous spirit she behaved as though she herself, and not the Duchess of Berry, was the person most likely to suffer from its consequences.

I have mentioned that the Dauphiness went every day to see the King at Marly; on the second occasion, that is, the very day after Monseigneur’s death, she received a rather surprising hint from Madame de Maintenon; namely, to wear more ornaments, because the King did not like to see her negligent about her dress. The Princess had paid no attention to her costume, for she thought, very properly, that it would be in extremely bad taste to dress elaborately; and that, as she was a gainer in every way by the recent event, people would be sure to make ill-natured remarks. However, next day she took a little more care, but still the King was not pleased; so, after that, she carried some jewels with her, and put them on secretly in Madame de Maintenon’s room; taking them off again in the same way before she left. In this way she complied with the King’s wishes without exposing herself to the remarks of the public, who would not have been very easily persuaded that she did not find some pleasure in thus adorning herself. Madame de Mailly and Madame de Nogaret told me this story; as they had both been fond of Monseigneur they were not very well pleased. It may be supposed from this trait, and from the fact that the King’s ordinary occupations and amusements were at once resumed without any apparent reluctance on his part, that his grief, as in most cases when it is violent at first, did not last very long.

An absurd dispute arose about the superintendence of the new Dauphin’s wardrobe, which M. de la Rochefoucauld

¹ The *sale* was a silver-gilt tray, on which the Queen’s watch, fan, and trinkets were presented to her at the close of her toilet. It was more usually called the “salvo.”
claimed as Grand Master of the King’s Wardrobe; for, old and blind as he was, he was tenacious of what he considered his rights. He alleged that he merely claimed the same right which he had exercised during Monseigneur’s life-time; but he forgot that he had never had anything to do with the Prince’s wardrobe till after the death of M. de Montausier, who, towards the end of his life, was assisted in his duties by his daughter, the Duchess d’Uzès. On one occasion the King was extremely angry with her; far more angry, indeed, than her mistake deserved, about a certain coat of Monseigneur’s. It was at a time when the King had determined to stop the importation of foreign cloth, and set the fashion of wearing a cloth of French manufacture, which was ribbed all over. I remember him wearing it, as everybody else did; and very ugly it was. The King had a very correct eye; and it seemed to him that Monseigneur’s coat was not ribbed quite in the same way as others; on inquiry, it turned out that Madame d’Uzès had been deceived; for the cloth was of foreign manufacture, made in imitation of the French stuff. The Duke de Beauvilliers claimed the new Dauphin’s Wardrobe on the ground that he, as his Governor, had always been in charge of it; and he alleged the precedent of the Duke de Montausier. His claim was at once admitted, and the Duke de la Rochefoucauld lost his case.

The King, during the first days of his solitude, gave the Duke de Beauvilliers to understand that he hoped the new Dauphin would not make long visits to Meudon. That was quite enough for the young Prince; he announced at once that he would never set foot there, and he kept his word. The King wished to make him the same allowance as he had given to Monseigneur, namely, 50,000 livres a month; but the Dauphin declined it. His own allowance had hitherto amounted to 6,000 livres a month; he accepted 12,000, but would take nothing more. This disinterested refusal made a good impression on the public, and inspired great hopes for the coming reign.

I have already alluded to the modern innovation of addressing the Princex of the Blood as Monseigneur, which, like all other titles and distinctions, had been extended to the bastards. This practice displeased the Duke of Burgundy, who had always been addressed as Monsieur; but the mania for addressing all royal personages as Mon-
seigneur caused him to be called so likewise. As soon as he became Dauphin he spoke to the King on the subject, and before going to Marly he gave out that he did not wish to be styled Monseigneur, like his father, but Monsieur le Dauphin; and in speaking to him he wished to be addressed simply as “Sir.” He was very particular on this point, and pulled up persons who from long habit fell into the mistake of calling him “Monseigneur.” This caused some embarrassment to the Princes of the Blood; nevertheless, sheltering themselves behind the Duke of Berry and the Duke of Orleans, they stuck to their style of “Monseigneur”; which Monsieur le Dauphin, if he had become King, would not have allowed them to retain.

On Saturday, the 15th of April, the King’s seclusion came to an end, and Marly was again peopled by the Royal Family, and by such persons as had been selected from the list submitted for invitations. The ordinary Court life began again, except that there was no card-playing. On the same day the Court went into mourning for twelve months; the same period as for a father.

The King announced that he would remain at Marly for three months, on account of the prevalence of small-pox at Versailles; also, that on Monday, the 20th of April, he would receive such persons as wished to pay their respects, whether from Marly or Paris; they were to wear mourning-cloaks or mantles, and simply make their bows and pass on. M. du Maine determined to turn the occasion to good account by putting himself on an equality with the Sons of France. By good luck for him the Duke de Tresmes was on duty for the year. He was an honourable and upright man, but very ignorant, and with no intelligence beyond a knowledge of the ways of the Court and good society; moreover, he was more servile than any professional valet, and no freshly arrived provincial could be more eager to flatter and please the King. With such qualities he was the very man for M. du Maine. It was his duty to make arrangements for the reception; he asked the King whether people were to go and pay their respects to his natural children, as Monseigneur’s brothers and sisters. The King, as we have seen, never approved of any of the innovations proposed for the advancement of the bastards when first suggested to him; and he thought the Duke de Tresmes’ question absurd. He did not posi-
tively say "no," however, but merely showed that he did not like the suggestion.

This was what M. du Maine, from his former experience, had expected; but he had only got M. de Tresmes to speak in order that the King might mention his suggestion to Madame de Maintenon; moreover, he had carefully postponed doing so till the Sunday, so that there might not be too much time for discussion. It was not till the Monday morning, however, that he carried his point, with the help of his faithful ally, Madame de Maintenon. Just before the King sat down to dinner the Duke de Tresmes announced, to the astonishment of every one, that courtiers were expected to visit the King's natural children. The time was well chosen for the declaration, for the ceremony was to begin at two o'clock, directly dinner was over; there was consequently no time to discuss the matter; all people could do was to obey, with the blind, though painful, submission to which they were accustomed. By this clever stroke the bastards were placed on a footing of absolute equality with the Sons and Daughters of France; but the King did not live long enough to make their new position quite secure.

At half-past two the doors of the private room were thrown open. The King was in ordinary dress, holding his hat under his arm, standing with his right hand resting on a table. On each side of him were the members of the Royal Family, including the bastards; Madame du Maine, however, had remained at Sceaux, for fear of carrying the infection of small-pox to her children; the Princess of Conti was also absent, for the same reason; and the Dowager-Princess of Conti was ill in bed. The rooms were densely crowded, for all Paris had flocked thither, as well as every courtier at Marly. The whole assemblage passed through the King's room in single file, without any previous arrangement; as each person came opposite the King he made a low bow and passed on; the King returned the bows of persons of title, both men and ladies, but took no notice of the rest.

The right of wearing a mantle or mourning-cloak was formerly a distinction reserved to persons of a certain quality; but this, like many other distinctions, had become obsolete, and several persons passed, dressed in this manner, who were absolutely unknown, not only to the
King and the royal circle, but to any of the courtiers. Some men of the gown presented themselves, which also seemed strange. In a scene of this sort, where there are many strange faces, and people present themselves wearing a dress not suited to their station, some ludicrous incident almost invariably occurs to upset the most dignified gravity. It was so on this occasion; the King had great difficulty in keeping his countenance several times; and once he and the other members of his circle fairly burst out laughing at the sight of some unknown plebeian with his mourning-dress half slipping from his back.

This ceremony lasted a long time; when it was over the royal personages separated, and those who were to be visited went to their own apartments, namely, the Sons and Daughters of France, the bastards, and the Duke of Orleans as husband of the Duchess, which seemed very singular. The Duke of Maine and the Count de Toulouse received together in M. du Maine's apartments, which opened on to the garden. Having got what they wanted, they thought it advisable to be modest, and showed their consideration for the courtiers by not giving them the trouble of paying their respects to them separately. M. du Maine thanked people effusively for taking the trouble to call on him, and made incredible exertions to reconduct all persons of title to the door when they left; the Count de Toulouse was also careful to show all proper attentions, but without affectation.

On Monday, the 27th of April, the King went about eleven in the morning to Versailles, where he received the visits of all the foreign Ministers and of various religious Orders. After dinner he received addresses from the Parliament, the Grand Council, and other legal bodies, followed by the University and the Academy. St. Aulaire was the spokesman for the Academy, and acquitted himself very well. The Parliament also went with an address to the Dauphin; the First-President took care to let him know that he only did so by the King's orders—a piece of insolence which deserves some notice. Towards evening the King returned to Marly.
Death of the Duchess de Villeroy—Her character—Death of the Emperor
—D’Antin resigns his claim to the duchy of Épernon—He is created a Duke—The King decides a dispute between the Duke de la Roche-foucauld and myself—Effects of Monseigneur’s death on various personages—M. du Maine—The Princess of Conti—The cabal—Vendôme—Vaudemont—Mademoiselle de Lislebonne—Madame la Duchesse—D’Antin—The Ministers—The Chancellor—Pontchartrain—“That nasty one-eyed man”—Voysin—Desmarets—His insolent conduct towards me.

About this time, to my great sorrow, I lost my friend the Duchess de Villeroy, whom I have often had occasion to mention. She was an honest, straightforward person; frank and natural in her manners, and thoroughly trustworthy. Though not clever, she had become one of the leading personages in the Court, and had completely subjugated her husband and her father-in-law. She was very proud, and punctilious in all matters concerning her dignity; at the same time she never attempted to disguise the humble origin of her own ¹ and her husband’s families: indeed, she used to talk about it in a way which sometimes made people feel uncomfortable. She was of a changeable disposition, though so far as I was personally concerned I never found it out. Her temper was not very good, and her manners rather abrupt and rough, in which she took after her family. For a long time she had been very intimate with the Duchess of Orleans, and the confidential friend of the Dauphiness, who was very fond of her; though at the same time rather afraid of her. She had many friends of both sexes, and deserved to have them; for she had a good heart, and was a warm and trusty friend; always ready to do a good turn, or break the ice for any one out of favour.

¹ She was a Tellier.
She had a singular face; the lower part of it was very ugly, especially when she laughed; but the upper part was charming. Her shoulders and hips were a little too high; but when she appeared at a ball, splendidly dressed, with her tall figure and dignified bearing, no one attracted more attention; ladies far more beautiful than herself were quite eclipsed. Some months before her death, at a time when she was in perfect health, she told Madame de Saint-Simon that her happiness was too complete, and she felt sure it could not last; either some unforeseen catastrophe would happen, or she would die before long; and it turned out that she was right in her last foreboding. Her husband was on duty at Marly as Captain of the Guard, in place of Marshal Boufflers, who had remained at Paris on account of his son's death. She insisted on the Dauphiness taking her to Marly during the first days of the King's solitude, on the pretext that she wanted to see her husband. She had never had small-pox, and was much afraid of it; nevertheless, she would go, in spite of all remonstrances; to such an extent do these petty court distinctions turn people's heads. Immediately afterwards she fell ill of small-pox, and died at Versailles. The Abbé de Louvois ¹ and her husband shut themselves up with her. The former was inconsolable; the grief of the Duke de Villeroy did not last long; he soon gave himself up to the pleasure of thinking himself independent. But he was not fitted by nature for independence, and before long his father brought him under the yoke again.

The Emperor died about the same time, of the same disease; very little regretted. He was a violent, hot-headed man, with abilities below the average; on bad terms with his mother, whom nevertheless he appointed Regent, together with his wife and his brother, the Archduke. His Court was always stormy, and the greatest personages there never felt sure of their position. Perhaps the only person who really regretted him was Prince Eugène, for he had always enjoyed his confidence, and was on very bad terms with the Archduke. The latter never forgave Prince Eugène for refusal to take the command in Spain, and thought he was the cause of his receiving so little assistance from Vienna. The Emperor's death was one of the unlooked-for events which preserved the Spanish

¹ Her brother.
monarchy to Philip V, and brought about the restoration of peace. I will not speak of these important events now; I will merely note that Torcy went at once to Compiègne to confer with the Elector of Bavaria, and remained with him a whole day.

D'Antin's claim to the dignity of Épernon had aroused a number of dormant claims of the same kind; several persons had already taken the preliminary steps to claim dukedoms to which, they said, they were entitled by descent through females; others were only waiting to see the result of d'Antin's pretensions. Among others the Duke de Chevreuse claimed two dukedoms: that of Chevreuse, of an older creation than his own, and that of Chaulnes. We were appalled at the prospect of an endless succession of lawsuits, each of which would have to be contested to the end, unless we were prepared to submit to a complete subversion of our relative ranks. We took advantage of the number of claimants to insist strongly on the danger of interfering with the old-established rules, which had hitherto regulated the descent of dignities.

D'Antin began to perceive that our remonstrances were not without effect on the King's mind; with his usual cleverness he changed his ground abruptly, and contrived to turn the situation to his own advantage. It was not only that, as he confessed afterwards, he had no great faith in the soundness of his claim; but the business compelled him to go frequently to Paris, and he was afraid lest the King should get into the habit of doing without him. He had begun by telling the King that he asked no favour beyond the permission, never refused to the humblest subject, to have his case examined by a court of law; but the recollection of this did not embarrass him in the least when he saw that it was advisable to take another line. He now said that, although he thought himself sure of winning his case, he saw it would arouse much ill-feeling, and he wished to live at peace with everybody; moreover, it would be a long affair, and would interfere with that constant attendance on His Majesty's person which was the happiness of his life; although justly entitled, as he thought, to the second place among the Dukes, he would far rather be the junior of them all, if he could obtain that rank by His Majesty's kindness and with the good-will of the other Dukes; he begged the King,
therefore, as a favour, to take the shortest way out of the difficulty by making him a Duke and Peer of a fresh creation.

The King gave him no decided answer, but did not remind him, as he might have done, of the very different language he had used only three or four months ago; after some delay it was given out that d'Antin was created Duke and Peer, and that by the King's orders all proceedings in the prosecution of his claim to the Duchy of Épernon were to be dropped. D'Antin chose to take his title from his property of Antin; like a clever courtier, he said the name had brought him too much good luck for him to wish to change it. He might have added that Henry III's favourite, though very inferior to himself in birth, had made the name of Épernon so great and famous that he and his descendants would have found it difficult to live up to it.

The King at the same time decided in my favour a dispute regarding precedence between the Duke de la Rochefoucauld and myself, which had subsisted ever since the first creation of our respective peerages. His son, the Duke de la Rochequayan, was much displeased; and this affair, following close on the death of the Duchess de Villeroy, put an end to the close intimacy which had existed between the Dukes de Villeroy and de la Rochequayan and myself. It was soon reduced to a mere exchange of ordinary civilities, and remained on that footing till they died, many years afterwards.

Monseigneur's death was felt as a great relief by M. du Maine, who had always been on bad terms with him. It is true that he could not expect much from the new Dauphin and Dauphiness; he knew that the latter was aware of the support he had given to Vendôme at the time of the campaign of Flanders; he also knew that the Dauphin did not look with a favourable eye on his artificial rank, still less on that recently conferred on his children. But he had one enemy the less; and the state of the King's health was such that he might still hope to profit for a long time by his blind affection for him.

He was just beginning to enjoy his newly-found tranquillity of mind when he was attacked by a strange illness in the middle of the night; his servant heard him gasping for breath, and, going into his room, found him insensible. He called for help; the Duchess of Orleans came in tears;
Madame la Duchesse and her daughters for the sake of appearances, and many other people in order to curry favour, for they hoped the King would hear of their affectionate zeal. M. du Maine was bled, and all kinds of remedies were tried one after the other, because none of them produced any effect. It was four hours before Fagon came; for he sweated profusely at night, and could only dress himself by degrees. He was the adviser most wanted, because he had personal experience of the same malady, though he had never had so severe an attack. He disapproved of the bleeding and of most of the remedies. It was decided not to awaken the King, and it was not till his lever that he heard of the alarm of the night, when his dear son was already better; he went to see him at once and continued to visit him for some days, till he was quite well again. Madame du Maine was at Sceaux all this time, giving a succession of entertainments; she declared it would kill her to see M. du Maine in such a state, and refused to leave her enchanted palace. M. du Maine, accustomed to acquiesce servilely in everything she did, thought she was quite right, and went to see her at Sceaux as soon as he could move.

No one felt Monseigneur’s death more acutely than the Princess of Conti, though in reality nobody was less of a loser by it. At one time she could do anything she liked with him, and her ascendancy had lasted long; but she had the mortification of seeing herself gradually supplanted by her protégée, Mademoiselle de Lislebonne; by her faithless servant Mademoiselle Choin, and by Madame la Duchesse. She found it necessary to keep on good terms with these persons, and to shut her eyes to their proceedings; and, in spite of her pride and ill-humour, she forced herself to do it. She took Monseigneur’s death so much to heart that, two or three nights afterwards, she was so ill that she had to call in the parish priest of Marly to hear her confession. Her rooms were on the upper floor of the château. The King went to see her; the staircase was steep and inconvenient; when the Court removed to Fontainebleau he had it pulled down and a new one built. It was more than ten years since he had had occasion to go upstairs at Marly; and till another emergency of this sort arose he would never have an opportunity of trying the new staircase.
We were losers by the Princess of Conti's recovery. We were always given the second pavilion \(^1\) on the side of the village of Marly as our quarters; we occupied the lower part, and M. and Madame de Lansun had the upper floor. This pavilion is as near the château as the first, and is not so noisy; we were now transferred to the first, and the second was given to the Princess of Conti. Although she disliked damp and the open air, she preferred this pavilion to her apartments in the château, because it was more accessible, and she found it easier to attract society; from that time she had regular days of reception which were attended by all the older members of the Court.

The despair and consternation of the cabal at Monsieur's death may be readily imagined. They had made sure of governing the kingdom as soon as he ascended the throne; and, so long as he reigned, had determined to reduce his son and heir to impotence. God breathed on their designs, which in one instant were brought to nothing; they saw themselves henceforth subjected, without hope of deliverance, to the power of him for whose overthrow they had plotted, without pity and without intermission. Great was the rage of the cabal, but its dispersion was complete.

Vendôme trembled in Spain. When he first went there he had not intended to remain; but he now decided to give up France altogether. His position in Spain, however, was precarious. The war, which he hoped would make his services indispensable, was drawing to a close; the Dauphin and the King of Spain had always loved each other, and their separation had not impaired their fraternal affection; the Queen was the sister of his enemy, and on terms of the closest union with her. He foresaw that when he was no longer wanted his situation might change for the worse. His only resource was to make a friend of the Princess des Ursins, and pay court to her—he, who had formerly laid down the law to the Ministers and Court of France. We shall see hereafter what came of it.

Vaudemont felt that for him all was over. Since Chami- lart's downfall he had lost much of his favour with the King, and had no one left to whom he could look for

---

\(^1\) Old prints represent Marly as consisting of the château, with six separate pavilions on each side of it, forming, with the main building, three sides of an oblong. Not a vestige of them now remains.
support. Torcy had never trusted him; Voysin had received his advances with cold civility; he was not intimate with any of the other Ministers, and hardly on speaking terms with the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beavilliers. He had contrived to make a friend of the Maréchale d'Estrees; but she was not strong enough to take his part effectively with the Dauphiness, so justly irritated, not only with his nieces, but with himself, as the partisan of Vendôme. Moreover, the Maréchale d'Estrees had been supplanted in the Dauphiness' favour by Madame de la Vallière, the cleverest and most dangerous of the Noailles family, who had nothing in common with a cabal marching under the standard of the Choin, always on her guard against any one connected with her former mistress.\footnote{The Princess of Conti, cousin to La Vallière through her mother.} For some time past what little credit Vaudemont still enjoyed had been owing entirely to the powerful influence of his nieces with Monseigneur; now that this resource failed him he knew not which way to turn.

Mademoiselle de Lislebonne was completely overcome by the downfall of her influence, for she was quite aware of the Dauphiness's sentiments with regard to her. Her pride would not allow her to remain as a spectator in a Court where she had reigned all her life; she decided, therefore, to go with her uncle to Lorraine for the summer, in order to escape the first period of confusion, and obtain leisure to settle her future plans. Fortune came to the rescue of this old witch. Several of the Duke of Lorraine's children were carried off by small-pox: among them a girl seven or eight years old, whom he had caused to be elected Abbess of Remiremont two years previously. This seemed a plank of escape from the shipwreck; the appointment would be a noble and honourable position for an old maid; she would have a sort of country-house where she could live when so inclined, with full liberty to go to Paris and the Court, and an income of 40,000 livres—no small consideration, for she was poor, and would now be deprived of the use of Monseigneur's carriages, and other conveniences which he procured for her. She had only to ask for the appointment, and her election took place immediately after her arrival in Lorraine. Her sister, a widow with a family and of a less haughty character, did not consider it necessary to retire; her employment as spy to Madame
de Maintenon, of which we have seen one strange illustration, assured her of protection; she even owed to it a position of marked consideration, though people did not know on what it secretly rested. She determined, therefore, to remain at Court, and this suited the policy of her sister and uncle. She applied for the King's sanction to her sister's election, which was readily granted. Mademoiselle de Lislebonne assumed the name of Madame de Remiremont; and so I shall call her on the few occasions when I shall have to mention her in future.

This affair was carried through with such rapidity that I knew nothing of it when I went into the saloon, after the King's supper, on the evening when his sanction had been granted. I was astonished to see the Dauphiness, with whom I had never been on terms of familiarity, come up to me with five or six ladies of her household; they surrounded me, and laughingly drove me back into a corner, telling me to guess who was appointed Abbess of Remiremont. I kept retreating backwards; and their laughter was increased by my astonishment at a question which seemed so utterly irrelevant, and which I was quite unable to answer. At last the Dauphiness told me that it was Mademoiselle de Lislebonne, and asked what I thought of the appointment. "What do I think of it, Madame!" I said. "I am delighted at it, provided that it relieves us of her company; and I would not grudge her sister a similar appointment on the same condition!"

"I thought as much!" said the Princess; and she went off, laughing heartily. Two months earlier such a declaration would have been quite out of place, though my sentiments were well known; now it passed without comment, after the first moment of astonishment at my audacity.

Madame la Duchesse was at first quite overwhelmed with grief. Her brilliant hopes had vanished; she was on bad terms with Madame de Maintenon; her quarrel with the Dauphiness was irreconcilable, and she was also at daggers drawn with M. du Maine and the Duchess of Orleans. There was no one to whom she could look for support, and she found herself regretting M. le Prince and M. le Duc, whose deaths she had considered a relief at the time. Now it was that the cherished image of the Prince of Conti presented itself unceasingly to her heart and fancy. That Prince, with the brilliant talents which
envy had rendered useless, would soon have become the arbiter, not only of the Court, but of the State; for he was on intimate terms with the Dauphin, he had gained the good-will of the Dauphiness by the manner in which he had expressed himself during the campaign of Lille, and by their common hatred of Vendôme, and he had always been the friend of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, and of the Archbishop of Cambrai. What tormenting reflections for Madame la Duchesse, with Lassé as her only consolation! For want of a better, she attached herself to him without restraint; and the attachment still subsists, after a lapse of more than thirty years.

But it was not in her nature to weep for long, and she soon ceased to show any outward signs of grief. She sought distraction in pleasure and amusements, to which she gave herself up to a degree hardly suitable to her age and situation. Prince de Rohan, under the pretext of showing her his house, entertained her magnificently at the Hôtel de Guise, on which he had spent a million, and which he has converted into an admirable palace. The bad situation of Madame la Duchesse's affairs, owing to her lawsuit about M. le Prince's succession, and her numerous family, inspired him with the hope that she might be induced to give one of her daughters to his son; and he trusted to the King's memories of his mother, and to Madame d'Espinoys's influence with Madame de Maintenon, to overcome the modern objections to a marriage between a subject and a Princess of the Blood-royal. He had availed himself of his brilliant situation in Monseigneur's Court to make advances to the Dauphiness, with whom he sought to ingratiate himself by high play and assiduous attentions; the high opinion he entertained of his own personal attractions had even led him to make some gallant overtures to her through his cousin, Madame de Montauban. The Dauphiness made great fun of these advances, but not openly; on account of Monseigneur and his surroundings she always treated Prince de Rohan in public with gracious familiarity. He hoped by her influence to consolidate his rank of foreign prince. Monseigneur's death had spread consternation among all the holders of this usurped dignity, for they had hoped everything from him, and feared the new Dauphin; as we have already seen, they might have found themselves mistaken in the father; but as to the son they
made no mistake, his discernment and solid judgement could not approve of a rank which was maintained only by the continuance of the confusion and disorder from which it had sprung. Prince de Rohan soon found that Madame la Duchesse would not listen to his proposals, and quietly withdrew them. He was careful not to betray his disappointment by any show of displeasure likely to draw attention to projects which he wished to conceal; but, finding that he had nothing to expect from her, he gradually withdrew from her society, without ceasing altogether to see her.

It did not take much to console d’Antin for the loss of Monseigneur. He knew he was not favourably regarded by the Dauphin, nor by any of the persons who had most influence with him; but, as we have already seen, he had cleverly managed to conciliate the Dauphiness at the time of the campaign of Lille, and he hoped to find an ally in her; moreover, as the King was still in good health, he trusted that he would have sufficient time to overcome the Dauphin’s dislike. He was released from the irksome necessity of paying court to Monseigneur, which had interfered very much with his attendance on the King; but which he could not escape, being, as he was, in the position of a valet engaged to serve two masters. He was also freed from the domination of Madame la Duchesse, and from the difficult task of keeping on good terms with the various members of the cabal which surrounded Monseigneur. He hoped, by paying assiduous, and now undivided, court to the King to advance still further in his favour; his ambition was to become a member of the Council, for who ever heard a lucky man admit that he had got enough?

The adherents of the cabal, who had looked forward to making their fortunes during the coming reign of Monseigneur, were plunged in grief at their common downfall. Marshal d’Huxelles was in despair, which he was obliged to conceal as much as possible; as a last remaining resource he set himself to gain the good graces of M. du Maine. The First Equerry, proud of the high birth of his mother and his wife, chose to ignore his father’s origin, and ventured to aspire to the dignity of Duke; he was fully persuaded that Monseigneur would have given it to him, and grieved over his death like a man who has lost his whole fortune.
Harcourt, who had stood higher in Monseigneur's favour than any of them, was more easily consoled; for he had Madame de Maintenon entirely on his side, and had long since contrived to secure the good-will of the Dauphiness. Boufflers, like a good-hearted man, regretted the loss of a friend, for Monseigneur had listened with sympathy to his complaints of the King's coldness to him (to say the least of it) since he had asked for the Constable's sword; but in reality he was a gainer by his death. He was likely to be even more favourably regarded by the new Dauphin, who was better qualified than his father to appreciate true merit; he was highly esteemed by the Dauphiness, and had always been on the best of terms with Madame de Maintenon.

To come to an inferior class, Sainte-Maure, whose company was only wanted at the card-table, really lost all his prospects. La Vallière was too nearly connected with the Princess of Conti to expect much from a Prince under the influence of Mademoiselle Choin. He had married a Noailles, the cleverest, most sensible, and most far-seeing of her family, who governed her clan, had great influence in the Court, and was entirely in the confidence of the new Dauphiness; she was bold and enterprising, though rather flighty, and not very good-tempered. Biron and Roucy, who, though not menins, had always been much attached to Monseigneur and had constantly accompanied him, thought their prospects ruined. Roucy was right, for only a man like Monseigneur would have made a favourite of him. Biron, who had been taken prisoner at Oudenarde, might still look for advancement in the army; he is now, indeed, a Duke and Peer, and senior Marshal of France. Moreover, he was brother to Madame de Nogaret, and might expect something from her influence with the Dauphiness; I had also succeeded in obtaining for him the good-will of M. de Beauvilliers, so he had good reason to hope for the favour of the new Court.

Three men in a class by themselves may also be mentioned here: the Dukes de La Rocheguyon, Luxembourg, and Villeroy. We have already seen the links which united M. de Luxembourg with Monseigneur, under whom he might reasonably expect to play a leading part—so far, at least, as he was capable of doing so. He could expect support in no other quarter. If the King showed him any
attention it was only on account of his name. He retained some of his father’s old friends, and was in much request in the highest circles of society; but that was all. He was, however, so great a seigneur that he had no difficulty in finding consolation for his loss. The two others had obtained Monseigneur’s good-will through the letters which, as I have somewhere mentioned, had brought about their disgrace with the King, whose prejudice against them was never entirely removed; they were, moreover, contemporaries of Monseigneur, and he had always been familiar with them. But they never had so much influence with him as M. de Luxembourg; and the death of their intimate friend the Prince of Conti was a great loss to them, for it left them exposed without protection to the attacks of Vendôme and his cabal. True, Vendôme was absent; but he had his emissaries, and he would certainly have returned when Monseigneur ascended the throne. It was not that he had any personal animosity against them, but no friend of the Prince of Conti could ever be his friend. So these two brothers-in-law were no great losers by Monseigneur’s death.

A fourth person, La Feuillade, found all his schemes for the future once more upset hopelessly. When he fell into disgrace after the battle of Turin he sought to attach himself to Monseigneur, and profited by the brief interval before Chamillart’s downfall to obtain the support of Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and M. de Vendôme. His love of play made him welcome to Meudon, and he was always invited there; without, however, making any real advance in Monseigneur’s favour. Still, he had hoped that under his reign fortune might smile on him once more; he knew he had nothing to expect from the present King, and still less from the new Dauphin; so that he was profoundly grieved by Monseigneur’s death.

That event was also a terrible blow to two classes of men who had much in common, though of very different standing, namely, the Ministers and the tax-farmers. We have already seen the sentiments expressed about the latter by the Dauphin; they looked forward to his accession with the most gloomy forebodings. Those of the Ministers were hardly more cheerful. Monseigneur would have been exactly the sort of King they wanted; under him they would have been the real rulers of the country, and would
have acquired more power than they, if possible, had already usurped. In his place they saw a young Prince arise, well-educated, industrious, and accessible; determined to look into everything for himself; quite able, and, as they feared, quite willing to keep them in their proper place as Ministers—that is, to make them obey orders instead of giving them, and abandon all pretension to dispense favours. They were conscious of a coming change, and already began to lower their tone a little—with what mortification may easily be conceived.

The Chancellor had taken pains to conciliate Monseigneur's good-will ever since his appointment to the Finances; he had useful friends in Dumont, to whom he had rendered many services, and in Mademoiselle de Lislebonne and her sister, who were much attached to him; he looked forward with some reason, therefore, to taking a leading part in the Government under Monseigneur, and in such a situation his abilities would have carried him very far. His hopes were now entirely overthrown. He was the declared enemy of the Jesuits, and strongly suspected of Jansenism; he was not on speaking terms with the Duke de Beauvilliers, with whom he had acrimonious disputes in the Council whenever matters relating to Rome were under discussion, and he had taken sides hotly against the Archbishop of Cambrai throughout his affair. It was too much; and he gave himself up as lost.

His son, Pontchartrain, was universally detested, and with very good reason. He had succeeded in making himself at once an object of fear and contempt; his mean servility was so exaggerated that it had lost its effect even in our servile Court; and he had contrived to quarrel with the Jesuits, while professing to be their warm supporter, so that, instead of being grateful to him for the manner in which he ferreted out and persecuted any one suspected of Jansenism, they merely put it down to his natural propensity for tormenting people. The new Dauphiness held him in abhorrence, and never lost an opportunity of setting the King against him. I will relate one instance out of many. One evening she entered the King's room just as Pontchartrain had left it, after transacting business; Madame de Saint-Simon and one or two other ladies were with her. On the floor near where Pontchartrain had been sitting she noticed some filthy splashes of spittle mingled
with snuff. "How disgusting!" she said to the King: "that must be that nasty one-eyed man of yours; nobody else would be capable of such a thing!" The King gave her a hint that she ought not to talk so freely in the presence of Madame de Saint-Simon. "Bah!" said she; "Madame de Saint-Simon may not say as much, but I know she thinks as I do; who indeed can think otherwise?" The King smiled, and rose to go to supper. The new Dauphin had no better opinion of him, nor had any of his advisers. Pontchartrain was therefore an additional millstone tied round the neck of his father, who was quite conscious of the burden. Madame de Maintenon, who, as we have seen, had long since quarrelled with the Chancellor, liked his son no better than did the Dauphiness.

La Vrillière was generally liked, because he was always ready to do any one a good turn whenever he had an opportunity; this was but seldom, however, owing to the nature of his office. He and his wife were on very good terms with Monseigneur, and of confidential friendship with Mademoiselle Choin, in which the First Equerry and Bignon had been of great assistance to them. Monseigneur's death was, therefore, a great blow to him; for his mother-in-law, Madame de Mailly, was not strong enough to keep him afloat. Moreover he had a domestic misfortune, to which he was wise enough to shut his eyes, though it was known to every one else in the Court; and this proved his ruin. Madame de La Vrillière had crossed the path of the Dauphiness, and had been mad enough to triumph over her undisguisedly. This had been going on for years, and it had even given rise to unpleasant scenes. There was no one in the world whom the Dauphiness hated like Madame de La Vrillière. All this was of bad augury for La Vrillière's future.

Voysin's sole protector was Madame de Maintenon. Utterly without tact, buried in his papers, and intoxicated with the favours he had received, he was dry, not to say rude, in his manners, and in his letters positively insolent. His only resource was his wife's adroitness in pleasing, but neither of them had any connection with the new Court. They had arrived too recently to have made many friends; the husband was indeed hardly capable of making any, still less of keeping them if he had made any; and his office was the one most coveted and the easiest to fill if vacant.
Torcy, of gentle and cautious disposition, had the advantage of a long experience of public affairs, and of his acquaintance with the mysteries of the Post Office and other state secrets. He had many friends, and, at that time, no enemies. He was first-cousin to the Duchesses de Chevreuse and Beauvilliers, and son-in-law to Pomponne, for whom M. de Chevreuse and M. de Beauvilliers had a respect verging on adoration. He had never been connected in any way with Monseigneur or the now defunct cabal. His position with regard to the new Court seemed therefore most promising; but in reality it was not so. His intercourse with the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers went no farther than the ordinary courtesies of society; neither their relationship, nor the continual contact into which they were brought by their official positions, had ever been able to melt the icy barrier between them. Madame de Torcy, who was proud and not very good-tempered, did not always take sufficient pains to conceal her opinions; the opinions of a person of her name were naturally suspicious to the two Dukes, and the ascendancy she had acquired over her husband made him fall under the same suspicion; consequently, they looked upon him as a dangerous man to have in the Ministry. In the Council he was sturdy in his opposition to any encroachments of the Court of Rome; he expressed his opinions with moderation, but with much force and ability, and was well supported by the Chancellor. This led to the wrangles between the latter and the Duke de Beauvilliers, who was hard put to it to reply to their arguments. Madame de Torcy was not so popular as her husband; the new Dauphiness rather disliked her than otherwise, for Madame de Torcy had never attempted to conciliate her; indeed, she never tried to conciliate anybody. Nevertheless, she had some friends; but the only person in a position to help them was his sister, who might have influenced Monseigneur through Madame la Duchesse.

Desmarets' long experience of the most profound disgrace and the difficulty with which he had been extricated from it ought to have taught him to distinguish his real friends from those who always swarm round a man in power. He was not wanting in sense and ability, yet on this point he was completely led astray. His promotion

1 She was an Arnauld, related to the famous leader of the Jansenists
turned his head; he fancied himself the Atlas who bore the world on his shoulders, and thought the State could not do without his services. He let himself be seduced by his new Court friends, and entirely forgot those who had stood by him in his disgrace. We have already seen that one of the chief of these was my father, whose example I had followed; that my influence with Chamillart had been of the greatest service to him in obtaining his readmission to employment in the department of Finance, and afterwards in procuring for him the appointment of Controller-General. As we have also seen, he was quite aware of what I had done; and after the declaration about my private affairs which I had made to him on his taking office, and to which I had adhered most punctiliously, he ought to have been doubly at ease with me. Nevertheless, it was not long before I perceived a coolness on his part. I watched his conduct carefully to make sure that I was not taking as an intentional slight the accidental neglect of a man harassed by difficult and important business; but in the end I was convinced that my suspicions were well founded, and I quietly withdrew from him.

The Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beaufuilliers noticed it, and asked for an explanation. They tried to persuade me that Desmarets was unchanged, and that I must not pay too much attention to the absence of mind caused by his incessant and melancholy occupations. They often begged me to go to his house; but I let them talk, and still retained my own opinion. At last, annoyed by my obstinacy, they came to me one morning at Fontainebleau and insisted on taking me with them to dine with Desmarets. I remonstrated; but yielded at last, telling them they would see for themselves how matters stood. The result was that Desmarets treated me with such coldness and want of civility that the two Dukes were very much annoyed, and confessed that I had been perfectly right.

Before very long they themselves had a similar experience. The honour of being their first-cousin was the greatest distinction Desmarets could boast of; and it was in a great measure by their efforts that he had been rescued from his shameful position, restored to honour, and admitted to his present office. Notwithstanding so many reasons for being grateful to them, they were soon on the same footing with him as I was; the Duke de Beaufuilliers
told me himself that they were hardly on speaking terms with him. He persecuted the Vidame d’Amiens in the most undisguised manner, and even went so far as to persecute the Light Horse because the Vidame was their commanding officer. He behaved no better to Torcy and his mother and sister, whose guest he had been from the time he left Maillebois till he became a Minister. The Chancellor, who had not indeed taken great pains to please him, but who, when Controller-General, had nevertheless been the first to overcome the King’s prejudice against him, was the only Minister whose salary was never paid; so that Desmarets could boast of making no exceptions to his general rule of ingratitude. He had a savage temper, which he could not control, even when speaking to women; and his indolence threw all business into arrears. Conduct such as this was not calculated to ensure him a very prosperous future; but he lost nothing by Monseigneur’s death, for he had never had much access to him or to any member of his intimate Court.

Such was the position of the Ministers when that event happened; I must now turn to that of the Duke de Beuvilliers and others who found their prospects improved by it.

1 Son of the Duke de Chevreuse.
CHAPTER XI

1711

The Duke de Beauvilliers—His changed position—Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai—His character and conduct in exile—The “little flock” —Their hopes for the future—The Duke de Charost—Dignified conduct of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers—Mistaken dislike for them on the part of the Dauphiness—Throng of courtiers at Cambrai—Apparent change in the Dauphin—He shows himself in his true character—General satisfaction with him—The King takes him into his confidence and orders the Ministers to consult him on public affairs—Mortification of the Ministers—Position of other Ministers—The Chancellor—Pontchartrain—La Vrillière—A success in Flanders—Illness of the Queen of Spain—Play resumed at Marly—Address of the Assembly of the clergy—Bold speech of the Archbishop of Alby—The King’s reply—Obsequies of Monseigneur—No Dukes attend—The Dauphin makes himself popular—Pontchartrain encroaches on my authority at Blaye—Captains of the Coast-guard—I remonstrate with him—Interview with Aubenton—My steady declaration to Pontchartrain—He refers the dispute to his father, who decides against me—I vow vengeance against Pontchartrain, but remain on friendly terms with the Chancellor.

To a casual observer it seemed as though but few new actors had come upon the stage; for, with the exception of certain personages, easily recognised, they kept in the background for the present. It is needless to say that there was a general rush to pay court to these personages, and to any one else who seemed likely to come to the front.

Perhaps the only man Monseigneur ever really disliked was the Duke de Beauvilliers; he could not conceal his aversion for him, and it was sedulously fomented by the cabal. M. de Beauvilliers’ feelings may therefore be easily imagined when he saw Monseigneur replaced by a Prince who prided himself on having been his pupil, and lost no opportunity of showing that he considered himself to be so still. Beauvilliers was a true patriot, and sincerely pious; he rejoiced to feel that he was now in a position to serve his country and the cause of religion by paving the way for the return of his beloved Archbishop of Cambrai.
Moreover, with all his candour and genuine piety, he was not so superior to ordinary human nature as to feel indifferent to the change in his own fortunes. At the time of his highest prosperity he had been persecuted, and pushed more than once to the very edge of the precipice; now he found himself securely established on a rock; and it was, perhaps, with some complacency that he saw the waves which had so nearly overwhelmed him breaking harmlessly at his feet. Nevertheless, he lost none of his usual equanimity; his quiet courtesy remained unaltered; he was as ready as ever to listen to any one who came to him; not a sign betrayed that his head was turned by his altered prospects, or disturbed by ambitious thoughts. He had another and more worthy cause for rejoicing: knowing the character of the new Dauphin as he did, he foresaw his conquest over men’s hearts and minds, when he should feel himself established in his new position. On this subject he took us into his confidence, and gave himself up freely to joyful anticipations. Chevreuse, united with him in the closest bonds of friendship, rejoiced with him for the same reasons.

But the person of all others whose fortunes were most affected by Monseigneur’s death was Fénélon, Archbishop of Cambrai. For him it seemed the prelude to a complete and certain triumph. What a beam of light suddenly shot through the gloom of his melancholy abode! Confined to his diocese for the last twelve years, old age was creeping upon him, as he brooded over his unavailing hopes; and the years rolled by with an uneventful monotonv which must have driven him to despair. He was odious to the King, who could not bear to hear his name mentioned, even in connection with the most trifling matters; more odious still to Madame de Maintenon, because it was she who had brought about his overthrow. He was singled out as a special object of vengeance by the terrible cabal which surrounded Monseigneur. His sole resource was in the unchangeable affection of his pupil; but his pupil had himself fallen a victim to the cabal, and in the ordinary course of nature would remain in subjection too long for the Archbishop to have any reasonable hope of living to see his emancipation, and with it his own restoration to the world. In an instant, this pupil becomes Dauphin; in another instant, as we shall see, he is admitted to a kind
of share in the monarchy. What a change of prospects for an ambitious man!

I have already described him to a certain extent at the time of his disgrace. His famous "Telemachus," which did more than anything to bring it about and render it irremediable, gives a complete and accurate insight into his character. This book is composed of themes written for his pupil; which were surreptitiously obtained, pieced together, and published at the time when the disputes about him were at their height. M. de Noailles, who, as we have seen, was seeking to supplant the Duke de Beauvilliers in his offices, told the King that no one but an enemy to his person could have composed such a work. Enough has been said already to throw much light on the character of this prelate, who was always regarded as formidable, even at the lowest point of his fortunes; he was, however, so remarkable a personage in all the stages of his career that some further description of him may not be out of place.

The passionate desire of his heart was to be liked; no woman ever felt it more strongly. But he did not want mere superficial popularity; he wished to be appreciated. He would take as much trouble to please a servant as his master, and the humblest as the most distinguished personages. He was endowed with talents exactly fitted for this purpose; he had a quiet, attractive manner, full of natural charm. His conversation was easy, witty, and agreeable, flowing from an ingenious and cultivated mind; and, if I may so speak, he kept his finger on the tap, turning on just the quantity and quality required for every occasion, and for every listener; he knew how to suit himself to everybody, making himself all things to all men. His countenance was very singular, but dignified, striking, penetrating, and attractive; his charming manners made him accessible to everybody; his steady, gentle piety repelled no one, yet always made itself felt and respected.

He was extremely liberal, not to say lavish, in his expenditure; but it was a well-considered liberality, and gave offence to no one. His table, furniture, and equipages were kept within the limits suitable to an ecclesiastic; his hospitality was unbounded, and he delighted in extending it to the officers and soldiers of the army. Always ready to do any one a service, he was entirely free from ostenta-
tion; the kind things he did in secret were numberless, and when he conferred a benefit which could not be so easily concealed he contrived to do it in such a way that he seemed to be the person receiving the obligation. He was never fussy, never obsequious; he never paid compliments; but he had a natural, easy politeness which he used with such tact that, although it comprised everybody, each individual took it as a personal favour to himself. He showed his cleverness especially in bearing his ill-fortune as he did; it became an additional merit in the eyes of the inhabitants of the Low Countries, who were devoted to him. The various Governments also, under whose authority they lived, all liked and respected him. Though his thoughts were always running on the possibility of being called to a more active and brilliant position, he thoroughly enjoyed this pleasant life. Perhaps he would have looked back to it with regret if his secret longings had been realised; however that may be, he did enjoy it; and with so little apparent dissatisfaction that his most intimate friends would never have suspected him of wishing for a change if they had been ignorant of his past and of what the future might still have in store for him.

With all his various occupations, he was as attentive to his episcopal duties as though he had nothing to distract his thoughts from his diocese. He visited the hospitals, superintended a liberal but judicious system of almsgiving, kept an eye on his clergy and the religious houses of his diocese; in short, nothing escaped his attention. Every day he said Mass in his chapel; he often officiated in person, sometimes preached, and contrived to perform all his episcopal functions without assistance. He found time for everything, yet he never seemed busy. His open house, with its hospitable table, was like that of a Governor of Flanders; at the same time it was just what a properly conducted episcopal palace ought to be. Besides soldiers of distinction, it always contained a number of officers of lower rank, many of them sick or wounded, who were kept there without expense to themselves; and each of them received as much attention as if he had been the only guest. The Archbishop was usually present at the surgeons' consultations, and ministered to the wounded in the hospitals like a true Christian pastor. All this he did
without forgetting anybody, yet without any fuss; he was always pleasant in his manners, and his hands were always ready to give. Consequently, he was universally adored.

Admirable as his outward conduct was, however, it did not completely reveal the man. Though I do not pretend to sound the depths of his character, I may safely assert that he never overlooked anything in the least likely to restore him to favour and enable him to attain a leading position. During his later years he occupied himself in writing books, which were warmly opposed by Father Quesnel and others; this strengthened the alliance between himself and that section of the Jesuits which, under the guidance of Father Tellier, had always stood by him; in this way he hoped in time to overcome the King's prejudice against him. Silence in the Church would have been more becoming to a Bishop whose doctrine had, after long and acrimonious disputes, been solemnly condemned. He had too much sense and tact not to know it; but his ambition led him to despise the disapproving voices raised against the author of a proscribed dogma, and others accusing him of motives which were visible enough to such as had eyes to see. He went forward towards his mark without turning to right or left; he provided his friends with excuses for occasionally venturing to pronounce his name; he flattered the Court of Rome, ungratefully as it had treated him; and succeeded in persuading the whole body of Jesuits to look upon him as a prelate who might be very useful to their Society, and ought to be taken warmly under its protection. He even contrived to conciliate La Chétardie, Rector of St. Sulpice, Madame de Maintenon's imbecile spiritual director, or rather, tyrant.

But, amidst all this paper warfare, Fénelon, always conciliatory and eager for popularity, took care not to commit himself to any acts of hostility. The Low Countries, the city and diocese of Cambrai in particular, swarmed with Jansenists, real or reputed. Wherever Fénelon's jurisdiction extended they found peace and an assured refuge. Satisfied with the repose they enjoyed under their Archbishop, they troubled themselves but little about his controversial writings, and left it to others of their way of thinking to oppose his doctrines; so they made no exception to the general love and admiration with which he was regarded. By this clever conduct he came to be regarded
as a kindly, charitable Bishop; at the same time, as one capable of rendering great services to the Church, who, consequently, ought to be supported by it to the utmost.

Such was the situation of the Archbishop of Cambrai when he heard of Monseigneur’s death, the elevation of his disciple, and the influential position of his friends. Never was there a bond of union closer or more unchangeable than that which existed among this little select flock. It was founded on their love of God and His Church. They were of different ranks in life, but all persons of real virtue, with the exception of a very few whose virtue consisted only in outward show. All were inspired by one object—to bring about the return of their master, the Archbishop of Cambrai; and in the meantime to think and act according to his principles, to seek his advice on all subjects, and to receive it as the oracles of God, which he was commissioned to deliver. What cannot an enchantment such as this effect, when, after taking possession of the hearts and minds of honourable and able men, it has become further consecrated into a belief that by abandoning themselves to it they are taking the only way to promote the glory of God, the welfare of His Church, and the salvation of their own souls!

From all this it will be easy to understand what a powerful influence the Archbishop of Cambrai exercised over the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers and their wives, who thought and felt alike on all subjects. It was perhaps only this influence which kept the Duke de Beauvilliers from resigning his office when his sons died, and on several occasions when he was on the point of being dismissed. Both he and the Duke de Chevreuse had a natural taste for a retired life; indeed, they indulged in it to a degree hardly becoming in persons holding their official positions; but their sense of duty forbade them to resign so long as there was a possibility of bringing about the return of their spiritual father. They feared lest they might have to reproach themselves some day with having wilfully rejected the chance of assisting in this good work, for which the hidden designs of Providence might at any time provide an opportunity, though they had waited for it so long in vain. They looked upon the revolution caused by Monseigneur’s death as the sign of a direct interposition of Providence; as the reward of the righteous man who
lives by faith, hoping against hope, and finds his deliverance when he least expects it. Not that I ever heard them say anything of the sort; but one who saw them, as I did, in their domestic circle, could easily divine their sentiments from the whole tenor of their lives and conduct. They were very reticent on such matters; they were always surrounded by a group of disciples of long standing like themselves, to which they cautiously avoided admitting proselytes; it was only in this society that they felt themselves really free; and this liberty was dearer to them than anything in the world. This was the cause of the more than fraternal affection between the Dukes and Duchesses de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, and of the marriage of the Duke de Mortemart, the son of the fearless, faithful disciple; it was also the cause of the weekly retreats to Vaucresson, to which none were admitted but a very small number of carefully selected disciples; above all, it was the origin of their boundless attachment to the new Dauphin, who had been carefully trained in the same sentiments. They looked upon him as a second Esdras, destined to restore the temple and people of God after the captivity.

Chief among this little flock was the Duchess de Béthune, one of the earliest disciples, whom Madame de Guyon had found worthy to be her favourite. She was, beyond comparison, the great soul, whom the Archbishop of Cambrai himself treated with deference, and who only showed deference to him out of humility and the consciousness of her sex. The Duke de Béthune, her husband, was merely a serving-brother, tolerated on her account; but her son, the Duke de Charost, reaped all the advantages to be derived from the merits of his saintly mother. He was an upright and honourable man, who did his best to be virtuous; and his virtue was enhanced by a devotion to the Archbishop of Cambrai as thorough as could be desired, even from the son of such a mother. He was, however, very ambitious, very envious, and very fond of society, in which he was extremely popular, for he had the kind of wit suited to it; but he had no sort of capacity for business, and no acquirements. Even in religious matters he had learnt nothing but the maxims and doctrines peculiar to the little flock. He was very capable of friendship, and loyal to his friends. All his family were tremendous
talkers, and he had inherited this peculiarity; but, in spite of it, he could be thoroughly trusted with any secret.

He was, perhaps, the only man who, while making no secret of his religious opinions, contrived to be on friendly terms with most of the libertines of his time; they sought his society eagerly, and were always anxious to have him at their parties—those, at least, at which there was no debauchery. They not only abstained from ridiculing his opinions, though so very different from their own (and I am speaking of the very best and most brilliant society of the Court and Army), but they put some restraint on themselves out of consideration for him, without any diminution of their gaiety and liveliness. He himself was of a cheerful disposition, and good company; brave, witty, and often extremely amusing. His lively temperament often led him into passions which his piety tried hard to restrain, but it had great difficulty in mastering them; this was a subject for many jokes at his expense.

It had long been the wish of M. de Beauvilliers that Charost and I should be friends, and a close intimacy had grown up between us which was never broken. I never knew the Archbishop of Cambrai, except by sight. I had hardly begun to appear in society at the time when his favour declined; and I had never presented myself for initiation into the mysteries of the little flock. I was, therefore, greatly inferior to the Duke de Charost in the eyes of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, and we shall see before long that this procured him a very material advantage; in spite of this, however, they never took him completely into their confidence except where their peculiar religious doctrines were concerned, while to me they talked with the utmost freedom about the Court, the conduct of the Dauphin, and State affairs generally. They never mentioned their doctrines to me, but they were quite open concerning their attachment to the Archbishop of Cambrai and their plans for his return. I was always welcome at Dampierre and Vaucresson, where those who were not generally known to be disciples of the little flock did not hesitate to reveal themselves as such, and conversed freely in my presence. I was the only person, not initiated into their doctrines, admitted on this friendly and confidential footing.

I had long perceived that the two Dukes did not take
Charost into their confidence to anything like the same extent as myself; he often complained to me that they would not talk to him about matters which they had already fully discussed with myself; though I took care not to tell him so. I was surprised at this; for he was considerably older than myself, and in most respects had more in common with them. But his activity was more bodily than mental. Though he went far more into society than I did, he saw little but what appeared on the surface; he was, therefore, ignorant of the secret intrigues of the Court, while they were revealed to me through my intimacy with the leading personages of both sexes, and because I always took the trouble to discover and to follow the daily progress of things of this sort; for they are not only interesting in themselves, but the knowledge of them frequently turns out to be of the greatest utility.

Madame de Saint-Simon was also entirely in the confidence of the two Dukes and Duchesses, who had a high opinion of her virtue, conduct, and good sense. For my own part, I could say anything I pleased to them, which the religious scruples of the Duke de Charost would not have allowed him to do. As we have already seen, I had been able to warn them of impending events of the greatest importance, which they could not believe till the result showed that I was right. It was with great and unmixed satisfaction that I found myself the only man in the Court on terms of confidential friendship with the two men who were now to play such a leading part, and had so much influence over the new Dauphin. But, as my intimacy with them was never known, I was on my guard against any outward appearance of satisfaction or self-importance, and most careful to avoid any change in my manner or ordinary mode of life.

To the public, therefore, there appeared to be only two persons in a position to profit by this great transformation scene, the Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, with a third in the background, the Archbishop of Cambrai. A crowd instantly flocked round the two Dukes, and among it there was not a single person who, according to his own account, had not been their friend all through. But these courtiers found that in them they had not to do with mushrooms, such as the new Ministers who are raised in an instant from the dust and placed at the helm of the
State; ignorant alike of the Court and of affairs, and incapable of seeing through flattery of this sort, which they are vain enough to ascribe to their own merit, instead of to their newly acquired favour. The two Dukes, without making the slightest alteration in their usual quiet behaviour and mode of life, sought only to evade these servile advances. They determined to trust only those friends who had always stood by them; to please the King by increased assiduity about his person; and to strengthen their influence over the Dauphin, so that, while carefully avoiding any appearance of guiding him, they might induce him to show himself as he really was.

They also did all in their power to win the good-will of the Dauphiness, or at any rate not to alienate her. She was not well inclined towards them; partly owing to impressions derived from Madame de Maintenon, partly because their virtue, of which she saw only the rough exterior, seemed austere to her, and alarmed her on account of their influence over the Dauphin. She was afraid of them, too, on a very delicate subject, respecting which she would, on the contrary, have trusted them implicitly, if, with all her cleverness, she had been able to understand that the first desire of a really wise and virtuous man is to conceal, with the utmost care, anything likely to disturb the peace and confidence of a married pair. I have often seen the two Dukes most earnestly endeavouring to do so; nevertheless, she lived in terror lest her husband should receive some spiteful warning from the very quarter in which she was safest. These fears had brought about a coldness and uneasiness in her manner towards the two Dukes which all the cleverness and favour of Madame de Lévi had been unable to dispel; and her dislike of them was sedulously kept alive by the Noailles family. Madame de Roucy also did what she could to foment it, for, though she communicated most piously every week, she had never forgiven the Duke de Beauvilliers for giving his voice against her in her lawsuit with M. d'Ambres.

When the spring arrived, and with it the season for the reassembling of the army, the change which had come over the Court was felt very perceptibly at Cambrai. It seemed as though no part of Flanders could be reached without passing through that town; all the courtiers on their way to the army, all the general officers, and a great
number of inferior rank, took that route, and stayed at Cambrai as long as possible. The throng which paid court to the Archbishop was such that, in spite of his pleasure, he was annoyed by it; fearing lest the King should be displeased. It may be easily imagined how courteously and modestly he received all this homage; and how those clever persons who had always visited him on their way to Flanders congratulated themselves on their foresight. All this caused a great deal of talk, as the prelate had feared; but he conducted himself with such dexterity that the King and Madame de Maintenon took no notice, willing, apparently, to shut their eyes to what was going on.

As may be supposed, the two Dukes did not allow the Dauphin's warm attachment to the Archbishop of Cambrai to cool—a point on which there was a complete understanding with the confessor. Their first object was to induce the young Prince to disarm the King's jealousy by increased assiduity, and treating him with profound respect and submission. He also paid great attention to Madame de Maintenon, in which he was well backed up by his clever wife, already in full possession of her heart; the consequence was that Madame de Maintenon, delighted at the substitution of a Dauphin whom she could trust for one who disliked her, gave herself up to him entirely, and in doing so brought over the King also to his side. The first fortnight was sufficient to make all at Marly aware of this extraordinary change in the King, formerly so stiff and reserved towards his legitimate offspring. This great step in advance made the Dauphin feel more at his ease; he became less shy in society, which he had hitherto dreaded because he was always in danger of receiving some sneering remark from Monseigneur—remarks which were received with general applause. It was for this reason that he shut himself up so much in his own room; he felt that he was disliked by his father, and, perhaps, by the King. He knew he was exposed to the persecution of a cabal comprising most of the people with whom he was brought into daily contact; and he resigned himself to a life of obscurity, the more painful because he could see no prospect of a change.

Now that he felt sure of the King's good-will; now that the insolent cabal had been destroyed by the death of the father whom he had come to look upon almost as
an enemy, this shy, timid, reserved Prince, who used to appear in his own house with a stiff, embarrassed air like a stranger, began to expand visibly; he mixed more with society, behaving cheerfully, agreeably, and with dignity; he did the honours in the saloon at Marly. As he presided over the circle assembled round him he seemed like a divinity in his temple, graciously receiving the honours due to him, and rewarding his worshippers by his beneficent influence. By degrees, hunting was no longer the chief topic of conversation, except for a few minutes when people were just starting for or returning from the sport. The wiser courtiers were charmed, and all were surprised, by the easy, sensible manner in which the young Prince talked. Allusions to history or science, never dragged in, but arising naturally from the conversation and evidently flowing from a well-stored mind; enlivened by lighter, and often very amusing, remarks, made people open their eyes and their hearts as well.

The Dauphin became a second Prince of Conti. Many of those who crowded round him directly he appeared were actuated less by a wish to pay court to him than by the real pleasure they felt in listening to his conversation; and they had the further satisfaction of seeing their future master so well qualified for the position he was to occupy. It is astonishing how rapidly public opinion changed with regard to him; people asked each other whether this could really be the same man, or whether the difference they thought they saw in him was not all a dream. Cheverny, to whom this question was put, answered it once for all. He said the reason of the general surprise was that nobody had ever taken the trouble to know the Prince. As for himself, he saw no change in him whatever; he was exactly what he had always been in private; it was only that he felt himself more at liberty, and could show himself in his true colours. Longer experience of the Dauphin, he added, would show that this estimate of him was correct, and full justice would be done to him. This new reputation spread from the Court to Paris, and from Paris to the most remote provinces, with such rapidity that the few people who had stood by the Dauphin all through could hardly believe the reports they heard from all quarters. Though the new opinion of him was thoroughly justified, it must not be supposed that it was due entirely to his merits; it
was caused partly by reaction from the calumnies spread broadcast by the cabal, and partly because every one hoped, in his own interest, that the things said about the young Prince might be true. People rejoiced to think that there was an appearance of advancing dawn, and trusted that it might bring order and happiness after a long period of confusion and darkness.

Madame de Maintenon was delighted at this change in public opinion, partly from affection for the Dauphiness, partly with a view to her own interests; and she at once set about turning it to good account with the King. Although she always professed great admiration for anything he liked, and was very cautious in her treatment of his Ministers, she was by no means pleased with their despotism and their manner of wielding it. Occasional sarcasms making them appear in a ridiculous light, an art in which she excelled, had let her intimates into the secret of her feelings on this point; sometimes she had even let fall more serious, though only half-uttered, remarks about the evil of their government. She thought it would be an advantage to the State and to herself, and a relief to the King, if he could be induced to let the Dauphin look into matters of public business before they were brought to him, and dispose of some of them himself, and thus by degrees relieve him of much burdensome work; for the Dauphin had already considerable experience of public affairs, having long been a member of all the Councils, in which he spoke with much force and ability. In a matter of this sort, which could be suggested at first by mere hints, and afterwards cleverly developed, she was always sure of having her own way.

The King, already more favourably inclined towards his grandson, was less on his guard against the applause showered upon him than he had appeared to be during his earlier campaigns. Bloin and the other confidential valets, now that Vendôme and Monseigneur were no longer there, went about in fear and trembling; and without their support M. du Maine dared not open his mouth, lest Madame de Maintenon should discover that he was trying to thwarther. So the King was no longer pulled the other way by these powerful intriguers, who had formerly turned his hours of privacy to such good account. The wise and respectful conduct of his grandson had produced its effect,
and disposed him to listen to Madame de Maintenon's suggestions; so that, to the amazement of the whole Court, after a long interview with the Dauphin, he ordered his Ministers to transact business with him whenever he should send for them; and, not only that, but to consult him on all business relating to their offices without waiting to be sent for. It is not easy to describe the effect produced on the Court by an order so directly opposed to the King's usual inclinations and policy; it amounted to nothing less than surrendering the management of a very considerable portion of public affairs into the hands of the Dauphin. To the Ministers it was a thunderstroke, and they could not conceal their astonishment and mortification.

It was a bitter pill for men suddenly raised from the dust to a position of absolute authority, which they did not always condescend to veil under the King's name; accustomed to make or unmake fortunes, to distribute rewards or punishments at their own caprice, putting down every complaint with a curt "Such is the King's pleasure"; in a position to report things to the King, or conceal them from him as best suited their convenience, and if they did tell him anything, to tell it in their own way; men, in short, who had all the authority, and were not far from assuming the airs, of Sovereigns. What a fall for such men to have to submit to a capable and industrious Prince, not to be put off with words, but insisting on examining things for himself; who, having the ear of the King at any moment, and the hearty support of Madame de Maintenon, was more than a match for them on their own ground; who would, therefore, be able to correct the mistaken opinions which they had so sedulously instilled into the King's mind; while at the same time he would be quietly taking stock of their qualifications against the time when he should become their master! They had nothing for it but to submit; the state of the Court precluded the formation of a cabal, and the public were overjoyed at an edict which reduced these haughty tyrants to the level of subjects. All they could do was to bow their heads in silence, to bend those proud necks which had stiffened to the consistency of iron. They all went to the Dauphin, looking like men on their way to the gallows, to offer him their humble duty and protest their delight at having received such a command.
The Prince had no difficulty in discerning sentiments which they were quite unable to disguise; he received them, however, with kindness and consideration; inquired of each Minister at what hour it would be least inconvenient for him to attend, and, satisfied with this first submission, abstained from discussing any business with them on this occasion. After this, however, he made them come regularly for the transaction of business. Torcy, Voysin, and Desmarets were the Ministers most affected. The Chancellor, having no special department, had nothing to do with the Prince. His son, seeing the other Ministers sent for, would have liked to be sent for himself; but the Navy was practically destroyed, and the reports of the private scandals of Paris, with which he amused the King every Monday, were not to the Dauphin’s taste, and he refused to waste his time over them. Moreover, Pontchartrain was personally offensive to him, so that he never had the happiness of being sent for; nor could he find anything in his departments which he could venture to take to the Dauphin without a summons. There was nothing to make La Vrillière’s attendance necessary: his department of the Provinces was really concerned only with the so-called Reformed religion, and the affairs of the Huguenots; and since the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes all this had come to an end.

Early in the year Marshal Villars had left for Flanders, intending to besiege Douai; but, finding it impracticable, had returned to Court till the usual time for the opening of the campaign. In the meantime, Permangle, who commanded in Condé, hearing that the enemy had a convoy of provisions on the Scheldt, marched with 800 men to attack it. He defeated the escort, which consisted of two battalions under a general officer, and burnt twenty-five barges out of thirty-six.

The army under the command of the Duke de Noailles was sent into Aragon, and he was instructed to act under the orders of M. de Vendôme, either in conjunction with him or separately, as the latter might think best.

The Queen of Spain had been in bad health for some months. The glands of her neck were swollen, and the complaint developed into scrofula; she had many attacks of fever, nevertheless she continued to do her best for the restoration of affairs in that country.
On the 8th of May lansquenet and other games of cards were resumed in the saloon at Marly, which for want of them had been much deserted since Monseigneur's death. The Dauphiness did not play for a week or ten days, but in the end everything went on as usual. Small-pox was still very prevalent at Versailles, and for this reason the King remained at Marly during the Whitsun festival.

About this time the King of England started for a tour round the kingdom, being apparently tired of his melancholy campaigns under an assumed name, yet unwilling to remain idle at St. Germain while the war lasted. People chose to suspect something mysterious about this expedition, but there was in reality nothing of the sort.

The King continued to wear mourning for the Duchess of Lorraine's children some days beyond the usual time; partly because he always disliked making a change in his dress, partly because he expected every day to have to go into mourning for the Emperor. But the Empress-Dowager, who had assumed the government till the Archduke could return, in her official letter informing the King of the Emperor's death, had the bad taste to speak of the pleasure she would have in seeing her son the King of Spain, giving him that title in full. Her letter was sent back to her, and the mourning suspended.

The Assembly of the clergy had just concluded its session, and they came in a body to Marly to address the King, headed by Cardinal de Noailles. The address was delivered by Nesmond, Archbishop of Alby, and I lost not a word of it. The first part, after the inevitable preamble of flattery of the King himself, was an address of condolence on the death of Monseigneur, respecting whom the speaker said as much as could be said, eloquently and without exaggeration. But when he came to his second theme, namely, the subject which had occupied the attention of the Assembly, he astonished his hearers and carried them away by his eloquence. It is impossible to describe how dexterously he alluded to the violence which had extorted their so-called voluntary gift, and contrived to mingle praises of the King with denunciation of the crushing taxes imposed on them. He boldly described the evil effects which must arise if such burdens continued to be imposed on that consecrated portion of Christ's flock set apart to act as shepherds to the rest; he told the
King that he should consider himself guilty of a gross betrayal of his trust, if, speaking as he did in the presence of the best and most religious of sovereigns, he shrank from expressing himself as forcibly as the Bishops of old, who had to speak to wicked Princes and Pagan Emperors. He would not conceal from him, therefore, that the bread of the Word was insufficiently supplied to the people; that they had even to go without the Bread of Life, the Bread of Angels; and this because there were not sufficient funds to train young men for the priesthood. The clergy were terribly diminished in numbers; in every diocese there were vacant cures, and there was no possibility of supplying the deficiency.

These bold assertions were skilfully and forcibly worded, and adroitly seasoned with sufficient flattery to make them go down. The King thanked the speaker in a very complimentary and gracious manner, and did not disdain to express some sort of an apology to the clergy. He wound up his reply by saying, pointing to the Dauphin, that here was a Prince whose talents and sense of justice inspired the hope that things would be better managed under him; who would compensate the clergy for the exactions which the misfortunes of the country had forced him to impose on their affection and good-will, winding up with some affecting allusions to his advanced age and approaching end. The extraordinary contribution which he extracted from the clergy amounted on this occasion to 8,000,000 livres. The King did not appear displeased at the very unusual boldness of the Archbishop, which astonished his auditors. The Dauphin seemed touched and grieved by the King's allusions to him. Already, when Cardinal de Noailles had pronounced the harangue at the opening of the Assembly, the King had pointed out the Dauphin to the clergy, saying: "There stands a Prince who by his virtue and piety will render both Church and State happier and more flourishing!" That also was at Marly.

I must now go back to the obsequies of Monseigneur. We have seen that, on account of the nature of his illness, the burial had been hurried on without any sort of ceremony. The service at St. Denis was held on Thursday, the 18th of June, the higher clergy and judges of the superior courts of law being present as usual. The mourners were the Dauphin, the Duke of Berry, and the Duke of
Orleans. The Dauphin's train was borne by the Duke de Beauvilliers, as his First Gentleman of the Chamber, assisted by Ste. Maure and d'O. The King wished the Dukes to attend, and was on the point of ordering them to do so; but thought better of it, and contented himself with letting his wish be known. I did my best to make them keep away; and the result was that no Duke was present except the Duke de Beauvilliers, who had to attend in his official capacity. The King was displeased when he noticed that not one of the Dukes staying at Marly was absent on that day; still more so when he heard that none of the others had been at St. Denis. No one made any reply to his remarks, however, and the matter was allowed to drop; but when the service at Notre Dame was held on the 3rd of July the Dukes, without a single exception, again abstained themselves.

After this second service Cardinal de Noailles gave a magnificent dinner to the three Princes. The Dauphin surpassed himself in politeness and affability. He insisted on the doors being thrown open, and allowed the crowd to press in upon him, speaking graciously to several of the bystanders. He completed his conquest of their hearts by his solicitude for a woman in the family way who had indiscreetly mingled with the crowd; she was seized with a violent desire to eat of one of the dishes on the table, and he immediately sent her some. As he passed through the streets of Paris he was greeted with shouts and acclamations, and the prevailing opinion of him spread immediately to the provinces; so true it is that, with very little trouble, French Princes may make themselves adored by their countrymen. The absence of the Dukes from the ceremony was again remarked by the King, but he said nothing.

It is now time to speak of my position with regard to the new Dauphin; I shall have some very interesting things to relate which will throw light on the great qualities of that Prince. But I must first mention a very tiresome affair which I would gladly omit; it will be seen later on, however, that it is a necessary prelude to what is to follow.

I have mentioned the encroachments of Marshal de Montrevel on my rights as Governor of Blaye, and the disputes which prevented me from making Guyenne my place of retreat at the time when I was thinking of retiring
from the Court in 1709. I must now explain that Chamillart had induced the King to create a new military office, that of Captain of the Coast-guard, to be hereditary in the families of those appointed to it; this Coast-guard consisting of the peasants inhabiting the parishes along the sea-coast; who were not regularly enrolled, but merely bound to defend the coast and assemble wherever their services might be required. These new commissions, as usual, were made more attractive by the addition of sundry rights and prerogatives: a bait which never fails to extract money in plenty from gullible and inconsiderate Frenchmen; though they might be warned by seeing that the law-courts never pay any attention to those who complain that such rights and privileges have been violated, and that on the conclusion of peace even the titles which they have purchased are usually abolished. The right of selling these appointments was given to Pontchartrain, in part payment of the arrears due to his department of Marine; and he, always eager to extend his domination, procured the issue of a fresh edict greatly enlarging the scope of the original scheme. A clause was inserted by which the new coast-guard officers were to obey only Governors, Commanders-in-Chief, and Lieutenant-Governors of Provinces, and were to be under the jurisdiction of the Admiral and the Marine department. By another clause the Coast-guard was no longer to be confined to the districts bordering on the sea, where it had existed from time immemorial; both banks of rivers were included to a considerable distance inland, so that districts far removed from the coast were now to be subjected to the vexations and exactions of the newly appointed Captains of the Coast-guard.

I knew nothing of all this till Pontchartrain had completed his work; when he told me, without any explanation, that I should do well to select some one to command the Coast-guard in my Government of Blaye. I thought he was merely trying to find a purchaser for his wares, and paid no attention. Some time afterwards he spoke to me again, begging me to choose somebody, lest a man should be appointed who might not suit me. I replied that whoever was appointed would be under my orders, so I cared very little who it was. He said no more, and there the matter rested for a time.
Shortly after this I asked Marshal de Montrevel to let Chamillart decide some of the points at issue between us; he dared not refuse, and as a beginning he abandoned all claim to authority over the Blaye Militia. It had always been under the sole authority of my father, and the officers’ commissions were all signed by him. M. de Louvois, though not friendly to him, had never disputed this right; but poor Chamillart, intimate with me as he was, was more tenacious than Louvois of his dignity as Secretary of State. He gave me to understand that the King would not approve of commissions being issued in my name, though as a matter of fact he had never objected to it; adding that I had only to nominate any one I pleased, and the commission should be at once issued from his office.

All this time Pontchartrain had been furtively watching the progress of my dispute with Marshal de Montrevel; he often questioned me about it, and I answered unsuspiciously, not seeing that he had any personal interest in the matter. He now told me that, since the commissions were to be issued in the King’s name, I ought to apply to the Marine Department, and not to the War Office; because these officers nominated by me would serve under La Motte d’Ayran, a Captain in the Navy who had been appointed to command the Coast-guard of Blaye and the surrounding district; and according to the terms of the edict these Captains of the Coast-guard were to be under the jurisdiction of the Marine Department. Chamillart, on the other hand, contended that the Militia were land-troops, as indeed they always had been; he alleged the precedent of the Boulongnais, a district which had one of these newly invented Captains of the Coast-guard; where, nevertheless, the commissions of the militia officers were issued from the War Office on the nomination of M. d’Aumont, Governor of Boulogne.

The two Secretaries of State had long been enemies; neither would give way, and it was determined to refer the matter to the King. Chamillart was at that time in high favour, and would certainly have gained his point, while Pontchartrain would have been well snubbed. They were both my personal friends; I did not wish to embitter the quarrel between them, so I thought the best thing would be to suspend my nomination of officers. The Chancellor and Pontchartrain thanked me for making this sacrifice,
which was indeed no small one; for in my present situation with regard to Montrevel it was important for me to regain the control of my Militia as soon as possible, and so diminish the number of questions in dispute between us. Things remained in this position till the downfall of Chamillart, when Montrevel flatly refused to abide by the decision of Marshal de Boufflers in my favour; as I think I have mentioned already.

When Chamillart was succeeded by Voysin I thought the latter, being new to office, would probably not have heard of this dispute between the two departments, and that my best course would be to get the commissions issued by the Marine Department, for the delay in appointing officers was very improper, and injurious to the public service. To my astonishment, on applying to Pontchartrain, he now told me that the right of nominating the officers did not belong to me, but to the Captain of the Coast-guard; adding, it is true, that La Motte d'Ayran would not exercise it without my concurrence! I kept my temper, and condescended to argue the point. I alleged the commissions formerly signed by my father as a proof that the right to appoint militia officers had always belonged to the Governor of Blaye. I reminded him that both he and his father had thanked me for suspending my nomination three years before; that neither he nor Chamillart had questioned my right at that time; that I had refrained from exercising it merely to save him from the unpleasantness of having to give way to Chamillart; and I told him that it was a poor return for my forbearance to attempt to deprive me of my rights. I added that I could not have been treated worse if his office had been held by my personal enemy; from a near connection like himself, and after our long intimacy, I thought I had a right to expect that, if he did not improve my position at Blaye, he would at any rate not seek to deprive me of privileges which had belonged to the Governor there from time immemorial. He could not contradict me on a single point; nevertheless I might as well have talked to a stone wall; he continued to argue at great length, till at last I broke off the conversation.

Madame de Saint-Simon was very much surprised when I told her all this; but, as her temper was always less hasty than mine, she begged me to make no difference in
my behaviour to Pontchartrain; to give him time to think
the matter over; for she could not believe that he really
meant to oppose me in a matter which was nothing to
him personally, when he saw that I felt so strongly about
it. I followed her advice, not only from affection, but
because long experience had taught me that it was the
wisest thing I could do. After some time she spoke to
him herself; he was profuse in expressions of respect, but
she could get nothing solid out of him. Shortly afterwards
he told me that he wished to satisfy me if he could, but
thought it better not to discuss the matter with me; he
asked me therefore to talk it over with d'Aubenton, one of
his principal clerks; to which I consented. Two days
later Aubenton came to me. I had to listen patiently to
a long speech full of compliments, intended to smooth
over my objections to Pontchartrain's pretensions. I re-
peated the arguments which I had used to Pontchartrain
himself; d'Aubenton had nothing to say in reply, except
that the commissions would really be granted by me,
though formally issued by the Captain of the Coast-guard.
I said that was all very well; I was willing to believe that
so long as Pontchartrain was in office no nomination would
be made without my approval, but another Secretary of
State might disavow his promises; and I thought the best
way would be to leave me to exercise my undoubted right;
adding that, after all that had passed between Pontchar-
train and myself, I could not believe that he would prefer
a Captain of the Coast-guard to me to such an extent as
to rob me and my successors of our functions for his benefit.
The interview proved fruitless; but d'Aubenton begged me
to give him another, and to endeavour to hit upon some
compromise, assuring me that Pontchartrain would be only
too glad to meet me half-way.

A week later Aubenton came again; during the interval
I had tried hard to find a compromise. I was particularly
anxious to avoid a quarrel with Pontchartrain, not only
because I had been on friendly terms with him for twenty
years, but also for the sake of his wife's memory, and
because of my intimacy with the Chancellor, to whom I
had not yet said a word on this subject. I told d'Aubenton
that these considerations had led me to suggest a com-
promise by which I gave up so much that nothing less
would have brought me to it, namely, that the Captain
of the Coast-guard should nominate the officers of the Blaye Militia, subject, as Pontchartrain had himself proposed, to my approval; but that, to ensure this arrangement being formal and durable, no commission should be issued without being endorsed with my signature, just as commissions in the cavalry have to be countersigned by the Colonel-General of Cavalry. Aubenton let me see that he approved of this arrangement; at the same time he gave little hope of a favourable answer.

It turned out as he foresaw. He brought me word that Pontchartrain could not venture to issue commissions in an unusual form without the King's permission, and he thought it would not be advisable for me to ask it. I replied in a loftier tone than I hitherto assumed, though without abandoning my polite manner towards Aubenton personally. I said I was not surprised at the issue of such an affair, since Pontchartrain had taken it up as his own concern; it was a poor return for twenty years of friendship, and for my complaisance towards him in Chamillart's time; but I perfectly understood what was at the bottom of it: he wanted, under cover of an obscure Captain of Coast-guards who was entirely dependent on him, to use these commissions in the Militia as rewards for his lackeys. So long as I had imagined myself to be dealing merely with an official edict and a Captain of Coast-guards I had striven to maintain my rights, relying on the justice of my cause; but, now that I understood the real state of the case, I was far too well aware of the superiority of a Secretary of State to a mere Duke and Peer to continue the struggle; I yielded at once, knowing my own impotence; but, in doing so, I yielded everything, and was determined never in my life to hear another word concerning the Blaye Militia.

Startled at this steady declaration (for I kept my temper completely), startled also, perhaps, by my tone and fiery looks, Aubenton employed all his remaining eloquence to shake my determination. He assured me of Pontchartrain's respect and wish to serve me; and represented that, in giving up the command of the Blaye Militia and the responsibility for its discipline, I was making a sacrifice which was quite uncalled for, and which I might afterwards regret. His looks and manner showed that he was thoroughly ashamed of his commission; in spite of his
proud position as chief clerk to one of the five kings of France, he could easily see that the affair might have unpleasant consequences. My only reply to his remonstrances was to rise with a smile; he implored me not to consider the negotiation at an end; I interrupted him by expressing my pleasure at having made his acquaintance, and so I bowed him out.

I met Pontchartrain some days afterwards; he said, in a voice broken by emotion, that he was very unfortunate, since my friendship depended on his performing impossibilities, adding something about the long standing of our acquaintance. I replied calmly that I never asked people for more than they could give; he had probably seen d'Aubenton, and heard that I gave up everything; and, that being so, there was nothing more to be said on the subject. He then offered to refer the question to the arbitration of any one I chose to name. I knew well enough which way the decision would go in our servile Court; so I replied simply that the matter was settled, and there was an end of it. Then he proposed his father as arbitrator, and this time I could not bring myself to say "no."

When we returned to Versailles, for the Chancellor never came to Marly except to attend the meetings of the Council, I laid the matter before him. He thanked me again for suspending my nominations while Chamillart was in office; said he was by no means biassed in favour of his son, for he well knew his faults and follies, from which he had often suffered; went into a long string of sophisti- cated arguments, which he always had at his command when required; and wound up by telling me that I expected his son to perform impossibilities. I was so astonished that I could not argue the point; I merely replied that I thought my only mistake was in not having nominated officers in Chamillart's time, without regard for his son's feelings. His answer took my breath away; he said it was a pity I had not done so. After this I made my escape as soon as possible.

The very confidential intimacy between the Chancellor and myself has been mentioned several times in these Memoirs; and it will be remembered how adroitly, in con- junction with Madame de Saint-Simon, he had prevented me from leaving the Court in 1709. When I thought of my present agreeable position at Court, with the brilliant
prospects which, as we shall soon see, appeared to await me in the future, and contrasted it with the situation in which I should have found myself if I had carried out my intention of retiring, my anger against him for backing up his son's treachery melted away; but I confess I was doubly determined to avenge myself on the son. I had a second conversation with the Chancellor, which I wound up by telling him that further argument was useless, for we should never convince each other; and I hoped he would excuse me if for the future I made no reply to anything he might have to say on the subject. I added that I was quite determined to have nothing more to do with the Blaye Militia; Pontchartrain and his Captain of the Coast-guard might do what they liked with it, so far as I was concerned. The Chancellor understood this plain speaking; he replied, with some embarrassment, that he thought I was making a great mistake, but it must be as I pleased.

After this the Chancellor, his wife, and Pontchartrain urged Madame de Saint-Simon to induce me to accept the appointment of Captain of the Blaye Coast-guard for myself. It was easy to see that they had not anticipated the embarrassment which my unexpected firmness had caused them; the son was sorry he had gone to such extremities in an unsavoury affair into which he had plunged, as usual, without his father's knowledge; and the father was sorry that he had backed him up when called upon to arbitrate between us. To get out of their difficulties, they now proposed that I should borrow the money to purchase this office of Captain of Coast-guards (whether from a bonâ fide lender, or whether they themselves found the money under cover of his name, I know not), on condition that the lender should be contented with the pay of the office in lieu of interest; that he should require no security beyond the office itself, and should bear the loss if it was abolished at any time, or if the pay fell into arrears; and that he should be liable for any of the taxes or other burdens which the Government was in the habit of laying on new appointments such as this. In short, I was to have the office without any risk, and without its costing me a farthing.

I was so angry that for a long time I would not listen to this proposal; but at last, to please Madame de Saint-Simon, I accepted it, on condition that, when once the
bargain was concluded (which it never was), they should never mention the affair to me again. After this I seldom met Pontchartrain, and then only on the most formal terms; and we were on this footing at the time of Monseigneur's death. As for the Chancellor, there was not the slightest coolness between us; our relations continued to be as friendly as they had always been. I have always been strongly influenced by gratitude, and, as we shall see before long, my gratitude to the Chancellor did not stop there.
CHAPTER XII

1711

Changed position of M. de Beauvilliers—He consults me—We discuss proposed changes in the Ministry—Torey—I do not oppose his dismissal—St. Contest to succeed him—Desmarets—Pontchartrain—M. de Beauvilliers determined to dismiss him—Description of his person and character—I put in a word for him—M. de Beauvilliers consents to my warning him privately—My interview with him—M. de Beauvilliers suspects him of Jansenism, but is reassured by my explanation—I am authorised to give Pontchartrain another warning, and he obtains a respite—I determine to try to reconcile M. de Beauvilliers and the Chancellor—A conversation with the Dauphin—My behaviour towards him—His reasons for looking upon me favourably—Explanation of my views respecting Jansenism, Rome, and the Jesuits.

In his pleasure at seeing his pupil’s new position so firmly established, the Duke de Beauvilliers was beginning to assert himself more; he no longer scrupled to let people see that he was now a personage to be reckoned with. I perceived a change in him such as I could never have hoped for; in his conversations with me he spoke with a decision quite new to him; I found in him a man sure of his position, energetic, going straight to the point, and apparently shaking off his old shackles. We discussed the whole Court; and he was no longer shocked at my plain speaking, nor did he attempt to controvert my opinions. He remembered that I had always given him good advice; and experience had taught him that I was the better judge of men’s characters, for which his mistaken notions of Christian charity and his retiring habits had unfitted him. He knew he could rely on my secrecy, and I think I may say on my truthfulness and probity; nor could he doubt my affection for him after an experience of sixteen years, since my wish to marry into his family had first brought us together. He talked to me, therefore, absolutely without reserve. The reason why we brought the whole Court under review in this way was, that we wished to decide who would be proper persons to bring into personal con-
tact with the Dauphin, and vice versa. We also talked over the men of the gown; not, of course, with precisely the same object, for their position unfitted them for introduction to the Dauphin's private circle, but in order to settle between ourselves who were the persons best fitted for public employment, so that they might be brought to his notice, and that he might be warned against others. This important subject was pretty nearly exhausted, in four or five long conversations which we had tête-à-tête: a fact which I note, because the Duke de Chevreuse was not present.

Another tête-à-tête conversation followed in which the Duke revealed his secret thoughts concerning all the present Ministers. Torcy was the first to be discussed. I had long since warned M. de Beauvilliers that there was a close intimacy between him and d'Antin, brought about chiefly by Torcy's sister, Madame de Bouzols, a hideous woman, but very clever and agreeable, a great friend of Madame la Duchesse. Another person also did a good deal to promote this intimacy: Mademoiselle de Tourbes, with whom d'Antin had a liaison which was just beginning to attract notice, and which lasted all their lives. She was another demon for cleverness and wit, a great friend of Torcy and his sister; she cared little for her brothers, the Marshal and Abbé d'Estrees, but was devoted to Madame la Duchesse. Nothing could be more strongly opposed to the Duke de Beauvilliers than this clique of Madame la Duchesse's, which still showed signs of life; and d'Antin was his personal enemy. Independently of all this, there was a coolness between him and Torcy, though they preserved appearances, and the Court in general had not perceived their estrangement. It arose in this way. The Duke de Beauvilliers was devoted to the Jesuits and Sulpicians, who had always stood by the Archbishop of Cambrai; and he followed their lead blindly in all matters relating to Rome or Jansenism. As the King grew older he became more and more a tool in the hands of the Jesuits, and of Madame de Maintenon's spiritual directors; for, as he was profoundly ignorant on such subjects, there was nothing to counterbalance their influence. The Jesuits and the Court of Rome therefore gained ground every day; and the more ground they gained the more blindly did the Duke de Beauvilliers abandon himself to their views.
1711] TORCY AND M. DE BEAVILLIERS 227

Torcy thought very differently on these subjects. He knew the inestimable importance of preserving the rights of the Crown and the liberties of the Gallican Church; he dreaded the wiles of the Jesuits, and the clumsy ignorance of the Sulpicians. It happened, therefore, that he frequently found himself opposed to the Duke de Beauvilliers in the Council. He was an able, honourable man; very well-informed, but reserved and rather timid. When he argued on these points he spoke mildly, and even with deference for M. de Beauvilliers; but he could not help speaking well, for he had a natural gift for speaking and writing; and, moreover, he was nearly always in the right. M. de Beauvilliers' turn for speaking came last but one; and it threw him into a cold perspiration to have to sit and listen to Torcy, who usually carried the other Ministers with him, and whose arguments he did not know how to refute. Moreover, he knew that he was about to receive the fire of the Chancellor, who spoke after him, and always handled him roughly; so that he came to look upon Torcy as the man who furnished the Chancellor with weapons which he sometimes used with rather unbecoming violence. The opinions of Torcy and the Chancellor were such as, in M. de Beauvilliers' vocabulary, came under the head of Jansenism; and a Jansenist in his eyes was even more odious and dangerous than a Protestant. There were two other crimes which set him against Torcy; in the first place, he had never shown any friendly feeling towards the Archbishop of Cambrai; and, secondly, he was the husband of Madame de Torcy, and submitted too much to her influence. In the eyes of M. de Beauvilliers she was a heretic who led her husband astray, and kept him too closely tied to her side to leave any hope of converting him, or even of mollifying his opposition.

M. de Chevreuse was by no means so violent in his opinions as his brother-in-law, in spite of his abjuration of Port-Royal, where he had been brought up. With regard to these subjects he was a very curious mixture. Though no less devoted than M. de Beauvilliers to Madame Guyon, the Archbishop of Cambrai, and their peculiar doctrines, he had never lost the profound aversion for the Jesuits instilled by his early education. He concealed it carefully; but I taxed him with it more than once, and in the confidence which existed between us he did not
attempt to deny it. Consequently, he was always on his guard against the Jesuits; and, being better informed than M. de Beauvilliers, he was less inclined to give way to the usurpations of Rome; I say he was less so, but he was still ready to give way far too much. He had never lost his affection and esteem for the people of Port-Royal, though he had thrown them over; he has often confessed as much to me; and yet, while he took their part theoretically, in practice he was against them. I cannot explain this inconsistency, I can only say that so it was. With such sentiments, he did not share M. de Beauvilliers' dislike for Torcy, with whom, moreover, he had no opportunities of quarrelling; for, though really and effectively a Minister, he had never been admitted to the Council. He did his best to preserve the appearance of friendship between them; more than that was not in his power.

Knowing how matters really stood, I was not surprised that the Duke de Beauvilliers, in discussing the Ministers with me, should begin with Torcy, and speak of him as a man whom it was absolutely necessary to get rid of. I knew no more of him at that time than one usually knows of people with whom one is not brought into contact; his friends were not mine; in the office which he held he could render me no services; I never went to his house; and, though we had some common acquaintances, he had never made any advances to me. I was not satisfied with his conduct towards the Duke of Orleans; besides, if I must tell the whole truth, I was offended at the indifference he showed towards myself. So I did not undertake his defence against M. de Beauvilliers, who proceeded at once to consult me as to who should be put in his place. Amelot was by far the best man, but he was too much the friend of the Princess des Ursins, and consequently stood too well with Madame de Maintenon, to be the man for M. de Beauvilliers; nor would he suit me with regard to the Duke of Orleans, whom I wished to see on good terms with the Dauphin. Instead of him I suggested St. Contest, a great friend of mine. He was a man who, under a clumsy exterior, concealed a very subtle and acute mind; he was painstaking and industrious; and, though his manners were bourgeois in the extreme, he had a thorough knowledge of the world and of the Court. He had been Intendant of Metz, and while there had conducted negotia-
tions very successfully with the Elector-Palatine, the Duke of Lorraine, and other petty Princes in those parts, for his manners were insinuating, and he knew how to get what he wanted without giving offence. M. de Beauvilliers knew him, and approved my suggestion; so that point was settled between us.

When we came to consider Desmarets there was some difference of opinion between us. The Duke, as I have already mentioned, was on such terms with him that he dared not talk to him about anything. He could not deny his sulky temper or his extraordinary ingratitude; but Desmarets had never been suspected of Jansenism, and had not opposed the Archbishop of Cambrai; for he did not return to public life till long after the latter’s disgrace; his character being clear on these essential points, other considerations saved him. He was Colbert’s nephew, trained in his doctrines, and was supposed to be the most capable financier of the day; finally, M. de Beauvilliers had himself taken immense pains to get his head above water again, and, whatever ingratitude he might receive from him, he could not find it in his heart to destroy his own work. Nothing that I could say had any effect; the Duke could not see any one better to put in his place, and determined to leave him there.

We were quite of one mind as to La Vrillière; the Duke agreed that what little work he had to do as Secretary of State was well done, and that he was capable of greater things; so it was unnecessary to displace him. We also agreed that Voysin must be dismissed. He had no capacity; his honesty was not above the usual standard of a Court; he was rough in his manners, knew nobody, and was absolutely at the beck and call of Madame de Maintenon. I sounded the Duke as to appointing Chamillart in his place. I was edified and touched by his reply; he said Chamillart had been his friend for forty years, and he had himself strengthened the bonds between them by giving his niece in marriage to his son; he knew him to be thoroughly honest, and a far more able man than was usually supposed; but he thought the Dauphin would never consent to his appointment. Moreover, he said, Chamillart had two great defects, which he considered incompatible with the good of the State, and of which he knew he would never cure himself: he was extraordinarily obstinate, and,
though I was well aware of this trait in his character, the Duke told me some fresh instances of it which astonished me; and, secondly, he had friends against whom he would never listen to a word, and who were extremely dangerous advisers. I knew this well enough; but it was with real sorrow that I saw I must give up all hopes of bringing my friend back to power; it was, however, clearly impossible after the line he took with regard to the campaign in Flanders, which I have related in its place; even if the other considerations could have been disregarded. I therefore suggested the appointment of La Houssaye, whom I did not know at all; but I had heard good reports of his ability as Intendant of Alsace; and it was desirable to have a man who had been Intendant on the frontiers, and had some experience with troops. M. de Beauvilliers approved of this selection.

With regard to Pontchartrain, I found M. de Beauvilliers in a frame of mind which would have pleased me, if I could have thought only of his conduct towards myself; but it was impossible. I was bound to his father by the closest ties of friendship and gratitude; I had a real regard and esteem for his mother; and his wife, who was nearly related to my own, had left children. I foresaw their fate; the Chancellor would be dismissed or driven to send in his resignation; after all his brilliant career he would be forced to live in retirement, with a dagger in his heart; and his grandson would lose any hope of advancement. I had carefully concealed my resentment against Pontchartrain from the Duke de Beauvilliers, knowing his relations with the Chancellor. He now spoke his mind to me, about both father and son, more freely than he had ever done before; indeed, he left nothing unsaid. Ever since the Chancellor's appointment as Controller-General there had been differences between the Duke and himself; and these had been accentuated by their totally opposite opinions concerning Rome, Jansenism, and, above all, the character and doctrines of the Archbishop of Cambrai. In their unceasing skirmishes over the Council-table the Chancellor often employed the weapon of light irony, which came naturally to him and had the effect of raising a laugh at his opponent's expense. His jests sometimes went rather beyond the bounds of propriety, and disconcerted the gravity of the Duke de Beauvilliers; moreover, he put
no restraint on his tongue outside the Council. Several times relations between them had been so strained that they did not exchange the ordinary courtesies of society. It is true that matters were not quite so bad as that at the time of which I am speaking; still, the wounds rankled on both sides; the two men could never forgive each other, and their mutual hatred was notorious. The Duke now told me many particulars which his cautious reserve had hitherto concealed, and which the Chancellor had also refrained from mentioning to me, out of consideration for my friendship with the Duke.

Although Pontchartrain was notoriously on bad terms with his father, and always treated M. de Beauvilliers with the utmost respect and politeness, the Duke equally disliked him, for reasons easy to discover. The failure of the Scotch enterprise in 1708, which was justly imputed to Pontchartrain, was an unpardonable crime in the eyes of the Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, who had first suggested the expedition; and his whole character was odious to them on other grounds. But it may be as well to give a more detailed description of him; he is still alive, but he has been so long dead to the world that I shall speak of him as if he were dead in reality.

He was about the middle height, with bloated cheeks and blubber lips; his face had been much damaged by small-pox, which had deprived him of an eye; the glass eye which he had substituted for it was always weeping, and gave him a treacherous, scowling expression, which repelled people at first sight, though not so much as it should have done. He was not without ability, but it was most perversely misapplied; he knew something of books and history, and was thoroughly well up in naval matters; he was sufficiently industrious, but liked to be thought fonder of work than he really was. His disposition was thoroughly perverted; he liked evil for its own sake, and would do a bad turn whenever he could, merely for the pleasure of annoying somebody. If he did by any chance render a service he boasted of it in such a way as to deprive it of all its value; and he never rendered one which had not been dearly purchased by previous refusals; so that he made enemies even of those whom he professed to oblige. His intolerable assumption of superiority made it very unpleasant to associate with him; he was per-
petually asking questions, for he thought himself entitled to advise and sit in judgement on everybody. Woe to the man who, from weakness or necessity, submitted to this usurped authority! he soon discovered that he was bound in fetters which he could only break by breaking with Pontchartrain himself. His conversation was as disagreeable as his character; it was more like a lecture. He was for ever dividing his discourse into three heads, stopping at every other sentence to ask, with an air of complacency, whether he made himself understood; interrupting others, raising his voice to bear them down; with a forced laugh at every moment, and a perpetual assumption of superior cleverness which made one sick. Always jealous and envious, he was inquisitive to the last degree, perpetually trying to find out family secrets and to have a finger in every intrigue. He treated his subordinates in the Navy department like galley-slaves; no officer, even of the highest rank, was safe from his insolent speeches, nor any man or lady of the Court from his impertinent airs of authority. He delighted in saying disagreeable things, and, under the pretext of giving friendly advice, would scold people like a schoolmaster. He was the tyrant of his domestic circle. His first wife, so perfect in every way, submitted too meekly to him, and it killed her eventually; his second has avenged her.

We have seen how he treated the Count de Toulouse, d'O, and Marshal d'Estrees; the wives of the last two turned the Dauphiness completely against him, and others influenced the Dauphin in the same way. Madame de Maintenon, who had been very fond of his first wife, could not bear him, and the only hold he retained over the King was through the amusement he gave him by the reports of his informers in Paris. This business, which belonged to his department, caused many quarrels between him and d'Argenson, whom he tried to treat as his subordinate. But d'Argenson was too clever for him; he had gained the King's confidence, and was entrusted with the secrets of the Bastille and other really important affairs of Paris, while he left to Pontchartrain nothing but the reports of follies committed by women and young people. Thus he got rid of the most odious part of his work, especially the issue of blank lettres de cachet, and was thanked by many influential persons in all ranks of society for saving their relations from Pontchartrain's claws.
The Jesuits and Sulpicians looked upon d'Argenson as their faithful ally, and spoke well of him to the King and Madame de Maintenon in consequence; while, as I have already mentioned, Pontchartrain served them with such bad grace that they hated him, and attributed his persecution of the Jansenists to his natural propensity for injuring people. With all his vices and insolence, he was astonishingly candid about his birth; he did not speak the whole truth about his family, but he admitted that they were originally petty burgesses of Montfort l'Amaury: quite enough to annoy La Vrillière, who used, very absurdly, to boast of his origin. I have witnessed some funny scenes between them on this subject. In his capacity as Secretary of State Pontchartrain was arrogance personified.

The Duke de Beauvilliers expressed himself so bitterly, and seemed so determined to get rid of Pontchartrain, that I thought it better not to irritate him by strong opposition on this occasion; I merely said enough to furnish myself with an excuse for returning to the subject another day, and changed the conversation. It was three or four days before we discussed the matter again; the Duke drew me aside as we were following the King in his walk, and began recapitulating Pontchartrain's defects: his spiteful temper, his overweening pride and ambition, the aversion of the public for him, and the abominable way in which he had behaved to persons of all classes, some of them persons of high distinction. I could not contradict him on any of these points; with regard to the last, indeed, I had painful and recent experience, and it was not without an internal struggle that I refrained from mentioning it at this decisive crisis. However, I let the Duke go on till he had finished, and then said that, unwilling as I was to oppose him in anything, and fully admitting the truth of all that he had said, I could not abandon the son of the Chancellor without an effort to save him; and I went on to speak of my gratitude and esteem for the Chancellor, and my affection for his grandchildren.

The Duke had a kind heart, and this way of answering him set him thinking. I saw that, though he did not like my opposition, he was pleased with my motives. He still insisted; I replied in the same manner, without irritating

1 His cousin.
him by contradiction, and, finally, I asked whether he considered Pontchartrain to be altogether incorrigible. He made no answer, and remained for some minutes in silent meditation. At last he said that, since I had undertaken his defence, for reasons which concerned nobody but myself, he would tell me, out of personal regard for me, that Pontchartrain was in imminent danger; the Dauphin and Dauphiness, supported by Madame de Maintenon, were determined to get rid of him; and it did not seem as though the King would offer much opposition to their wishes. For his own part, he added, I could easily imagine what line he would take if he allowed personal feelings to influence him; but, putting aside so unchristian a motive as revenge, he could not disregard the reports he heard from all sides about Pontchartrain's conduct. It seemed to him that his dismissal was required in the interests of the public service, and, so far as he himself was concerned, it was unnecessary for him to act; he had simply to stand by and do nothing. That being so, Pontchartrain had better show that he was not incorrigible by a prompt change of conduct, if indeed there was yet time for it; if he did so, he would reconsider the matter.

Knowing that we were speaking, as we always did, in the strictest confidence, I asked him whether he spoke merely from an anticipation of what was likely to happen, or whether there really was a settled plan for getting rid of Pontchartrain, to be carried into effect without delay. He replied unhesitatingly that it was the latter. I was startled; but, not venturing to say more, I contented myself with begging him to give a short respite to a man who did, at any rate, thoroughly understand his business in the Marine Department, and whose successor might very likely turn out to be his inferior in that respect. Who this successor was to be I never knew, but I think Desmaret was the man. On my urgent entreaty, M. de Beauvilliers gave way so far as to permit me to warn Pontchartrain. He said I might tell him to keep his temper within bounds, to be more polite to people when giving audiences, and to show less inclination to severity in making his reports to the Council. I was to specify particularly several cases, which the Duke explained to me, in which his rough manners and general leaning towards harshness had left a bad impression; but I was not to go further, and let him
see how I had learnt these particulars. I thanked the Duke warmly, and again begged him to suspend the breaking of the storm, if possible, till he saw whether his counsels had produced any effect. He would not promise anything; but I fancied I could perceive a certain hesitation, as if he was afraid of indulging in revengeful thoughts; and I entertained some hope accordingly. This ended our important conversation.

It gave me a good deal to think about. I saw that, even if I could succeed in averting this blow, the Chancellor and his grandchildren would still be in a most precarious position. It was not in Pontchartrain's nature to restrain himself for long; the first relapse would be fatal to him, and, with the mutual dislike subsisting between the Duke de Beauvilliers and his father, would probably be fatal to the latter also. I had always wished most earnestly to bring about a reconciliation between the Duke and the Chancellor, but only as one wishes for something hopelessly impossible. They had absolutely nothing in common, except their uprightness and their zeal for the public service. Their connections, their opinions, their dispositions, were totally dissimilar; and, though both were sincerely religious, their views were so different that religion itself supplied a fresh ground for their mutual aversion. Nevertheless, it was clear to me that, in the altered circumstances of the Court, nothing but a sincere reconciliation could save the Chancellor; and, impossible as the task appeared, I resolved to attempt it. To see my two most intimate friends on such terms that one of them must infallibly ruin the other was the only thing which marred my happiness in my present fortunate position; and, with such an incentive, my undertaking began to appear rather less chimerical.

I went to Pontchartrain's rooms that same evening, as soon as his supper-party was over and his guests had retired; he was astonished to see me at that hour, for I was no longer in the habit of dropping in familiarly. I opened my business at once by telling him, in a cold, grave manner; that although it had never been my custom to give him advice, and, since what had happened lately, I felt less inclined than ever to do so, there were certain things which it was absolutely necessary for me to tell him; he was not to ask my reasons, nor the sources of my
information; all I could say was that he would do well to listen attentively, and try to profit by what he heard without delay. I then repeated all that I had permission to tell him, like a lesson learnt by heart, and as if it came from myself. Pontchartrain saw at once that the specific facts which I mentioned must have been communicated by some person of importance; he began to defend his conduct on certain points; with regard to others he admitted that he was in the wrong, and said it was the fault of his temper. I interrupted him, and said all that was nothing to me; it was his business to profit by what he had heard; my business was to go to bed; and thereupon I left him as abruptly as I had entered. Next day I related this interview to the Duke de Beauvilliers. He increased my alarm by what he told me of Pontchartrain’s imminent danger; nevertheless, he agreed to wait and see whether my remonstrance would produce any effect.

Some days later I was walking after midnight with the Dauphin and the Abbé de Polignac, when the conversation turned on the Dutch Government, and its toleration for all religious sects; and from that we got on to the subject of Jansenism. The clever Abbé took the opportunity of saying such things as he knew would please. The Dauphin gave me openings for expressing my opinions, which I did, honestly and without affectation. It was a lovely night, and our walk was prolonged till very late; I left the Dauphin as he was re-entering the château. Next morning M. de Beauvilliers came up to me in the Saloon, and said the Dauphin had just told him, with an air of much pleasure, that from what had fallen from me the night before I seemed to be strongly opposed to Jansenism. He asked me what we had been talking about, for the Dauphin had not time to go into particulars; I told him; and he said he had confirmed the Dauphin in his opinion of me. This had the effect of setting the Dauphin at ease with me, and making him trust me in many ways; altogether, it was a wonderful instance of what may come of a mere chance.

The Duke then told me that although, to gain the King’s favour, Pontchartrain professed great zeal for the detection of Jansenism, the Dauphin strongly suspected him of being a Jansenist himself. I replied that I would answer for Pontchartrain’s orthodoxy in this respect; he and his
father never thought alike on any subject, and differed from each other about the Jesuits and the Oratory as they did about everything else. What had given rise to the suspicion was that, for several months after his wife's death, Pontchartrain had been much in the company of Father de la Tour, General of the Oratory. I told the Duke the truth, namely, that Pontchartrain had very ungratefully cast off Father de la Tour's acquaintance all of a sudden like a dirty shirt, and had never held any communication with him since.

Towards evening of the same day we met again; in the interval M. de Beauvilliers, on the strength of my assurance, had told the Dauphin that he could answer for Pontchartrain's being no Jansenist. This was the first good turn he did him. He went on to say that, accepting my statement as true, there were two things which he could not understand: first, why the Jesuits distrusted Pontchartrain so much; and secondly, why he took part so strongly against a certain priest in the diocese of Orleans, who was petitioning for the union of two benefices. The matter was referred to Pontchartrain; and though the priest was strongly anti-Jansenist, and it was desirable for the sake of the good cause that he should succeed, Pontchartrain did all in his power to thwart him. The Duke spoke quite warmly on the subject; he gave me leave to warn Pontchartrain, as if of my own motion, that the Jesuits looked upon him with suspicion, and tell him to regulate his conduct accordingly; further, he wished me to tell him, from him, to have the priest's business finally settled at the next meeting of the Council of Despatches, and see that it was decided in his favour, giving him to understand that more might depend on his doing so than he perhaps imagined. Accordingly, I went to Pontchartrain's rooms about midnight; he was startled to see me there again at such an hour; still more so when he heard what brought me. He had probably guessed the quarter from which my warnings had come on the first occasion; this time he knew it for certain. No one could be more insolent to people whom he did not fear; on the other hand, no one was meaner or more servile when frightened. His messages to M. de Beauvilliers may be easily guessed; so may the decision in the case of the priest and his benefice.

M. de Beauvilliers was so well satisfied that he asked
me to tell him that he would arrange for his being sent for to transact business with the Dauphin, letting him know beforehand, and would give him some hints as to how he should behave with him. I went to Pontchartrain the third time with this message; I never saw a man so delighted. It was as if he had been suddenly plunged under water, and as suddenly rescued: his protestations of gratitude to M. de Beauvilliers and myself were endless. So far as I was concerned, I knew what to think of them, for it was not three weeks since he had sent d'Aubenton to me; I received them with cold disdain, and let him see how little personal consideration for himself had to do with the service I had rendered him. The Duke kept his word: Pontchartrain was sent for, and the Dauphin was satisfied with him. Matters remained in this position for the rest of our stay at Marly, whence the King went direct to Fontainebleau; for small-pox was still prevalent at Versailles.

Before we left Marly I had an interview with the First Equerry, who might, I thought, be useful to me in my scheme for a reconciliation between the Chancellor and M. de Beauvilliers. He was an intimate friend of the former; but his acquaintance with the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers was very slight, for, being related through his wife to the Louvois family, he had imbibed their prejudice against any one connected with Colbert. For this reason I thought he was the very man to remonstrate with the Chancellor on his treatment of M. de Beauvilliers. I told him that, being myself on the most intimate terms with both, I could not help being profoundly grieved by their dissensions; up to the present I had not attempted to interfere, but, since the event which had recently transformed the face of the whole Court, I could no longer rest in peace; with the rapidly increasing authority of the Dauphin the Duke de Beauvilliers was becoming all-powerful, and I feared his hostility would be fatal to the Chancellor. The danger was imminent; Pontchartrain was so universally detested that, even if he kept his place during the remainder of the King's reign, which I did not believe possible, he would certainly be dismissed when it came to an end; and in that case I did not see what was to become of his father. The Chancellor would find it impossible to remain in a Court where every influence
would be adverse to him, at the risk of being deprived of the 
Seals at any moment for some imprudent speech about 
Rome or Jansenism; and neither his ability nor his well-
deserved reputation would be any protection to him.

Beringhem knew Pontchartrain thoroughly, and admitted 
the truth of all I had said; he begged me to use all my 
endeavours to effect a reconciliation so indispensible to 
the safety of both father and son. I replied that I would 
certainly do so; but it would be perfectly useless so long 
as the Chancellor persisted in skirmishing with M. de Beau-
villiers over the Council-table, and would not keep his 
tongue under restraint elsewhere; instead of trying to 
mollify a hatred so dangerous to himself and his family 
it seemed as though he were doing his best to foment and 
keep it alive. It was for Beringhem, I said, his old friend, 
free from any suspicion of partiality for M. de Beauvilliers, 
to open his eyes to his danger and to the folly of his pre-
sent conduct; if the Chancellor could be induced to behave 
differently, I would make the most of the improvement 
in talking to M. de Beauvilliers, and perhaps in that way 
I might succeed by degrees in bringing them together.

The First Equerry was naturally timid; and, either for 
that reason or because, knowing the Chancellor’s hot and 
impetuous temper as he did, he despaired of making him 
listen to reason, he said he feared he should have no oppor-
tunity for talking to him at leisure, for he had obtained 
leave of absence for nearly the whole of the stay at Font-
tainebleau, and it was impossible to get hold of the Chan-
cello\r\ncellar at Marly; he only came there to attend the Council, 
leaving immediately afterwards to dine at Versailles, and 
on the days when the Council did not sit he remained at 
Pontchartrain. He begged me again to undertake the 
work of reconciliation, in which, he said, no one could 
succeed but myself; I, in my turn, implored him to speak 
one, at any rate, to the Chancellor before the Court left, 
and to speak plainly, without mincing matters. The 
sequel to all this will be seen when I come to relate what 
happened at Fontainebleau; I must now go back a little.

For many years the Duke de Beauvilliers had been doing 
all he could to raise me in the estimation of his pupil and 
make him like me; his efforts had not been without suc-
cess, as we have seen from the gracious notice taken of me 
by the Duke of Burgundy at the time of my proposed
mission to Rome, and still more from his very marked attentions when he returned from the campaign of Lille. But extreme caution was the leading characteristic of the Duke; his natural timidity was increased by Madame de Maintenon's dislike for him, and his knowledge that the King himself had more than once been on the point of dismissing him. He was anxious to avoid any suspicion that he exercised undue influence over his pupil's mind; and, though he desired to bring about an intimacy between the young Prince and myself, he wished it to grow up by slow degrees, without attracting attention. He knew that sharp eyes had been fixed upon me since I had been selected for the mission to Rome, and was afraid of anything that might arouse the suspicion and jealousy of the Court. For this reason he was doubly cautious during the period of eclipse for the Prince which followed the campaign of Lille, when I had declared myself so openly his partisan. In concert with the Dauphin, he now laid down certain rules for my conduct.

In my public attendance upon him I kept strictly within the bounds of propriety. I showed myself sufficiently often not to cause remark; on the other hand, I was most careful to avoid any appearance of seeking his intimacy. On the whole, I paid my court to him in a manner which erred rather on the side of negligence than of excess. For this reason the Prince took little more notice of me on these occasions than he usually did of persons of my rank; but very often a significant glance or a furtive smile told me all I wanted to know.

Besides the good offices of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers there were other things which inclined him favourably towards me. He liked people who led quiet, steady lives, at peace with their families; his respect for them was increased if they had a circle of friends who did them honour; and, as we have seen, I had been particularly fortunate in my friendships. Most of my intimate friends were persons whom he liked and esteemed, while it so happened that nearly all my personal enemies belonged to the clique which was hostile to him. I had always been favourably regarded by the Jesuits; though I had never been intimate with more than one at a time, they reckoned me among their friends; what we have already seen, and, still more, what we shall see, of Father Tellier's behaviour
to me proves this beyond a doubt. I had also been very intimate with Godet, Bishop of Chartres. All this was sufficient to save me from the dangerous suspicion of Jansenism; and the chance conversation which I had with the Dauphin and the Abbé de Polignac in the gardens of Marly set the seal to his confidence in me on this point. I shall have so often to refer to my opinions on this subject that perhaps they deserve some explanation; and as the opportunity presents itself naturally on the present occasion I may as well avail myself of it.

The celebrated Abbé de la Trappe has been my guiding-star in this matter, as in many others; I would that my practice had always been in conformity with the teaching I received from him. I hold all parties to be detestable, whether in Church or State; there should be but one party, that of Jesus Christ. I also believe that the famous five propositions are heretical, and I hold any book to be so which contains them, whether expressed directly or indirectly. I also believe that there are persons who hold them to be right and true; that these persons act in unison with each other, and therefore form a party. Consequently I am no Jansenist.

But, on the other hand, I am warmly attached, both by conviction and from motives of sound policy, to what are improperly called the liberties of the Gallican Church. I say they are improperly so called, because they are not the fruit of concessions made to the Church of France, or extorted by her; nor have they even sprung up from long usage and toleration; they represent what was in ancient times the usage of the whole Church; but the Church of France alone has jealously defended and preserved them from the usurpations of the Court of Rome, while all other Churches have succumbed, to the infinite loss of the cause of true religion. I say the Court of Rome, out of respect for the Bishop of Rome, who alone has retained the name of Pope, and whom we are bound, as an article of faith, to regard as the Head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter, the Chief Bishop, superior by divine right to all others, whoever they may be; to whom, as Vicar of Jesus Christ par excellence, belongs the care and superintendence of all the Churches; that is, every Bishop is the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and the Bishop of Rome is their Chief. Further, I hold the Church of Rome to be the Mother and
Chief of all the Churches; but I look upon her as magistra, not domina; as chief, but not as entitled to sovereign power. Nor do I regard the Pope as the sole or Universal Bishop, the Ordinary and Diocesan of all other dioceses, from whom alone other Bishops derive their episcopal power—a doctrine which the Inquisition would have us accept as an article of faith; which Inquisition I hold to be accursed among men and abominable in the sight of God.

I think compelling people to sign the famous formulary was a very pernicious mistake; it was tolerable taken in conjunction with the compromise of Clement IX, but not otherwise. It is therefore needless for me to say that I do not believe the Pope to be infallible in any sense of the word, nor do I believe him to be superior, or even equal, to the Ecumenical Councils, which alone have the power of defining articles of faith without possibility of error. As for Port-Royal, I entirely agree with what the King said about it, with a sigh, to Maréchal. I think all the wisest, purest, most learned, most practically instructive, and, at the same time, most elevated and luminous writings which have appeared for several centuries have proceeded from the school commonly called that of Port-Royal. I think, too, that the word "Jansenist" is a very convenient blacking-pot with which to bedaub any one whom it is desired to ruin; that out of a thousand persons so bedaubed there are perhaps not two who deserve it; that to incur the reproach of Jansenism it is quite enough to decline to believe anything which the Court of Rome may please to assert respecting spiritual or even temporal things; it is enough even to lead a quiet, retired, and laborious life, or to associate with people who do so; and I am convinced that these unfounded suspicions, scattered broadcast by malicious persons to serve their own selfish ends, have done infinite harm to religion, to society, and to the State.

I am firmly convinced that the Jesuits, so long as they keep to the principles laid down by St. Ignatius, form a very useful Society. It is so numerous that it cannot but include in its ranks many men of saintly lives—I have known some of them myself; but it must also include many

1 The Duke d'Harcourt used to say the same thing:—"Un Janséniste n'est souvent qu'un homme qu'on veut perdre à la Cour."
of a very different character. The jealous policy of the Jesuits has caused, and still causes, many grave evils; their piety, learning, and their zeal for the training of youth have, on the other hand, produced much good.

I have said enough for a man of my position; if I went more into detail I should go beyond what is fitting to set down in Memoirs such as these; I have not, however, said more than is necessary to explain those portions of them which I am now approaching. The definition of my opinions will not satisfy those who assert that Jansenism is a purely imaginary heresy; it will certainly not please those whose prejudices, ignorance, or self-interest make them see Jansenists everywhere. It has always surprised me extremely that, with his own strong prejudices on this point, M. de Beuvilliers should ever have brought himself to trust and like me as he did, without a single interruption, throughout his life; for I never made the slightest attempt to conceal my opinions from him, on this or any other subject.
CHAPTER XIII

1711

A few words with the Dauphin—My growing intimacy with him—A question of etiquette—Position of the Dukes—My first private conversation with the Dauphin—The style of "Monseigneur"—The Dauphin orders me to bring him some letters as evidence—M. de Beauvilliers surprised at the Prince's outspoken confidence—Another private conversation—The Dauphin's opinions on various subjects—The Dukes—Cardinals—Bastards—I am commanded to prepare a memorial—Disposal of Monseigneur's property—Many private conversations with the Dauphin—The Dauphiness takes us by surprise—Her gracious behaviour—I determine to bring the Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans together—The Duchess of Berry—I warn the Duke of Orleans of the calumnies against him—His horror—He repeats my report to his daughter—I break off friendly relations with him—The Duchess intercedes, and we are reconciled—I warn him to be careful in his talk before the Dauphin—He follows my advice, and their relations become more friendly.

As the Dauphin was walking one evening in the gardens of Marly I went up and joined the little group which accompanied him. He gave me a very gracious reception; and, as there was no one present before whom I need feel under constraint, I took advantage of it to tell him, in a half-confidential manner, that I had hitherto been prevented by considerations, which I believed he understood, from paying my respects to him as often as I should have wished; but now I thought I might show my attachment with less reserve, and I trusted it would be agreeable to him that I should do so. He replied in a low voice that he was aware of my reasons for keeping away from him, but he thought they no longer existed; he knew he could count on me as a friend, and it gave him much satisfaction to think that henceforth we should be able to see more of each other. I record his exact words, on account of the singular politeness of his last sentence; I took it as a sign that my overture had produced the effect intended.

By degrees I attended him more assiduously in his
walks, especially when there was not a great crowd, and no dangerous people about; and I talked to him more freely. I had lent him our memorial against d'Antin's claims, and had taken the opportunity to say a few words to him about our dignity, towards which I knew him to be favourably inclined on principle. He had read the memorial; and was glad, for the sake of some of our number, to find that d'Antin's pretensions could not be sustained. I also knew, from the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, that his opinions on many questions relating to the government of the country were identical with my own; I was anxious to turn this similarity of opinions to good account, and watched for an opportunity to draw him naturally into conversation. It was not long before I found one. Some days after the incident in the gardens of Marly the Dauphin and Dauphiness entered the Saloon together, talking to each other. I drew near and overheard some of their conversation; it aroused my curiosity, and I asked the Prince what subject they were discussing; not point-blank, but with a certain air of respectful freedom which I had already begun to adopt. He replied that they were going to St. Germain for the first time since he had become Dauphin—that is, for the first time except the official visit in mourning-cloak and mantle—and the ceremonial hitherto observed with respect to the Princess-Royal of England would now have to be altered.

He explained the matter. During Monseigneur's life-time the Duchess of Burgundy had always yielded precedence to the Princess-Royal, but now that her husband had become heir-apparent to the Crown she ought to go before the English Princess, who was merely heiress-presumptive. her brother being likely to marry and have children. The Dauphin said, with some vivacity, that he must not let any of his legitimate rights fall into desuetude. "How rejoiced I am, Sir," I replied, "to hear you say so! and how right you are to insist on the observance of rules of this kind! for it is the neglect of them which mars everything." He assented heartily to this; and I took the opportunity of saying that since he, whose rank and high position could not be disputed, found it necessary to pay attention to such things, we Dukes, whose rights and privileges were continually being nibbled away, might surely be excused for
grieving over our losses and trying to combine in our own
defence. He expressed the warmest sympathy for our
cause, going so far as to say that he regarded the restoration
of our privileges as an act of justice, most important to the
State. He added that he knew I was well acquainted with
the subject, and it would give him much pleasure if I would
talk it over with him some day. Thereupon he rejoined
the Dauphiness, and they went off together to St. Germain.

A few days later he sent for me. Duchesne, his first
Valet-de-Chambre, a very good and trustworthy man, who
was entirely in his confidence, led me through the wardrobe
into the Dauphin's private room, where I found him alone.
In thanking him for the honour he had done me I said a few
words about my own conduct, past and present; and ex-
pressed my pleasure at the change in his position. He
began talking of this quite freely, any little constraint in his
manner arising evidently from a fear of being led away by
vanity. He told me that, up to the present, his time had
been mainly occupied in acquiring information, as he had
not thought it wise to attempt any interference in public
affairs; but now that the King had expressly commanded
him to relieve him of some part of his burden, and to transact
business with his Ministers, he considered that the whole of
his time belonged to the State and to the public, and he
intended to give up to amusements only such part of it
as was necessary for relaxation. He then went on to speak
of the King in terms of the warmest affection and gratitude,
adding that he felt bound to help him to the utmost of his
power, since he trusted him so far as to wish for his assist-
ance. I expressed my cordial sympathy with these generous
sentiments; but, fearing lest so much gratitude and affection
might degenerate into a perilous admiration, I hinted that
the King was unfortunately ignorant of many things which
he had put it out of his power to learn, but to which his
kind heart would not be insensible if they could be brought
to his notice.

This string, though lightly touched, gave forth a striking
note. The Prince, after saying that he knew from M. de
Beauvilliers that he was quite safe in talking to me con-
fidentially, admitted that what I had said was only too true;
he then went on to speak severely of the Ministers, of the
power they had gradually usurped, and of the impossibility
of bringing anything to the King's notice without their
intervention. Without naming any of them, he gave me to understand clearly that this form of government was entirely contrary to his taste and principles. Then, coming back in an affectionate manner to the subject of the King, he deplored the deficiency of his early education and the pernicious hands into which he had fallen. His heart, he said, was naturally kind and just, but his Ministers had led him astray without his perceiving it, under the pretext of increasing his authority, while in reality they had kept all power to themselves; this had been the cause of many misfortunes to the kingdom.

I took this opportunity to lead the conversation to the encroachments of Ministers on the privileges of the Dukes and other persons of the highest quality. What I told him raised the Prince's indignation to the highest pitch; especially on the point of the "monseigneur" which the Ministers refuse to us, while they exact it from all non-titled persons except the men of the gown. I cannot describe how shocked he was at this audacious and absurd preference given to the bourgeoisie over the highest nobility. I let him talk on without interruption, not only that I might enjoy the expression of such worthy sentiments from one who would soon be in a position to carry them into effect, but also that I might judge how far his sense of offended equity would carry him. After a time I told him that I had, by mere chance, preserved three letters written to my father by M. Colbert, when Controller-General and Secretary of State, in which he addressed him as "Monseigneur." This seemed to give him as much satisfaction as if he had been personally interested. He ordered me to send for the letters, and expressed his astonishment at such a complete change. Then, as he liked to trace everything to its source if possible, he began to discuss the origin of the office of Secretary-of-State, again expressing his surprise that it should have grown to such importance from so humble a beginning; from the way he spoke I saw that he had nothing to learn on the subject.

All this took up more than an hour; our conversation had strayed from the matter we had intended to discuss, but it had turned on one by no means foreign to it, and even more important. The Dauphin ordered me to let him know when I could show him the three letters, and said we would then have another interview to talk over our original
subject. It is impossible to express my feelings on leaving him. A magnificent future seemed to be close at hand; I saw in him a pious, just, and enlightened Prince, anxious to improve his mind, and caring nothing for the trifles which usually have so strong an attraction for men in his position. I foresaw a change in the methods of government inspired by sound principles. The Ministers, those scourges of the State, were doomed to a speedy fall, and the nobility which they had trampled under their feet, reanimated by a breath from the young Prince as soon as he became King, would once more assume its proper position and make other people resume theirs. This restoration of order in society had been the desire of my whole life, with which no considerations of personal fortune could compare for a moment; I tasted all the sweetness of its approaching realisation, and of my deliverance from a subjection so intolerable that I had not always been able to hide my abhorrence of it. I resolved to conceal most carefully the fact that the Prince had granted me a favour so likely to stir up jealousy and enmity against me if it became known; at the same time I should have thought myself most ungrateful if I had not confided it to the person who had been the sole means of procuring it for me; I did not think I was committing a breach of confidence in doing so, for I was well aware that he had the key to all the Dauphin's most secret thoughts. I therefore went straight to the Duke de Beauvilliers and related the whole of the conversation to him. He was as delighted as myself.

M. de Beauvilliers, with all his unworldly piety and his timid disposition, and in spite of a respect for the King which verged on idolatry, was thoroughly convinced that the system of giving such exaggerated power to the Ministers was full of danger; and he was as conscious of his dignity as Duke and Peer as I was myself. He was astonished that his pupil should have been so outspoken with me, and not a little surprised to find that his efforts to give him a favourable impression of me had succeeded so completely. I gathered that he himself had never heard him speak so plainly. I was surprised at this to the last degree; but I could see clearly that it was so, from his looks, and from the way in which he made me repeat all that the Dauphin had said about the power of Ministers and the King's bad education. His pleasure at hearing it was so naively ex-
pressed that I was convinced that, though what he heard about the Dauphin's opinions was not new to him, he had never heard him explain them so boldly, or perhaps so fully. He was evidently grateful for the unreserved confidence I had placed in him, and we immediately made plans for concerted action.

A few days later I had another audience. I may say, once for all, that I was usually warned of those audiences by Duchesne, sometimes by M. de Beauvilliers, sometimes by the Dauphin himself in a whisper when I met him out walking. I was always introduced by a back way, and Duchesne took care that no one should see me going in or coming out, so that my audiences remained entirely unsuspected. Only on one occasion the Dauphiness found me out, as I shall relate in its proper place; but she kept the secret perfectly. I gave the Dauphin the three letters which I have already mentioned; he read them with much interest, saying how fortunate it was that they should have been preserved, considering the small importance of their subject-matter. He expressed himself in strong terms about the insolence of Ministers and the misfortunes of the seigneurs.

I was particularly anxious to sound him about everything which concerned our dignity, so whenever the conversation strayed from that point I quietly brought it back again. I found him well informed concerning the origin of the dignity of Duke and Peer, its history, and its relations to the Crown and State; not so well informed on other points, but thoroughly impressed with the importance of upholding and restoring this, the first dignity of the kingdom, in the interest of the Kings of France themselves; to enhance their majesty, and uphold the pre-eminence of their Crown. I showed him how the degradation of our order had opened the door to all sorts of ambitious pretensions; reminding him of the strange claim to equality with Monseigneur put forward by the Elector of Bavaria at Meudon, though travelling incognito at the time; and I quoted instances from history of crowned Sovereigns who had been content to rank on an equal footing with Sons of France. I contrasted the position of our Dukes with that of the Grandees of Spain, showing how the wise policy of Charles V and his successors had upheld the dignity of the Grandees, and how their dispersion throughout Europe had greatly
contributed to the respect with which the Crown of Spain is regarded in foreign countries. I then went on to speak of the great advantage the Popes have managed to derive from the order of Cardinals; though their dignity is in reality a mere sham, there being nothing necessarily ecclesiastic about it; they are laymen with ecclesiastics, and churchmen with the laity; the only real power they have lies in their right to elect the Pope, and in the fact that, by long-established custom, he chooses his Ministers of State from their number. I proceeded to speak of England, the northern kingdoms, and the Empire; showing how none of these have allowed their chief dignities to be degraded as has been the case in France, and also how France alone has suffered in consequence, the reigning House having been all but overthrown by the League.

The Dauphin listened with the closest attention; he appreciated my arguments, interrupting me occasionally and carrying them to a conclusion himself. We had a long and instructive conversation; besides the League, we spoke of the dangers to which all our Kings, including Louis XIV, had been exposed from the treasons and conspiracies of Princes, real or self-styled; and the distinctions showered on the latter, instead of the chastisement they deserved, were not forgotten. The Dauphin, being well acquainted with these historical facts, became indignant as he deduced a moral from them, and deplored the ignorance and ill-considered action of the King. Throughout this conversation I did little more than suggest the topics, leaving the Dauphin to discuss them, so that he might have the pleasure of showing me that he was well-informed; and also to give me an opportunity of observing his way of thinking and the working of his mind.

Being completely satisfied with his sentiments regarding foreign Princes, Ministers, and the men of the gown (for these also came in for a brief discussion) I drew his attention to the edict concerning Dukedoms which had recently been published with reference to d'Antin's claims. To my great satisfaction and astonishment, he began at once to speak of the injustice of the first two clauses, and proceeded to denounce the encroachments of the Princes of the Blood and the scandalous elevation of the bastards. His indignation was aroused in particular by the clause appointing the Princes of the Blood to represent the ancient Peers of France
in the coronation ceremony, to the exclusion of the Peers actually existing. He showed that he understood perfectly the typical significance of every detail of that august ceremony, and let me see clearly that he intended to be crowned with the same ceremonial as his ancestors. Though aware of the usurpations of the Princes of the Blood in general, he was not well acquainted with the particulars of each case; I gave him a good deal of information on this point, and he listened with pleasure.

All this took some time, and I did not wish the interview to come to an end without some mention of the bastards and their legitimation. I was anxious, however, that he should be the first to touch on this subject; so that I merely threw out hints and feelers about it while talking about the Princes of the Blood. It was some time before I could bring him to the point, but at last he came to it of his own accord. Assuming a lower voice and choosing his words more carefully, but at the same time with a more significant look (for I kept my eyes open as well as my ears), he began by making excuses for the King, and lamenting that he should have made himself so inaccessible to advice. I made no reply, except by signs and looks; but he understood this language, and encouraged me to speak in my turn.

I began, as he had done, by praising the King, and then proceeded to speak of the unfortunate consequences of his inaccessibility. I dwelt particularly on the scandal of establishing equality between the children of a lawful marriage and the offspring of a double adultery, pointing out that, after two generations, there would be absolutely no distinction between them, as indeed could be seen already in the case of the Duke of Chartres and the children of the Duke of Maine. I took care not to express myself too mildly; the Dauphin’s indignation was kindled by my words; he interrupted me, and pursued the subject himself with much warmth. He was especially struck by the practical illustration I had just brought forward; and spoke forcibly of the difference between a man capable by birth of succeeding to the Crown, and one whose rank and position are merely the consequence of a scandalous and infamous offence. He recapitulated the gradual steps by which the bastards (for he used that word repeatedly) had risen to the level of the Princes of the Blood; a level which had indeed been raised still higher for their benefit. He spoke again of the
alteration in the Coronation Service; saying that, indefensible as was the substitution of the Princes of the Blood for the Peers, its extension to the legitimised Princes was odious, and almost sacrilegious. These remarks were, however, interspersed with affectionate and respectful allusions to the King; and I was filled with admiration for the qualities of a good son and a good Prince which I found combined in this enlightened Dauphin.

Finally, as if recollecting himself, he said: "It is a great misfortune to have offspring of this kind. Up to the present, I have been preserved from it by God’s grace, but one must not be presumptuous. I know not what may happen in the future; I may fall into disorders of all kinds. I pray God to save me from them; but I believe that, if I had bastards, I should be careful not to acknowledge them, much less to elevate them up in this manner. But, although the grace of God inspires me with that feeling now, no one can be sure that he will always deserve or receive His grace, so I think it very desirable to put such restrictions on myself as shall prevent the recurrence of the present evils." These sentiments, expressed so modestly and at the same time with so much wisdom, charmed me, and I thanked him warmly for them. After this, the conversation turning back to our original subject, I said that people were not ignorant of his dissatisfaction with the latest honours which M. du Maine had procured for his children. He said nothing to this, but no reply could be more expressive; he would not openly condemn what the King had done, but I saw that he had great difficulty in restraining his vivacity. His looks and gestures showed plainly how strongly he disapproved of these monstrous honours, and how soon they would come to an end in his reign. I saw enough to fill me with hope; I even ventured to hint as much to him, and I perceived that he was not displeased by my audacity.

Our conversation had now lasted more than two hours; before it closed he began speaking again of the importance of restoring the order of Duke and Peer to its former position, and said he would like to have more information about the matter. I had told him that the number and extent of the infringements of our rights would surprise him if he saw them set down on paper; I now suggested that I should go thoroughly into the subject, and draw up a statement. He not only acquiesced, but begged me earnestly to do so.
I told him I must have a little time to do it properly, and left it to him to decide whether I should treat each particular subject by itself, or make out a chronological list of our losses as they occurred. He preferred the latter method; I told him it would not be so clear for him, and would give me more trouble; but he persisted in his choice, and it was too important that he should be served to his liking for me to grudge any pains. I will not record my expressions of thanks to him for the honour he had done me, or his flattering speeches in reply. As I took leave, he told me to use my own judgement about seeing him in public; and he would be glad to receive me in private whenever I wished to speak to him.

Next day I told M. de Beauvilliers all that had passed between the Dauphin and myself; he congratulated me warmly, and urged me to go on as quickly as possible with the work I had undertaken. He advised me to see the Dauphin when out walking, rather than at his regular hours for receiving people in his rooms; because I should be more free to remain with him or leave him, to talk to him or not, as it suited me with regard to others who might be with him; to be careful never to speak to him in the King's presence; but, while avoiding all publicity, to take advantage of the opening presented to me, and insinuate myself more and more into his confidence. This cordiality on the part of the Dauphin was the fruit of long preparation by M. de Beauvilliers: his kind esteem for me made him think that my friendship would be useful, not only to the Prince himself, but to the State. Although the Court was not aware of the full extent of my intimacy with him, and my private interviews with the Dauphin were quite unknown, I began about this time to find that people had their eyes on me, and treated me with greater deference than before. They began to be afraid of me, and to make advances. I was most careful to avoid any change in my ordinary habits, leading the same apparently objectless life as heretofore; above all, I was on my guard against assuming an air of self-importance, or anything likely to give the envious and inquisitive crowd who surrounded me a clue to my secret. I did not allow my most intimate friends, even the Chancellor himself, to know more than what it was impossible for me to conceal.

The Duke de Beauvilliers was shut up with the Dauphin
nearly every day for a long time; at these conferences they discussed the business of each Minister, and the affairs of the Court and State in general. Many a man was then brought to judgement, and approved or condemned, without his having the slightest idea of it, and nearly all had been discussed beforehand between M. de Beauvilliers and myself. On one important matter we could not agree as to the advice he should give the Prince; I would not give up my own opinion, and he was equally obstinate: it had to do with Monseigneur's property. At first the King thought of taking it for himself, but soon came to the conclusion that to do so would seem rather strange; the succession was therefore treated exactly like that of any private person, the Chancellor and his son being appointed to do what the ordinary Judges do in such cases.

The property consisted of Meudon and Chaville, worth between them about 40,000 livres a year, together with furniture and jewels to the value of 1,500,000 livres, subject to the payment of debts amounting to 300,000 livres. The King of Spain left it to the King to look after his interests, saying, at the same time, that the furniture was what he would like best. There was an immense quantity of jewellery; the King wished the Dauphin to have the coloured stones, because the Crown jewels were chiefly diamonds. An inventory was therefore taken of the whole property, and the best of it divided into three shares. The crystals and the finest furniture went to the King of Spain; and the diamonds, with some of the furniture, to the Duke of Berry. What was over, consisting of the remainder of the jewels and furniture, was sold by auction to pay Monseigneur's debts. The sale of the jewellery was held in a very indecent manner in the Saloon at Marly; the doors were thrown open to the whole Court. Men and ladies went where they pleased, examining the things, laughing and talking; it was just like a public sale. The Dauphin bought hardly anything, except a few presents for persons attached to Monseigneur's household, who were no less astonished than gratified; for they had given him no reason to love them during Monseigneur's life-time. There were some little squabbles between the Dauphiness and the Duke of Berry, who had set their hearts on the same things; one in particular about some snuff, of which there was a great quantity, went so far that M. de Beauvilliers and some
ladies of the household had to intervene. On this occasion the Dauphiness was in the wrong; she confessed as much afterwards, and apologised with a very good grace.

The King hastened the sale of the furniture, because he was afraid that whichever of his grandsons took Meudon would want to use it, and so divide the Court again, as in Monseigneur's time. His uneasiness was quite unfounded; as we have already seen, the Dauphin had given him ample assurances on that point; and, as for the Duke of Berry, even if he had dared to go against the King's wishes, the following which he would have drawn to Meudon would have made no perceptible difference to the Court; especially when people found out that the King did not like their going there. This Prince had no house of his own in any of his apanages, and he wished passionately to have Meudon; the Duchess of Berry still more so. My idea was that the Dauphin should give up any claims he might have to Meudon; he would lose nothing by it, and it would be a suitable and gracious way of showing his affection for his brother and the Duchess of Berry. To my great surprise M. de Beauvilliers was of a different opinion. He thought it would be very dangerous to enable the Duke and Duchess of Berry to set up a separate Court; the King would be much displeased, and it would eventually become a source of discord between the brothers; it was better, he said, that the younger should be dependent on the elder; and, with regard to the King, the Dauphin could not please him better than by having Meudon in his possession, and yet not using it. In short, he thought, the Dauphin ought to have Meudon; and the Duke of Berry should receive compensation in diamonds for any claims he might have to it. This reasoning did not satisfy me; I told the Duke that, sooner or later, the Duke of Berry must have a house of his own, and it would be wise of the Dauphin to gratify him now by letting him have Meudon, since he had a fancy for it. The gift would make the Duke of Berry more dependent on his elder brother than ever, as might be seen from the experience of Monsieur at St. Cloud. It seemed to me that these arguments were reasonable; at any rate, they were what occurred to everybody afterwards; but they did not convince M. de Beauvilliers.

The Dauphin kept Meudon; and the whole inheritance was divided with an illiberal exactness which produced an
unfavourable effect on the public. The Duke of Berry was not at all pleased; he was not well off, and had expensive tastes, in which he was encouraged by his Duchess. They wisely said nothing, however; I was careful not to talk to them on the subject, and they never suspected that the Duke de Beauvilliers had anything to do with it. Before long they sold a quantity of their inherited diamonds, to fill the void created by their extravagant whims and habits.

After this I often saw the Dauphin in private, always telling the Duke de Beauvilliers what had passed between us. By his advice I spoke freely to the Prince about everything. Neither his reserve nor his Christian charity took fright; not only did he speak freely of the persons whom I mentioned to him, but he encouraged me to do so, and even ordered me to report to him about many people and things. He gave me notes which he had drawn up, and I returned them to him with marginal comments; I gave him notes of my own which he discussed with me before returning them. My pockets were always stuffed with papers when I went to these audiences; I often laughed to myself as I passed people in the Saloon who little thought that their names were actually in my pocket, and that an important discussion was about to be held about them.

The Dauphin at that time lived in one of the four great suites of apartments on the same floor as the Saloon; the same which, as I have already mentioned, was broken up when the Court moved to Fontainebleau soon afterwards in order to make a great staircase, because the King found the little winding stairs inconvenient when he went to visit the Princess of Conti. His bed was placed with its foot towards the windows; by the side of it, towards the fireplace, was the door of the dressing-room by which I entered; between the fireplace and one window was a little portable writing-table, behind this was a door leading into the Dauphiness' rooms; on the opposite side of the room was the door generally used; and between the windows was a cabinet in which the Dauphin kept his papers. There was always a conversation of a few minutes before the Dauphin sat down to his writing-table, and ordered me to take a seat opposite to him. As I had by this time become more familiar with him, I took the liberty of saying, before we sat down, that it would be just as well to bolt the door behind him. He assured me that there was no fear of the Dauphiness coming in
upon us, as it was not her usual time. I replied that I was not afraid of the Princess if she came alone, but very much afraid of the ladies who usually accompanied her; however, he was obstinate, and would not bolt the door, and I did not like to press him further; he sat down to his writing-table, and told me to do the same. We had a long sitting. When it was over we arranged our papers; he took some of mine, and gave me others to take away. Instead of locking up his papers he left some of them lying on the writing-table, while he stood chatting with his back to the fire, his keys in one hand and some documents in the other. I was standing by the writing-table, looking through the papers on it, when all of a sudden the door opposite to me opened, and in came the Dauphiness.

I shall never forget the looks of us three at that moment—for, thank God! she was alone; she stood petrified, like a statue, while we remained in a stupefied and embarrassed silence which lasted for the space of a slow Paternoster. The Princess was the first to break it; she told the Prince, in a very hesitating voice, that she had not expected to find him in such good company, smiling first at him, and then at me. I had time to return her smile with lowered eyes before the Dauphin replied. “Since you have found me in it, Madame,” said he, also smiling, “you had better go away.” She stood for a moment, while they looked at each other smiling. She looked at me, smiling with more freedom than at first; then, turning on her heel, she went out, shutting the door behind her, for she had never advanced beyond the threshold. Never did I see a woman so astonished, nor a man more taken aback, if I may use the expression, than the Prince; never also, to confess the whole truth, was a man more thoroughly frightened than I was at first; but I was reassured when I saw that she had no one with her.

As soon as she had shut the door, “Well, Sir,” I said to the Dauphin, “it might have been as well, after all, to bolt the door!” “You were right,” he said, “and I was wrong. But there is no harm done; fortunately she was alone, and I can answer for her secrecy.” “I am not at all uneasy about that,” I said (though it was not strictly true), “but it is a miracle that she should have been alone. If she had had her ladies with her you would perhaps have come in for a scolding; but, as for me, I should have been hopelessly
ruined!" He again admitted that he had been in the wrong, and assured me that she was to be trusted. She had not only found out the secret of our private interviews, which no one suspected in the slightest degree; but she had actually caught us red-handed, so to speak, with our papers all about us. I knew she would not betray the Dauphin; but I was afraid she might tell some one in strict confidence, and so the secret might leak out; but it was well kept, and if she did tell any one it was a person who could be trusted. The remainder of the interview was short; the Prince and I pocketed and locked up the rest of our papers, and I retired as usual through the dressing-room, where Duchesne was waiting for me. The Duke de Beuvilliers turned pale when I told him of this adventure; but took courage when he heard that the Princess was alone.

After this discovery the Dauphiness often gave me a smile, as if to remind me of it, and treated me with marked distinction. She was very fond of Madame de Saint-Simon, but never said a word to her about this matter. As for me, she was rather afraid of me, because she was very much afraid of the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beuvilliers, and knew how intimate I was with them. Their grave and serious manners did not suit her, nor did she like their influence with the Dauphin; she knew Madame de Maintenon hated them, and, timid as she was, the confidence the King placed in them alarmed her. She was particularly afraid lest the Duke de Beuvilliers should bring certain delicate matters to her husband's knowledge; for she did not know, and nobody could tell her, that M. de Beuvilliers was himself alarmed in the extreme at the very thought of such a possibility, and was always devising measures to avert the danger which she feared. So far as I was concerned, she had no reason to be afraid of me, but I had never been on a familiar footing with her; the card-table was almost the only place where one had a chance of meeting her familiarly, and I never played. My intimacy with the two Dukes had alarmed her, and I daresay Madame de Maintenon, who did not like me, had also helped to set her against me; but her feeling towards me never went so far as positive dislike. Some of my most intimate friends, the late Duchess de Villeroi, the Duchess of Orleans, Madame de Nogaret, and others, were her confidential companions; besides, she had no very strong feelings, and if she had really
disliked me she would have been obliged to give up the plan, on which she had set her heart, of having Madame de Saint-Simon appointed as successor to Madame du Lude.

The Dauphin was no less anxious for this than she was; he told Madame de Saint-Simon so herself; for her virtue and amiability had completely gained his confidence. She had always been admitted to the familiar circle of the Duchess of Burgundy; and, since the marriage of the Duchess of Berry had necessarily made her almost a member of their household, they had had more ample opportunities of admiring the gentle tact, judgement, and good sense with which she discharged the duties of her office. These duties were not rendered easier by the capricious humour of the Duchess of Berry; nevertheless, she acquired the respect of that Princess, and at the same time the friendship and confidence of the Duke of Berry. The Dauphin was also much influenced by the marked consideration always shown for Madame de Saint-Simon by the King and Madame de Maintenon; as well as by the affection and esteem of the whole Court, which she had acquired without any effort on her part, and without anything savouring in the slightest degree of meanness or servility. She was always dignified, and respected to a singular degree by everybody. To myself, throughout my whole life, she was always an invaluable helper and resource in times of difficulty.

I said just now that Madame de Maintenon disliked me; I only suspected it at this time, but after the King’s death Chamillart told me that she positively hated me, though I had done nothing to deserve it. I always thought that M. du Maine, looking upon me as his personal enemy and dangerous to his rank, annoyed moreover at finding that his persevering advances to me met with no success, had inspired this hatred on the part of Madame de Maintenon. I had no opportunities of approaching her; nothing was more difficult than to obtain access to her; and, to confess the whole truth, I had never taken much trouble in the matter, for her position, and many things she did, gave me a strong aversion for her. My friendship with the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, with the Duke of Orleans, and with the Chancellor, merely increased the dislike which this queer witch had already conceived for me. I cannot understand now how I escaped from the bad turns she was always trying to do me, nor how the King came to treat me with such
marked consideration as he always showed after the audience which Maréchal procured for me. But sometimes he piqued himself on not giving in to Madame de Maintenon's wishes on all points. M. du Maine, who was naturally timid and cautious, left it to her and the confidential valets to do me as much harm as they could; I never heard that he did anything openly against me. He always worked underground; and we shall see that he went on trying to conciliate me, and never lost patience under the coldness with which his advances were received.

Among the many occupations, private and public, which now took up my time, I was extremely anxious to bring the Dauphin and the Duke of Orleans together; and, as a necessary preliminary, to give the Duke de Beauvilliers a more favourable impression of the latter. Everything helped me towards this object, except the Duke of Orleans himself, and his daughter; which was all the stranger, because he felt that it was only becoming, and necessary for his own sake, that he should be on friendly terms with the Dauphin; and was very desirous of becoming so. The intimacy between the Dauphiness and the Duchess of Orleans, the friendship which existed, after their own fashion, between the Duke of Orleans and M. de Chevreuse, that Prince's openly avowed partiality for the Archbishop of Cambrai, and the support given him by the Jesuits, were so many points in my favour; unfortunately, there were others to counter-balance them. The private life of the Duke of Orleans, his parade of debauchery and impiety, and his loose and indiscreet way of talking, were highly offensive to the Dauphin; his conduct was odious to the King in more ways than one; and his daughter's marriage had by no means diminished Madame de Maintenon's hatred for him, though she had herself arranged it. This marriage, which should have been the means of uniting the Royal Family, turned out, on the contrary, a very torch of discord.

We have already seen some illustrations of the terrible character of the Duchess of Berry, whose affairs of gallantry, numerous and strangely conducted as they were, were far from being the worst of her misdeeds. I have already spoken of her ingratitude towards the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, to whom she owed everything, and her absurd designs against them. Indignant at the blot on her birth, she had always hated her mother; and when once her
marriage was concluded she made no attempt to conceal her aversion. Although she owed her present position entirely to the illegitimate birth of her mother, and had always been treated by her with the utmost kindness, her hatred and contempt for her were continually giving rise to most scandalous scenes between them. The Duchess of Orleans did all she could to hush these up; nevertheless, they drew down on her daughter some severe rebukes from the King, and even from Madame, in spite of her irreconcilable aversion for the illegitimate birth of her daughter-in-law. These rebukes kept the Duchess of Berry within bounds for a time; but they only served to inflame her anger and hatred. She was of a bold and violent disposition, and moreover she always felt sure of the support of her husband and her father.

The Duke of Berry's character was naturally kind and easy-going; he was passionately in love with his wife, and her outbreaks of temper terrified him. The Duke of Orleans, as we shall have only too many opportunities of seeing, was weakness and insincerity personified. He had always loved this daughter more than any of his other children; he was, moreover, afraid of her; she was quite aware of her ascendancy over him and her husband, and abused it without constraint. The Duke of Berry, who was naturally truthful and upright, but far from clever, and no match for his wife in talking, often allowed himself to be drawn into things which he disapproved of; and, if he ventured to contradict her, he had to submit to most terrible scenes. The Duke of Orleans, though he nearly always saw that she was in the wrong, and said so freely to the Duchess of Orleans, and even to the Duke of Berry himself, could make no more stand against her than her husband; if he tried to remonstrate with her, no words were too bad for him; she treated him like a negro, so that he thought only of appeasing her and obtaining her forgiveness, for which she made him pay dearly. He used to spend much of his day in her company, usually alone together.

Under ordinary circumstances this would have attracted no attention; but, as we have already seen, the angry and disappointed cabal had long since spread the most sinister rumours concerning the intimacy between father and daughter. Having failed in their attempt to prevent the marriage of the Duke of Berry, the cabal now did all they
could to deprive their opponents of the fruits of victory; and the assiduity of the Duke of Orleans, who, unfortunately, had no serious occupations, and always found amusement in the wit and lively conversation of his daughter, provided a welcome topic for the tongue of Satan. The Duke of Berry, for his part, wished to enjoy his wife’s society in freedom, and was annoyed at finding his father-in-law continually with her; he often left them in a very bad temper, and when these vile rumours reached his ears his discontent reached its height.

I became aware of this soon after the Court returned from Fontainebleau, and it seemed to Madame de Saint-Simon and myself that we ought to take prompt measures to prevent a quarrel between the father and son-in-law, arising from an imputation so odious, though so utterly false. I had already tried in vain to persuade the Duke of Orleans not to spend so much time in his daughter’s company, on the ground that it annoyed the Duke of Berry; I thought I must now use stronger arguments. Accordingly, after a suitable preamble, I told him what had forced me to speak to him again. He was horror-struck, and exclaimed against the wickedness of people who could not only invent such an abominable calumny, but carry it to the ears of the Duke of Berry. He thanked me for warning him; and, indeed, hardly any one but myself was in a position to render him such a service. I left him to draw his own conclusions as to his line of conduct in the future. All this passed between us at Versailles, about four in the afternoon. Except Madame de Saint-Simon, no one had been aware of my intention of speaking to him but the Duchess of Orleans, who had begged me most earnestly to do so.

Next day Madame de Saint-Simon told me that the Duchess of Berry had called her into her dressing-room on the previous evening and said, in a sharp and angry manner, that she was astonished to find that I had been trying to get up a quarrel between her father and herself; that I wished to separate them, but that I should not succeed in the attempt; and thenceupon proceeded to relate what I had told her father, which he had been good enough to repeat to her not an hour afterwards. Madame de Saint-Simon, in great astonishment, listened attentively till she had finished; and then told her that this infamous calumny was wide-spread, and, false and horrible as it was, she might
easily imagine what its consequences might be; a little consideration would show her how important it was that the Duke of Orleans should be warned in time. As for me, she said I had given them so many proofs of my attachment, and my wish to promote their happiness and union, that she did not believe the Duchess of Berry could really entertain any suspicions to the contrary. Thereupon she made her curtsy, and went off abruptly to bed.

This was rather more than I could stand. I went in the afternoon to tell the Duchess of Orleans what had happened, adding that, after this extraordinary experience, I should, for the future, see as little of the Duke of Orleans as possible, and so avoid risks which it was impossible to foresee; as for the Duchess of Berry, there was no need for her to say anything more; I accepted, once for all, the singular opinion which she had been pleased to express concerning me. The Duchess of Orleans was very much put out. She spoke of what had happened as it deserved; at the same time she made excuses for the Duke of Orleans, on the ground of his weakness where his daughter was concerned, and implored me not to abandon him; for I was the only man of honour of his acquaintance in a position to speak to him freely and honestly. She was alarmed at the prospect of a rupture for such a cause; and I had been so constantly useful to them since I had brought them together again that she did not at all like losing my services. She confessed as much, and exerted all her eloquence—which was by no means small—to persuade me as a friend to forgive the weakness of her husband. I cut my visit short, and was in no hurry to pay her another; as for the Duke of Orleans, I left off seeing him altogether.

This conduct of mine grieved them both extremely, and they spoke to Madame de Saint-Simon. The Duchess of Berry, who had apparently been scolded by her father, made a sort of apology to Madame de Saint-Simon, though with a very bad grace. The Duchess of Orleans sent a message to me begging me to go and see her. She began again to try the effects of her eloquence; while we were talking the Duke of Orleans came in, and made all sorts of apologies, using the most touching language he could think of. I maintained a stony silence for some time; when I did speak it was with the most icy respect; at last, however, I lost my temper, and spoke my mind with the
utmost freedom. This pleased them better than my former method of treating them; they renewed their apologies and entreaties, promising the strictest secrecy and fidelity for the future. My affection for him, and, though I hardly like to say it, my compassion for his weakness, overcame me; to cut my story short, we made friends again; but I made a firm resolution to let him live with his daughter as he pleased for the future, and never speak to him about her affairs, if I could possibly avoid it.

Since I had become acquainted with the real character of the Duchess of Berry I seldom visited her, and had dropped all intimacy. But she used sometimes to come to my room on the pretext of going to see Madame de Saint-Simon, and when she was in any difficulty she would keep me for hours in tête-à-tête conversation. After this adventure I did not set foot in her rooms for a long time; and when I saw her elsewhere I treated her so coldly that I got her out of the habit of coming to see me. After a time, not to make the affair too marked, I used to go to her public toilette about once in two months, and then only for a minute or two; and so long as she lived I kept matters on this footing, in spite of many advances which she made to me, directly or indirectly; she often began making them again, but I always resisted them. I have taken this opportunity to explain, once for all, the internal situation of this family, and my position with regard to all of them. I must now go back to my original subject.

The gleam of religion and right feeling which showed itself in the Duke of Orleans after his separation from Madame d'Argenton did not last long, though genuine enough while it did last; it was perhaps prolonged a little from motives of prudence till the marriage of the Duchess of Berry was finally settled, which was about five or six months after the rupture with Madame d'Argenton. But his old habits, the tedium of his life at Court, and the evil company he fell into when he went to Paris, drew him down; he resumed his old ways of debauchery and impiety, though he had no declared mistress, nor any quarrel with the Duchess of Orleans, except such as were caused by the Duchess of Berry. The father and daughter vied with each other in scoffing at religion and morality; frequently in the presence of the Duke of Berry, who was sincerely religious, and much disliked talk of this kind. He showed, as strongly
as he dared, his resentment at their attempts to bring him to their way of thinking on such subjects, and these attempts never had any success.

The King was quite aware of his nephew's conduct, and much displeased at his return to debauchery and his old associates at Paris. As the Duke of Orleans was perpetually in his daughter's company, the King held him responsible for her misconduct and for her offences against her mother, whom he loved as a father and protector, and for whose sake alone he had sanctioned the marriage against the wishes of Monseigneur. M. du Maine took care to keep the King's anger alive, playing the part of a good-hearted man by openly pitying the fate of the sister whom hatred for his other sister had converted into his closest ally. In this he was well backed up by the principal valets, as well as by Madame de Maintenon. M. du Maine had his reasons. He had done his best to bring about the Duke of Berry's marriage, for fear of his marrying Mademoiselle de Bourbon; but, once that was settled, he did not want to have a Prince so far superior to himself as the Duke of Orleans admitted on an equal footing to the domestic circle; to amuse the King, and perhaps become a formidable rival to himself.

He had another reason; he wished to arrange a marriage between his son, the Prince de Dombes, and a younger sister of the Duchess of Berry. The Duchess of Orleans, to whom the interests of the bastards came before everything, and who was always scheming to promote the grandeur of her brothers and nephews, was strongly in favour of this match. The Duke of Orleans was the only obstacle; and I have sometimes thought that M. du Maine's inconceivable perseverance in making advances to me arose from a hope that I might be induced to use my influence to overcome this opposition; notwithstanding the fact that all my personal interests were diametrically opposed to a marriage which would do so much to consolidate the rank of his children. However this may be, his object was to reduce the Duke of Orleans to such a position that his only chance of regaining the King's favour would be to consent to the marriage between his daughter and the Prince de Dombes. Seeing that he was likely to succeed in this artful intrigue, I was confirmed in my opinion that it was absolutely necessary to strengthen the position of the Duke of Orleans by an alliance with the Dauphin; which, if sincere, would
MEMOIRS OF SAINT-SIMON

keep him within bounds in many ways, render him a personage of importance, and, in the long run, act as a restraint on the Duchess of Berry, and restore concord to their family circle. The influence of the Dauphin was increasing daily; and, knowing his opinions on the subject of the bastards, I looked upon a union with him as the only effectual means of stopping a marriage which would make the Prince of Dombes brother-in-law to the Duke of Berry; for the Duke of Berry himself had not strength or influence enough to prevent it; and the Duchess of Berry would not dare to say a word against it, in the present state of her relations with the King.

I laid my views, accordingly, before the Duke de Beauvilliers, pointing out that our chief object in arranging the marriage of the Duchess of Berry had been to promote the union of the royal family; and the more we had been deceived in the character of that Princess, the more necessary it became to seek some other means, such as I now proposed to him. I told him that, although the Duke of Orleans had been reduced by his enforced idleness to a condition in which he was utterly without influence, a Prince of his birth could never be entirely disregarded in the future, whatever might be the case during the life-time of a King before whom everybody trembled. He could not deny, I said, that the Duke of Orleans was a man of very superior ability and attainments, capable of doing anything if he only chose to make use of his natural talents, as his campaigns had testified; he might, when delivered from the yoke of the King, and spurred on by the ambition of his daughter, grow tired of his present objectless life, and determine to make his influence felt during the new reign. If that turned out to be the case, I said, they would regret that they had not taken this opportunity of making friends with a man who would then be opposed to them, and whose opposition would always be, more or less, a source of embarrassment. I supported my arguments by mentioning the high opinion of the Duke of Orleans entertained by M. de Chevreuse, who saw much of him in private; and I did not forget to quote his openly expressed opinions on the subject of the Archbishop of Cambrai. Finally, I reminded M. de Beauvilliers that the Duke of Orleans was thoroughly acquainted with history, science, and art, and could talk of them easily and agreeably, like a man who is
master of his subject; the Dauphin also liked discussing these topics. If they could be brought together, such conversations would be an inexhaustible source of amusement and instruction for both of them; and so would do much to promote our object, the union of the royal family.

When I began my speech the Duke de Beauvilliers seemed disinclined to listen, but at my request he heard me out without interruption. He agreed with my arguments; but said the habits of the Duke of Orleans, and especially his loose way of talking, even in the Dauphin’s presence, were very repugnant to that Prince, and an insuperable barrier to their closer acquaintance. I knew it too well to dispute the fact; but I impressed upon him that perhaps the Duke of Orleans might be induced to change his conduct, and I saw that he was not unwilling to give way on that condition. I said no more on that occasion, because I knew everything depended on the Duke of Orleans himself; and, knowing his careless disposition and the detestable parade of impiety which he affected (for it was in a great measure put on), I felt that I could not answer for him.

I lost no time in attacking him on the subject; and easily brought him to admit the numerous advantages which he would derive from a closer acquaintance with the Dauphin, and, as a necessary preliminary, with the Duke de Beauvilliers. I stimulated his desire for it by telling him, what he knew well enough, that his own conduct was the chief obstacle; repeating this till I thought him sufficiently interested to listen to the proposal which I intended to submit to him. Then I told him that I had always carefully abstained from lecturing him about his mode of life, or about the opinions he professed, which I did not believe he really entertained; but I thought he might overcome the Dauphin’s objections if he chose to persevere steadily, and follow my advice. I said I did not think him capable of doing so; but I would nevertheless tell him what I thought he should do. There were two essential points to be observed: the first, to be always on his guard against making licentious remarks in the presence of the Dauphin, or in the rooms of the Princess of Conti; for the Dauphin often went to them, and anything said there might be repeated to him. I told him that this way of talking alienated the Dauphin more than he might perhaps imagine; that if he would only drop it, and let the Dauphin feel that he
could talk to him without the risk of hearing offensive remarks, he would soon begin to take pleasure in his conversation, and their intercourse would become easier and more agreeable. The second point was this: he ought not to go quite so often to Paris; and since, unfortunately, he thought himself unable to abstain from debauchery, he ought at any rate to practise it in secret, and put sufficient restraint on himself and his companions to prevent their doings overnight from becoming a topic of conversation next day.

As this compromise did not really interfere with his pleasures, he agreed to it readily; and kept his promise faithfully, especially with regard to imprudent speeches in the Dauphin's presence, or in company where they might be repeated. The Dauphin soon noticed the change, and made a remark about it to the Duke de Beauvilliers. By degrees they became more intimate; but M. de Beauvilliers had never been in the habit of seeing much of the Duke of Orleans, and, as he disliked any change which might cause remark, all communications between them passed either through me or the Duke de Chevreuse.
CHAPTER XIV

1711

My memorial for the Dauphin—He tells me of another affair referred to him by the King—Cardinal de Noailles and his enemies—The King insists on the Duchess of Berry accompanying the Count to Fontainebleau—An accident by the way causes her to miscarry—The Count de Toulouse suffering from stone—He also is compelled to travel to Fontainebleau—My design to reconcile the Chancellor with M. de Beauvilliers—I inform the Chancellor of his son’s late peril, and of his deliverance by M. de Beauvilliers—He is overwhelmed with gratitude—The reconciliation effected—Death of the Prince of Nassau—Of the Duke de Lesdiguières—Funny remark of his widow—Death of Marshal Bouillé—His character—I apply for his office as Captain of the Guard—It is given to the Duke de Charost—Benevolent intentions towards me frustrated—Siege of Bouchain—Difficulty about Ravignan—Marlborough’s generous conduct—Cardinal de Noailles’ affair again—He makes a mistake—M. de Chevreuse and the duchy of Chaulnes—He quarrels with the Chancellor—His son created Duke—His reception in Parliament—The Count de Toulouse undergoes an operation.

Amidst these cares and occupations, I had to work at the detailed account of the infringements of their privileges sustained by the Dukes and Peers, which the Dauphin had asked me to draw up. I had all my materials in readiness, for since my earliest youth I had noted down each successive infringement, with the causes which led to it; and I had taken particular pains to acquire information from those old Dukes and Duchesses who had been most about the Court in their time, as well as from untitled persons of long experience in the usages of the Court and Society. Without these preliminary collections it would have been impossible for me to comply with the Dauphin’s request; as it was, the particular arrangement which he insisted upon cost me much time and trouble. Nobody could help me; M. de Chevreuse was not at Marly; M. de Beauvilliers was too busy with other things; I could not venture even to employ a secretary; nevertheless, I finished my work before the Court left Marly.
Although the Dauphin was very busy, he gave me an appointment in his private room. I had some trouble in stowing away all the papers I had to submit to him in my pockets, so that their unusual bulkiness might not excite remark. He locked up some of the documents with his more important papers, others with those of less consequence. I could not refrain from admiring the businesslike order in which he kept his papers; in spite of the frequent moves of the Court, which were a source of great annoyance to him. Before putting my documents away he cast his eyes over them, and was horrified to see how many innovations had crept in to the detriment of the Peers. He promised me that he would read the whole carefully, from beginning to end, when the Court went to Fontainebleau, and talk the matter over with me afterwards; his reason for putting off the study of my papers till he should be at Fontainebleau was, he explained, that, at present, his time was fully taken up with another affair, which the King had left to him almost entirely. As he did not seem inclined to say more about this affair, which did indeed occupy only too much of his time, I thought it unadvisable to prolong my audience, and took my leave with many thanks for his kindness.

The affair in question was of course that of Cardinal de Noailles, which eventually gave birth to the famous Constitution "Unigenitus." The wicked inventors of this dark plot, though highly satisfied with their success in reducing the Cardinal to the defensive, were uneasy at seeing him allowed to return to Court, after a short banishment. The King, notwithstanding the powerful influence of his confessor, backed up by Madame de Maintenon and the Bishop of Meaux, found it hard to overcome his old liking and veneration for Cardinal de Noailles; and the Cardinal's enemies were conscious that his presence disconcerted their schemes, or, at any rate, unsettled the King's mind. To counteract this influence, they suggested that the affair should be referred to the Dauphin; and the King, who was weary of it, gladly adopted the suggestion. This arrangement was completely satisfactory to the enemies of Cardinal de Noailles. He was the sole survivor of the three prelates who had opposed and overcome the Archbishop of Cambrai in the disputes about Quietism; and though the Dauphin had more than once shown, when the Council had to decide
some questions in which the Jesuits were interested, that he intended to be guided only by his sense of justice, they thought his affection for his old tutor, backed up by the influence of the Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, would be sufficient to prejudice him against the Cardinal.

I talked over this matter with the Duke de Beauvilliers, and we had no difficulty in agreeing that it would be advisable to appoint some Bishop to assist the Dauphin. I suggested the ex-Bishop of Troyes, who seemed in many ways a suitable person. He was a man of much ability and learning, and had distinguished himself in the Assemblies of the clergy; moreover, he was a man of the world, and had formerly been connected with influential persons at Court, of very opposite cliques. In church matters he got on well with all parties, including the Jesuits; he was quite unprejudiced in this particular affair, for he had resigned his see many years ago; and his uprightness and piety were beyond suspicion. These qualifications, combined with a conciliatory disposition, seemed to point him out as the very man for the appointment. The Duke de Beauvilliers could find nothing to say against him, except that he was a personal friend of Cardinal de Noailles; but, do what I would, I could not get him beyond that. Finding it useless to discuss him any further, I suggested Besons, Archbishop of Bordeaux, also a conciliatory and learned man, who had been translated from Aire to Bordeaux by the influence of Father de la Chaise; and who, being a friend of the Jesuits, might be looked upon as beyond suspicion. The Duke did not reject this proposal; but suggested Bissy, Bishop of Meaux, as the most suitable person to assist the Dauphin. This Bishop had not yet raised his mask; he treated Cardinal de Noailles with the utmost friendliness and respect, while in secret he did all he could, in concert with Father Tellier, to prejudice Madame de Maintenon against him. I protested against this choice; telling the Duke what I knew of Bissy’s ambition, and his intrigues at Rome when Bishop of Toul, with other things which it is unnecessary to repeat. M. de Beauvilliers then confessed to me that he had already suggested this appointment to the Dauphin; whereupon I reproached him mildly for having taken up my time with a discussion which was perfectly useless, seeing that the choice had already been decided. Finally, I persuaded him so far that I saw a
possibility of appointing the Archbishop of Bordeaux as a second assistant to the Dauphin. I must now drop this affair for the present.

As I said before, the King remained at Marly for three months after Monseigneur's death, because small-pox was raging at Versailles; he left it on the 15th of July for Fontainebleau, sleeping one night on the way at d'Antin's house at Petit-Bourg. The trifling story which follows is hardly worth mentioning were it not characteristic of the King. The Duchess of Berry was enceinte for the first time, and very unwell and feverish. Fagon advised that she should postpone her journey for a few days, but neither she nor the Duke of Orleans dared hint at such a thing; and though the Duke of Berry did say something about it, in a timid manner, he met with a rebuff. The Duchess of Orleans, who was still more timid, spoke to Madame and to Madame de Maintenon about it; though by no means inclined to be tender to the Duchess of Berry, they thought the journey would be very dangerous for her, and spoke to the King; and Fagon backed them up. It was all in vain; but they would not take "no" for an answer, and the dispute lasted for three or four days. At last the King became really angry, and all he would grant by way of compromise was that the Duchess should travel by boat, instead of in his carriage.

So much being obtained, they managed, with great difficulty, to get the King to allow her to leave Marly on the 13th, to sleep two nights at the Palais-Royal, and embark on the 15th, as so to arrive at Petit-Bourg at the same time as the King; and then go on, still by the river, to Fontainebleau. The Duke of Berry received permission to accompany his wife; but the King forbade him angrily to stir outside the Palais-Royal on any pretence whatever; they were not even to go to the Opera, though the theatre adjoined the Palais-Royal, and the private box of the Duke of Orleans could be entered without going outside, or even going up or down stairs. On the 14th the King, under the pretext of asking after their health, sent to reiterate the same injunctions; and he gave Madame de Saint-Simon strict orders not to lose sight of the Duchess of Berry while she was at Paris. As may be supposed, these orders were punctually obeyed; Madame de Saint-Simon could not get out of sleeping at the Palais-Royal, where she had the
rooms formerly used by the Queen-mother. High play went on all the time they were there, to console the Duke of Berry in his captivity.

The Provost of the Merchants had received orders to prepare boats for the journey; but so little time was allowed that he could not procure good ones. The Duchess of Berry embarked on the 15th, and arrived in a very feverish state at Petit-Bourg, about 10 o'clock in the evening. The King seemed highly pleased at this exact obedience. Next morning they resumed their voyage, the Dauphiness going down to see the Duchess of Berry embark. The bridge at Melun almost proved fatal to them; the Duchess's boat struck on a pier, and was nearly upset, the side being broken in with a loud crash; and for some moments they were in very great danger. However, they escaped with the fright and some delay, and eventually reached Fontainebleau at two in the morning. The King, completely satisfied, went to see the Duchess of Berry next morning. She kept her bed for several days, and on the 21st gave birth prematurely to a dead child. Madame de Saint-Simon carried the news to the King as soon as he was awake; he did not seem much discomposed; he had been obeyed, and that was enough. As the child was only a girl, nobody cared much about its loss, and the Duchess of Berry suffered no ill consequences from the miscarriage.

The Count de Toulouse had been suffering from sharp pains in the bladder during the last two months at Marly, and towards the end of the time saw hardly any one. The King went to see him several times, but none the less he insisted on his accompanying him to Fontainebleau. He could not bear the movement of a carriage, and riding was quite out of the question, so he travelled by boat; but all the time he was at Fontainebleau he never left his room, except once or twice to see the King. So there was no getting out of these journeys on any plea whatever; in this way the King let his dependents see that he was too great a man to be touched by ordinary considerations. At this time he paid the Dauphiness the compliment of ordering her whole band to attend her Mass, as it had formerly attended Monseigneur's. The Dauphin did not care about having it at his own; he usually went in the early morning, and his thoughts would have been disturbed by music; the more so, because he was very fond of it. The Dauphiness was
much pleased by this attention, which she had not asked for; it showed the Court how highly she stood in the King's favour.

As soon as we were settled at Fontainebleau I began to consider seriously how I might bring about a reconciliation between the Duke de Beauvilliers and the Chancellor. I continued to talk to the Duke about Pontchartrain, without ever mentioning his father; for I was not yet certain that he would be allowed to retain his office, though I had strong hopes that he might. At last, in a private conversation, I got the Duke to say that if Pontchartrain showed himself more amenable he thought it would be better to leave him where he was, rather than have a change of Ministers; even though his successor might be a better man for the office. This conversation took place in the Galerie des Cerfs; the Duke had the key of a door which led into it from his staircase, and it was there that he liked to converse privately while walking up and down. I thanked him warmly, and, seeing that Pontchartrain was safe, for I knew his fear of dismissal would keep him on his good behaviour, I thought it was time to attempt the great stroke which I was meditating. I felt, however, that the only chance of effecting a reconciliation between the Duke and the Chancellor was to force it on them in spite of themselves. The Duke was too justly offended by the Chancellor's behaviour, and too conscious of his own power, to listen to a word on his behalf; and the Chancellor, in his disappointment at seeing the favour and authority which he had reasonably expected to enjoy under Monseigneur transferred by that Prince's death to the Duke de Beauvilliers, would never humiliate himself by making advances to a man whom he hated, and was in the habit of attacking on every possible occasion.

Full of my design, I went one afternoon to the Chancellor's quarters. He had a little narrow garden in front of his rooms, which he called his monkish retreat; and indeed it was rather like the little garden attached to the cell of a Carthusian monk; it was here that he delighted to walk by himself, or tête-à-tête with me. Directly I entered his rooms he took me out into this garden; for he was longing to talk to me; he had only just arrived at Fontainebleau, and we had been separated nearly the whole time that the Court was at Marly. After a little talk about the Ministers transacting business with the Dauphin, and the newly acquired
importance of the Duke de Beauvilliers—a sore point with him—I asked him whether he was aware of all that had been going on at Marly, and whether his son had told him anything. He replied, with some surprise, that he had heard nothing particular. "Well then, sir," I said, "since your continual absence from Marly, and your reluctance to tear yourself away from Pontchartrain, prevent you from hearing what is going on, I must tell you that your son has been within an ace of being dismissed from his office." Shrugging his shoulders, he replied: "Considering his usual conduct, and the follies he commits every day, that is a misfortune which, unhappily, I fully expect at any moment. But tell me," he continued in some agitation, "what is the matter? and how does he stand now?" I told him the reasons which had led to the determination to dismiss Pontchartrain; and I did so purposely in such a way as to alarm him as much as possible; not mentioning the Duke de Beauvilliers, but, on the contrary, leaving him to the opinion, which he expressed more than once with some vivacity, that his son's peril arose from the mutual hatred between the Duke and himself.

I kept him on tenterhooks for some time. At last I told him that Pontchartrain was saved for the time being, and that I believed the same person who had come to the rescue would support him for the future. The Chancellor breathed a sigh of relief; he embraced me, and begged me to tell him the name of this generous friend and preserver. I would not tell him for some time; but enlarged upon the imminent danger from which his son had escaped, and the gratitude which he and his family owed to the man who had saved him. The Chancellor was all impatience to know who it was, declaring that he owed him a life-long debt of gratitude.

At last, fixing my eyes steadily on him, with an air of severity which did not become me in speaking to him, but which I thought I might assume for this occasion only, "How astonished and ashamed you will be," I said, "on hearing this name which you ought to bless for ever! The man who had simply to let things take their natural course, and your son would most certainly have been deprived of his office; the man who, on the contrary, has interfered to save him is the man whom you hate without a cause, whom you never cease to attack. In short," I went on, raising my
voice and darting a fiery glance at him, "it is M. de Beauvilliers. What have you to say to that? Take my advice, and go to hide your head!" "What have I to say!" replied the Chancellor, in a voice broken by emotion: "I can only say that henceforth I am his devoted servant, and will leave nothing undone to prove it!" Then, looking at me, and embracing me with a sigh, he went on: "Ah! but I recognise your handiwork in this; and I feel it deeply; but none the less M. de Beauvilliers has behaved admirably considering the terms we were on. I beg you to go to him and tell him that I throw myself at his feet, and from this time forth am at his service. But first let me hear all the details, for at present you have told me nothing but the general result."

I then told him the whole story from beginning to end. The Chancellor heard it with sentiments of sorrow, repentance, and gratitude worthy of a man of his ability and upright character. He repeated his thanks to me for the service I had rendered to his son, at a time when I had so little reason to be satisfied with his conduct, and said he would never forget it. I told him that, in acting as I had done, I had simply paid a debt of gratitude to himself; but his real thanks were due solely to the Duke de Beauvilliers, who, having received nothing but wanton provocation from him and his son, had gone out of his way to save them, from pure generosity and Christian charity, at a time when he had merely to hold his tongue, and Pontchartrain must have been ruined; at a time too when, humanly speaking, he could never require any assistance from either Pontchartrain or his father. The Chancellor frankly confessed that he would never have expected to find a helping hand stretched out from that quarter; and said he was impatient to see M. de Beauvilliers and express his gratitude in person. I begged him to wait till I had confessed to the Duke that I had let out his secret; I did not say so, but I also wanted time to persuade him to make friends with the Chancellor and condescend to receive his assurances. The Chancellor begged me to see him at once; he asked me to say that, although he must keep to his own opinions on matters of importance when they came before the Council, he would express them for the future without wrangling or bitterness; and on less important subjects would always support the Duke's opinion if possible. M. de Beauvilliers would see
from his future conduct that his gratitude was heartfelt and durable.

I went immediately to the Duke de Beauvilliers and repeated the whole of this conversation to him. He flushed up, and asked me, rather angrily, who had asked me to interfere. I told him it was all my own doing, and I would not conceal from him that I considered it my duty to bring about a reconciliation between him and the Chancellor, whose perilous position marred the happiness of my life. After a little more talk, he became calmer; and was satisfied, not with what I had done, but with the motives which had inspired me. I got him to see that, since in his present position he could not be suspected of any personal motive, so gratuitous and undeserved an act of generosity must have the effect of binding to him both the Chancellor and his son; and he would be spared the painful necessity of procuring their downfall. So far as the son was concerned, I said, I looked upon him as of little importance; but I was sincerely convinced that, if he were honestly reconciled with the father, he would obtain from him advice and assistance which would be of great value to the public service.

The Duke by this time was quite appeased. He entrusted me with polite messages to the Chancellor, begging me to tell him that he was glad to have had an opportunity of showing him and his son how much they had misconceived his character. With regard to the Chancellor’s assurances about the Council, he said he thought they went too far; it was only right that each of them should reserve perfect liberty of action; all he asked was that their discussions should be conducted without acrimony; and he could assure the Chancellor that he would do his best to see things from his point of view. I asked him immediately, as I afterwards asked the Chancellor, to promise that he would so far discard his prejudices on the subjects of the Roman Court and Jansenism as to discuss even these matters in such a way as to show their personal respect for each other. They both gave me their words, very willingly, that they would do so; and from that time forth they kept their promises faithfully.

I took care not to tell the Chancellor how the Duke had received me at first; but I told him all the rest. He was very impatient to see M. de Beauvilliers, and set the seal on their reconciliation; but the Duke, always inclined to
be over-cautious, insisted on putting it off for ten days or a
fortnight; for no particular reason that I could see. I
suspected, however, that, having been taken by surprise,
he required a little time to overcome his dislike of the
Chancellor, so as not to do things with a bad grace. The
Chancellor, in his impatience, asked permission to meet
M. de Beauvilliers in the narrow passage which led to the
King's antechamber, and clasp his hand as they passed each
other; so that he might at least express mutely the senti-
ments which he was not allowed to declare openly. The Duke
agreed to this, and the meeting passed off as suggested.

After about ten days, M. de Beauvilliers asked me to
tell the Chancellor that he would call on him next day with
M. de Chevreuse, who wanted to speak to him; and, to my
great surprise, added that he wished the Chancellor to say
nothing to him about their reconciliation while M. de
Chevreuse was in the room; he also said that he did not
wish me to be present. The visit passed off with ordinary
civility, though with rather more mutual cordiality than
was usual between them. When M. de Chevreuse had done
with the business which brought him there, M. de Beau-
villiers asked him to leave him alone with the Chancellor.
Then followed thanks, embraces, and protestations of sin-
cere friendship on both sides; the Chancellor frankly con-
essed himself beaten by the Duke's generosity, and said
he owed him a life-long debt of gratitude. They both
agreed that, to avoid gossip, their reconciliation had better
remain secret for a time; and then parted with mutual
satisfaction. I heard all that had passed from the Duke
and the Chancellor, and they both asked that all com-
 munications between them might be conducted through me.
For a long time afterwards they both reported to me all
that passed between them in the Council.

Pontchartrain, though he felt that he was at my mercy,
said not a word to me about the affair of the Coastguard
of Blaye, nor did I mention the matter to him. I rather
admired his tenacity; and, though I had a fine opportunity
to make him relax his grip, I carefully refrained from hinting
at such a thing; for I would not have it supposed that a
trifling personal grievance had anything to do with the
difficult task which I had just accomplished. Its success
gave me the sincerest and most unmixed joy; and I had
the further pleasure of seeing that the reconciliation between
my two most intimate friends was complete and hearty, and lasted without the slightest interruption as long as they both lived. It remained unsuspected for some time; but at last the altered behaviour to each other of the Duke and the Chancellor at the Council-table opened the eyes of the other Ministers, and by degrees the courtiers also found out something. The new creation of the dukedom of Chaulnes, in favour of the Duke de Chevreuse, which did not take place till three months later, was for some time supposed to be the cause of the reconciliation; but everything becomes known in the long run, and eventually the whole story leaked out. After what had passed between the First Equerry and myself on the subject I could not keep the secret from him; but, as he remained at Arminvilliers for some time, it was not till near the end of the stay at Fontainebleau that he had the pleasure of hearing it.

Several deaths occurred about this time. The Prince of Nassau was drowned while crossing the river Mordick. It was raining, and he would not get out of his carriage when it was placed on the ferry-boat; the horses took fright, and caused an accident, in which two or three persons were drowned besides himself. He had taken the name of the Prince of Orange since the death of King William, who had made him his heir.

The Duke de Lesdiguères died at the age of eighty-five, and his peerage became extinct. He was an imbecile courtier, brother to the Duke and Marshal de Créquy, who were anything but imbecile; I have spoken of him on the occasion of his marriage, under the name of Canaples, which he bore at that time. His wife, who had a good deal of the wit of the Mortemarts, was silly enough to weep for him. People laughed at her. "How can I help it?" said she; "I respected him as a father, and loved him as a son!" People laughed all the more; and she had to dry her tears.

About the same time the startling news arrived of the death of Cardinal de Tournon, legate a latere to China and the Indies. The story of his mission, and of his holy but deplorable end, are so well known that I will say no more of this extraordinary affair. It is altogether outside the scope of these Memoirs; and I should not have alluded to it, but for the curious coincidence in time between his martyrdom and the first beginnings of the affair which gave rise to the Bull "Unigenitus."
Marshal Boufflers died at Fontainebleau, aged seventy-eight; I have so often mentioned him in these Memoirs that little remains to be said about him. With so little natural ability, and the disposition of a thorough courtier (except with regard to the Ministers, for he always knew how to hold his own with them), it is surprising that he should have kept his probity so completely unspotted. He was of a noble and generous disposition, as he showed in every action of his life; always ready to give praise where it was due, and to do justice to the conduct of others, even at his own expense; equally ready to find excuses for their failures, he never hesitated to exert himself to obtain a fresh chance for those who had fallen into disgrace. He was a passionate lover of his country; and, from gratitude and sincere admiration, he was equally devoted to the King personally.

Though not clever, he was hard-working to a very uncommon degree; and his industry, combined with his zeal for the public service, enabled him to write papers on public affairs containing some extremely sensible suggestions, many of which he showed me. I used to lend him writings of my own to read; and at the time I heard of his imminent danger, which was on the day before he died, he had a very important paper of mine in his possession. Up to that time I had hoped for the best, and had been unwilling to let him see that I was uneasy; but now I was terrified at the idea of his papers being put under the official seal, and an inventory of them drawn up. I went to him immediately, and told him that though, from what I saw of him, I had strong hopes of his recovery, it was evident that, after such an illness, it would be some time before he could apply his mind to serious affairs; I should therefore be much obliged if he would return my paper, and I would let him have it back when he asked for it. He was not in the least put out, but called his wife and asked her to bring his despatch-box; he opened it himself, took out my paper, and returned it to me.

As I have already said, his brilliant and fortunate services at Malplaquet turned his head to such a degree that he ventured to ask for the Constable’s Sword; or, failing that, for the post of Colonel-General of the Infantry, an office which had also been abolished, as even more dangerous to the State than that of Constable. Both requests
were refused, with a sharpness which made him forget all his previous rewards; he only saw the contrast between his own treatment and the honours showered on Villars for the same battle; and he was extremely mortified. The King began to dislike him as a man of insatiable ambition, and took no trouble to conceal his dislike. Boufflers loved the King as a servant loves his master; he feared, admired, and worshipped him almost as a god; he saw that he had made a bad impression, and one which would never be effaced; from that time he fell into a condition of sombre and bitter melancholy, which gradually brought on infirmities beyond the reach of medicine. I spared no time or trouble to console him; for, though he had not told me beforehand of the requests he was about to make, he did not attempt to conceal their unfavourable reception. He sometimes complained of it to Monseigneur, who respected him, and tried to comfort him; very often to the Dauphin, who admired and liked him, and went to see him affectionately during his illness. It lasted only four or five days. A quack-doctor gave him a remedy which threw him into a violent perspiration, and might have saved him, telling him that he was on no account to take a purgative. Next morning, the regular doctors were surprised to find him so much better; they persuaded him to take medicine, which killed him in the course of the day, the symptoms showing plainly that it was nothing less than a poison after the remedy he had taken previously. He was universally regretted, and his praises were sung by every one, although he had quite lost all influence. The King spoke kindly, but briefly of him, and felt his death as a relief.

There were several candidates for his office of Captain of the Guard; I ventured to apply for it in a letter which I presented to the King. I heard that he was pleased with it, and this gave me some hopes; but M. de Beauvilliers, without whose advice I never did anything of importance, soon damped them. The Marshal died on the 22nd of August; on the 4th of September the King sent for the Dauphin, and said he felt that, at his age, the new Captain of the Guard would not serve him long, whereas he would be in the Dauphin's service for life; he thought it would be only right, therefore, to give him one of his own choos-
he would prefer. The Dauphin thanked him suitably, and said he would prefer the Duke de Charost. The request was immediately granted; the King sent for Charost and gave him the post, with a brevet de retenue of 500,000 livres to enable him to pay off a similar charge formerly granted to Marshal Boufflers; telling him, at the same time, that he had to thank the Dauphin entirely for the appointment.

Charost was a Lieutenant-General, but had long ago left the service; he was not on such terms with the King as to make him formidable to the other applicants; consequently his appointment was received with general amusement; it made the Court look with profound respect on the Dauphin, and established the conviction that he could do anything he pleased. A certain Domingue, portemanteau to the Dauphiness, who was very familiar with her, ran to tell her the news. He ventured to add that he congratulated her heartily; mainly, because now M. de Charost could not be appointed Governor to the Duke of Brittany. We shall see that his prophecy did not come true; but the Dauphiness laughed approvingly at it, as I heard from some of her ladies who were present. This Domingue was a clever and cultivated fellow, very superior to his position, and treated with distinction by everybody. He had accompanied his father from Spain when quite a child, in the Queen’s suite; he had subsequently been in the service of the Bavarian Dauphiness, and had entered the service of this one at the time of her marriage. She was very kind to him, and, indeed, put great confidence in his advice; he used to speak very plainly to her, like an honourable man, and his remarks often made a considerable impression. He was so much attached to her that he would not marry, so as not to be separated from her; she knew it, and was grateful to him. He never got over his grief at her death, but fell into bad health; he never left his room till he died, less than a year afterwards, and saw no one except his spiritual advisers.

As I was not to have the appointment myself, I was delighted that it should be given to one of my most intimate friends. I never saw any one so pleased as he was, not only at the appointment itself, but that it should have come to him in such a way. The Dauphin, in spite of his modest reserve, could not help showing his great gratification; the Dauphiness also seemed pleased, but only out of
complaisance for her husband. We have seen the high position held by the Duchess de Béthune among the little flock which remained faithful to the Archbishop of Cambrai, and among the disciples of Madame Guyon; and the consideration which accrued, in consequence, to her son the Duke de Charost, in the eyes of M. de Chevreuse, M. de Beauvilliers, and the Dauphin. His father had resigned his peerage in his favour in 1697; but, as Charost did not take his seat in Parliament for more than a year afterwards, his father continued to go there and hear the trials, a thing in which he took much pleasure. Cardinal d’Estrees used to say maliciously that it was the Escalopier strain coming out, for his grandmother was the daughter of a lawyer of that name. In the end, the King was displeased at his doing so, and Charost was received in Parliament, his father taking the name of Duke de Béthune on his resignation.

M. de Beauvilliers had never looked upon the Duke de Charost as fit for anything beyond an office about the Court, and was glad to have the opportunity of recommending him to the Dauphin for this one; in this way he gratified, not only his old friend the Duchess de Béthune, but the whole of the little flock. For me he had other views, which he explained to me, and I heard of them soon afterwards from the Dauphin himself; his design was to make me Governor to the Duke of Brittany, born in 1707, so soon as he should be taken out of the charge of nurses; and it was probable that the King would leave this appointment to the choice of the Dauphin. God did not permit the accomplishment of this plan; we shall soon see the young Prince carried to the tomb, and with him all the nation’s hopes of happiness; all the gaiety, the charm, and the pleasures of the Court. By a curious chain of circumstances Charost eventually obtained the post which had been destined for me; though it was to exclude him from it that he had been given the appointment of Captain of the Guard.

Nothing of much importance occurred during the campaign of this year. Marlborough and Prince Eugène crossed the Scheldt with the intention of besieging Bouchain, and it was said that Villars twice threw away a favourable opportunity of attacking them. The garrison was commanded by Ravignan, and this caused a rather embarrassing
situation. He had been taken prisoner, with the garrison of Tournay, and released on giving his promise not to serve till exchanged. Exchanges of prisoners were difficult to arrange, and in the meantime Ravignan appealed to the Duke of Marlborough to release him from his parole. Marlborough, with great generosity, did so, warning him at the same time that he could answer for the English only, but not for the Dutch or Imperialists. This restriction did not deter Ravignan, who was a good officer and full of ambition. An intelligent man was required to command in Bouchain, and he was appointed, because it was considered very unlikely that the place would be besieged. Now that the siege was impending the question arose whether Ravignan should remain there. To do so would be a distinct breach of his parole so far as the Dutch and Imperialists were concerned, and even Marlborough might consider the assumption of so important a command as an abuse of his generosity; by the laws of war, in fact, Ravignan was liable to be hanged on the spot if he fell into the enemy's hands. It was decided that he could not honourably retain the command, and another commandant was about to be appointed; but Ravignan, who thought a breach of his parole would be less dishonourable than a withdrawal from his post in the moment of danger, urged Villars so strongly to allow him to remain that he carried his point.

Villars was beside himself at the impending loss of a place so important as Bouchain, especially as it was due entirely to his own blunders that the enemy was able to besiege it; so perhaps he was not sorry to entrust the defence to an able officer, whose zeal would be stimulated by the prospect of a gallows if he surrendered. The siege, however, only lasted a month, for Villars found himself unable to relieve the place; and the garrison surrendered on the 13th of September. The hostile Generals, with great generosity, ignored Ravignan's presence. Marl-

1 Ravignan had been one of the King's pages. He was very fond of shooting; and determined to have some sport in the small park at Versailles, which the King reserved strictly for himself. He dressed up two of his fellow-pages in Fagon's livery, disguised himself as Fagon, with an artificial hump, and proceeded to blaze away on the forbidden grounds. When the keepers came to interfere the other two pages kept them at a distance by telling them that M. Fagon did not wish to be recognised! The King was rather amused at this boyish trick, and forgave Ravignan.
borough was in a hurry to return to England, where the
tottering fortunes of his party required his presence; and
Prince Eugène had his own difficulties at The Hague,
besides that he was on bad terms with his master, the new
Emperor. So, after repairing the fortifications of Bouchain,
they went into winter quarters about the middle of Octo-
ber; and our own harassed army was glad to follow their
example.

On Monday, the 14th of September, the King left Fon-
tainebleau, and arrived at Versailles next day. Cardinal
de Noailles had a long audience of the King immediately
after his arrival, followed by a still longer one of the Dauphin.
That Prince had been busily occupied with the Cardinal's
affair at Fontainebleau; and the Archbishop of Bordeaux
kept me well informed of its progress. There were two
distinct points to be considered: the personal quarrel
between the Cardinal and the Bishops of La Rochelle and
Luçon; and the doctrines contained in Father Quesnel's
book; the latter being the principal issue, for it was
only to obtain the condemnation of the book that Father
Tellier and the Jesuits had incited the two Bishops to
make a personal attack on the Cardinal. A third Bishop,
Gap, had associated himself with them, but Father Tellier
saw that the attack on the book must fail if left only to
these three; he therefore caused letters expressing alarm
on behalf of orthodox doctrines to be prepared for signa-
ture by all the Bishops whom he could influence; and as
these comprised, besides all the subservient creatures of
the Jesuits, many weak or ambitious men who dared not
refuse anything to the confessor, their numbers were
sufficiently imposing. Cardinal de Noailles got wind of
these machinations, which were directed from the Jesuit
headquarters in the Rue St. Antoine. Fathers Lallemont,
Doucin, and Tournemine were the leading spirits; and
they gave vent to some indiscreet and very insolent threats
against the Cardinal, which were repeated by other pro-
minent Jesuits. Cardinal de Noailles thereupon inhibited
some of them from preaching or hearing confessions in his
diocese.

This was the position when the King returned from
Fontainebleau. The shower of letters from the Bishops
had not yet begun to fall, because it took some time to
prepare so many papers dealing with the same subject, but
all differently worded. The inhibition of the Jesuits had caused much fresh irritation, and the Dauphin was anxious to bring the whole matter to a conclusion. His decision, which the Cardinal had expressed his readiness to accept beforehand, was, that the three Bishops should prepare a fresh manifesto modifying some of the statements in their original letters; this was to be submitted to certain persons nominated by the Dauphin, and not made public till the Cardinal had declared himself satisfied.

But in this manifesto there was not a word about Father Quesnel’s book. The Dauphin, who was not sufficiently alive to the artfulness of the Jesuits or the ambition of the Bishop of Meaux, looked upon the whole affair as settled; he thought that, the personal quarrel having been arranged, the clamour against the book would cease of its own accord; or, at any rate, that if there was really anything to be said against the doctrines contained in a work which had so long been circulated with general approval, the question would be discussed quietly and amicably by the newly reconciled prelates. It was not difficult, however, to discern the artifice of the Jesuits. The preparation and examination of the Bishops’ manifesto would take some time, during which they would have ample opportunity for raising fresh difficulties; and the omission of all mention of the book left them at liberty to denounce it as much as they pleased, under the specious pretext of zeal for the purity of orthodox doctrines. But the Dauphin would have thought it sinful to impute such motives to his fellow-men; he was not aware of the numerous letters from the Bishops which were then being concocted; nor could he foresee the surprising chance which laid bare the mystery of iniquity to the eyes of the public.

M. de Chevreuse had, while at Fontainebleau, exerted himself to push forward his claim to the duchy of Chaulnes, which had been dangerously delayed by his habit of absenting himself from Marly, for which I had often scolded him. People used to say of him that his love of argument amounted to a positive disease, and certainly on this occasion he was so ill with it that he often had to resort to me for advice to prevent its killing him; that is, to prevent his affair from falling through altogether. The dukedom and peerage of Chaulnes had been created for Marshal de Chaulnes, brother to the Constable de Luynes.
It is true that it was created by reason of his marriage with the heiress Picquigny, and that the county of Chaulnes was her property; nevertheless, the peerage was, as usual, strictly limited to the male heirs of the marriage in succession. Two sons, who succeeded each other as Dukes, had died without issue; consequently the peerage had become extinct, if ever a peerage was so; and since the death of the last Duke de Chaulnes, so well known as an Ambassador, nothing had been heard of it.

This last Duke had left all his property to M. de Chevreuse, whose father was his first-cousin, with remainder to his second son; and M. de Chevreuse, who was fond of quibbles and fine-spun reasonings, thought he could, on the strength of this bequest, establish a claim to the peerage of Chaulnes. He used to style himself Duke de Luynes, Chaulnes, and Chevreuse; I often saw on his writing-table commissions issued by him to officers in the chevaux-legers containing these titles; and, as I was on terms of the utmost familiarity with him, I used to say: "You are lord of the duchy of Chaulnes, if you like; but Duke de Chaulnes, no!" He would laugh uneasily, and mutter that he thought he had some claims to that title.

He now put forward a formal claim to the dignity of Chaulnes. I begged him not to base it on such worthless grounds as his succession to the property of the last Duke, but to rely on the friendly offices of the Chancellor and the King's good-will towards him; for the Chancellor had already suggested the creation of a new peerage of Chaulnes in favour of M. de Chevreuse's second son, the Vidame d'Amiens, and the King had not refused. I told him he would only spoil his chances if he insisted on his chimerical rights, for he would weary the Chancellor and cause him to lose patience; and without his assistance he had no chance of obtaining this prodigious advancement for his second son. But it was useless to talk to him; he was a man who, by dint of metaphysics, could convince himself of the soundness of the most absurd arguments, and thought he could convince others also; he would not abandon his chimeras, and insisted on trying to bring over the Chancellor to his point of view. The Chancellor, a singularly clear-headed man, was also quick-tempered; he fidgeted about during M. de Chevreuse's arguments, interrupted him, and contradicted him flatly. He came to me after-
wards, complaining of the absurdity of a man who, not content that a peerage and dukedom should be conferred on his second son out of pure kindness to himself, insisted on its being based on grounds absolutely unprecedented and untenable. At last he told M. de Chevreuse flatly that he might go and pester the King with his fine arguments if he liked; and, if he could persuade him, well and good; but, as for himself, he would waste no more time in listening to the same absurdities, whatever sauce they were served up with; he would not hear another word about this peerage, nor would he mention the matter to the King.

M. de Chevreuse, with all his self-confidence, was rather startled at this; he came to me at once, and begged me to set matters right. It took me several days to smooth down the Chancellor, but at last he promised to speak to the King, on condition that M. de Chevreuse did not come near him again. The end of it was that, on the 8th of October, the King announced that he made the Vidame d’Amiens Duke de Chaulnes, and Peer, by a fresh creation. The joy of the family was intense, but not unalloyed; for the creation of a third dukedom in the house of Albert, for a younger son of the Vidame’s age, gave great offence to the whole Court, and many unpleasant remarks were made about it. The Dauphin also expressed his disapproval in terms which, though reserved, showed that, in his time, even his most intimate and confidential friends would not be allowed to extract from him favours which he considered neither just nor reasonable.

I take leave here to insert a trifling anecdote in connection with this peerage; for there is nothing in it really injurious to a man who was always one of my most intimate friends; and, besides, everybody knew the story at the time. When the day came for the new Duke de Chaulnes to be received in Parliament all were assembled at the usual hour, and the Princes of the Blood and other Peers took their places. M. de Chaulnes ought to have been at the door of the Grand Chamber to salute them as they came in, but he had not yet arrived. At last the assembly became impatient, and it was feared that an accident might have happened. The First-President sent an usher to the Hôtel de Chaulnes to inquire. The new Duke was being shaved; he did not seem in the least put out at having kept the august assembly waiting, but said he
would make what haste he could. The rest of his toilet took some time, however; at last he arrived, with a pleasant smile on his face. All the preliminaries had already been gone through; he had merely to take the oath and his seat. It is the custom for the First-President to congratulate a newly created peer, though not those who inherit their peerages. Accordingly, he raised his cap, turned to the new Peer, and, after a word or two, put on his cap again, completed his congratulatory address, and resumed his seat, once more raising his cap and bowing as he did so. M. de Chaulnes immediately rose, and, taking off his hat, put a paper into it which he endeavoured to read. His neighbour nudged him, and told him to put his hat on; Chaulnes stared at him, but, on being told a second time, did put it on, and remained with his paper fully exposed to view. This put him out; nevertheless, he tried to read it. "Sir, sir," he began, over and over again; at last he stuck fast, and remained speechless, amid the laughter of the assembly. Finally, he raised his hat without saying a word, and bowed to the First-President, as if to conclude the speech which had never begun; looked round, and joined in the general laughter as he took his seat. Such was the reception of the Duke de Chaulnes, which was never forgotten, because nothing like it had ever been witnessed before. He was as ready as anybody to make fun of it.

Ménager, a merchant, who, owing to his ability and knowledge of commerce, had come to be employed as a negotiator, arrived from London on the 19th of October, and was taken by Torcy to the King. He brought the news that Queen Anne had nominated three plenipotentiaries to arrange terms of peace. Marshal Huxelles and the Abbé de Polignac had already been appointed to act for the King, and Ménager was now nominated as the third plenipotentiary; on an equal footing with the other two, which seemed strange. Utrecht was to be the place of meeting. Soon afterwards Tallard arrived, and was kindly received by the King. He had spent the seven years of his captivity since the battle of Blenheim at Nottingham, under close observation, not allowed even to go to London on parole. His release without exchange or ransom was the first manifestation of Queen Anne's good-will.

On the 7th of November the Count de Toulouse was
operated upon by Maréchal, who extracted a very large, pointed stone. The operation was perfectly successful, and the patient's recovery uninterrupted. Maréchal received a fee of 10,000 crowns, which he refused to accept till he received the King's positive orders to do so. He had previously refused 2,000 crowns from Fagon, upon whom he had performed a similar operation. The King had gone to Marly on the 2nd, but the Duchess of Orleans and Madame la Duchesse remained at Versailles, to be with the Count de Toulouse. When the King returned on the 15th he gave orders that no one was to pass through the Gallery or the grand suite of apartments, for fear of disturbing the patient; this caused a good deal of inconvenience, for there was no way of getting from one wing to the other except by the courtyards. The Count de Toulouse had prepared himself for the operation with piety and quiet courage; it left no bad effects, and he rode out hunting as before.
CHAPTER XV

1711

Illness of the Queen of Spain—The Duke de Noailles' ambitious projects—
He suggests a mistress to the King—The suggestion taken in bad part—
The Queen and Madame des Ursins informed of it—The Duke de
Noailles recalled in consequence, and coldly received at Versailles—
He makes advances to me—He is taken in by him—
I bring him into friendly relations with the Duke of Orleans, with M. de
Beauvilliers, and with the Dauphin—Cardinal de Noailles—My
acquaintance with him—Showers of hypocritical letters from Bishops—
The King invoked as a modern Constantine—The plot disclosed—
The Cardinal fails to use his advantage—The King taken in—
The Dauphin takes a different view—He commands me to investigate the
subject of the Galilean Church and its privileges, and to draw up a
memorial. The First-President resigns his office—President Mesmes
appointed to succeed him—The Mesmes family—Sieur de Mesmes—
D'Avaux—La Bazinière—The new First-President—His character—
Noëls—Quarrels between the Duchess of Berry and her mother—The
King interferes—Dinners at Trianon—Sinister warnings—Illness of
Madame de Gondrin—A devoted mother—Death of Marshal Cattinat.

As we have already seen, the army formerly commanded by the Duke de Noailles in Catalonia had ceased to exist as a separate force, and he himself was placed under the orders of M. de Vendôme. Nothing of importance occurred during this campaign, both hostile armies being reduced to impotence by want of supplies; M. de Vendôme remained at headquarters, while the Duke de Noailles spent his time at Court, either at Saragossa or Corella. Here his ambition and his discontent with his present position led him, in conjunction with the Marquis d'Aguilar, to conceive a scheme which nearly brought him to ruin. The Queen of Spain was already suffering from scrofula, the disease which eventually killed her; she was unable to accompany the King out hunting, and, as she was compelled to wear a headdress which concealed her neck and the greater part of her face, she became much less accessible to the public. The two friends knew that the King could
not do without a woman, and that he was accustomed to be ruled by his wife; they persuaded themselves that the ascendancy of the Princess des Ursins rested entirely on that of the Queen; and that, if the latter were destroyed, the other would fall with it. Judging the King by themselves, they thought it would be easy to use the Queen's disease as a means of giving him a distaste for her, and, having made that great step in advance, they proposed to furnish him with a mistress, trusting that his piety would yield to his natural wants. A mistress of their own providing would, they thought, be continually in want of their advice and assistance; their design was that she should take the place of the Queen, while they themselves assumed the authority now exercised by Madame des Ursins.

A temporary separation between the King and Queen, caused by a visit to Corella, seemed a favourable opportunity for carrying their design into execution. The King's weak point was a fidgety uneasiness about his own health; under the pretext of personal affection, and the value of his life to the public, they took advantage of this to alarm him about the possibility of his catching the Queen's disease if he continued to sleep with her, or even to eat at the same table. This anxiety for his preservation was well received; they ventured further, sympathised with the King's physical necessities, insinuated that ordinary rules must yield to circumstances, and wound up by suggesting point-blank that he should keep a mistress. Up to that point all had gone well, but the King's piety took alarm at the word "mistress," and their scheme was ruined. He put their suggestion quietly aside, and from that time his manner towards them was marked by a constraint which seemed of evil augury.

No sooner did the King find himself again in the company of the Queen and Madame des Ursins than he informed them of the specious suggestions made to him by two men whom they believed to be devoted to them, and whom they were perpetually praising. Their feelings may be easily imagined; but they dissembled them, for they wished their vengeance to be complete. The Queen wrote to the Dauphiness complaining bitterly of the conduct of the Duke de Noailles, and Madame des Ursins did the same to Madame de Maintenon. Although the King and Madame de Maintenon had reasons for being displeased with Madame
des Ursins—reasons which will be more fully explained later on—they were extremely angry with the Duke de Noailles. The King's religious scruples were offended; Madame de Maintenon was touched on her tenderest point, the influence which she fancied she exercised over Spanish affairs through the medium of Madame des Ursins; and both were shocked at the ingratitude and perfidy of a man loaded with favours, the nephew by marriage of Madame de Maintenon, treated by her as a son, a confidential friend, and frequently as an adviser. The Dauphiness, surrounded by members of the Noailles family, had taken a fancy to the conversation, sometimes light and witty, sometimes grave and sensible, of the Duke de Noailles; partly in order to please Madame de Maintenon, she had admitted him to a very unusual degree of familiarity, and looked upon him as a friend. She was the more angry with him on behalf of the Queen, her sister, whom she loved, and with whom she kept up a constant correspondence. She was grateful to Madame de Maintenon for expressing herself so strongly against a man so nearly related to her; and Madame de Maintenon, on her side, was pleased with the Dauphiness for taking her sister's part so warmly. The Dauphin also joined with them in reprobating an action as absurd from a worldly point of view as it was criminal from that of religion.

The replies to the letters of the Queen and Madame des Ursins were sent off without delay; and they were such as to satisfy them completely. The Duke de Noailles received at the same time a curt and peremptory order to return at once. On his arrival at Versailles he had an audience of the King in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, for they wished to keep up appearances, and made no change in their usual mode of receiving him. But it was not long before their altered manner showed the public that the Duke de Noailles was in disgrace. The cause, indeed, was known only to a very few; I was one of the first to hear it from the Ladies of the Palace, to whom the Dauphiness always talked without reserve. In this unpleasant situation the Duke de Noailles began to cast his eyes round in search of persons who might be useful to him. His own relations, though so numerous and highly placed, could do nothing for him; and were, moreover, furious with him for having so wantonly thrown
away his favour. His wife was a madwoman, who, though Madame de Maintenon's only niece, had become extremely irksome to her; and was so far from being in a position to ask favours that she very rarely saw her, and then it was usually to receive a scolding. His sisters were indeed Ladies of the Palace, and on the best of terms with the Dauphiness; but the Dauphiness was too angry to listen to any one. The only Minister from whom he could expect assistance was Desmarets, who, living like a wild boar in his den, and absolutely ignorant of everything unconnected with his official duties, never suspected the real situation of the Duke de Noailles, and felt highly flattered when he saw him disposed to cultivate his acquaintance.

The Duke de Noailles had formerly been on very friendly terms with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, but had quarrelled with them on account of Renault, whom he had recommended to them. In his fortunate days he would, I think, have cared little about their friendship; but now he was ready to catch at any straw. My intimacy with them was notorious; moreover, I was known to be on the most confidential terms with the Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, and with the Chancellor. My secret interviews with the Dauphin were not known; but something was suspected owing to his very friendly manner when I met him in public, and the private conversations which he often held with Madame de Saint-Simon and myself in the saloon at Marly, and elsewhere. He and the Dauphiness made no secret of their wish that Madame de Saint-Simon should eventually succeed to the office held by Madame du Lude; the King invariably treated her with the utmost distinction; his manner to me was also most gracious; and I had, in consequence, become a subject of close observation to the sharp eyes of the Court. All these circumstances apparently led the Duke de Noailles to look upon me as a man whose good-will it was advisable to gain, for future times at any rate, if not for the present; and he had not been back a fortnight before he began laying siege to me.

The Duke de Noailles, now a Minister and Marshal of France, will henceforth figure so prominently in these Memoirs that it would be difficult to continue them intelligibly without giving a description of his person and character, although he is still alive and full of vigour, and
three years younger than myself. He is a man who would have probably attained the highest position even without his advantages of birth and fortune. His tall, corpulent figure, slow, heavy gait, and studiously plain style of dressing give him an appearance of natural simplicity, which he supports by the assumption of a hearty, genial manner, sufficient to impose on the generality of people. It is hardly possible to have a greater variety of talents than he has; no one ever excelled him in the art of adapting himself to the ideas of other people; when it serves his purpose, he can make them believe that he is animated by the same motives and wishes as they are, to an even greater degree, and that his whole time is given up to carrying them into effect. Good-tempered, when he chooses to be so, he is gracious and affable in his manners; however much he may be bored, he never shows it. Cheerful and amusing, his wit is of that fine quality which never gives offence; his impromptu sallies are delightful; he is merry and convivial; a good musician; always ready to suit himself to the tastes of other people and adopt them as his own. He has the talent of saying exactly what he means to say, and of expressing himself in exactly the right words; and yet, when he chooses, he can talk all day long in such a way that it is impossible to remember anything he has said; and that in the crowded saloon of Marly, in the most anxious and difficult moments of his life. I speak of my own knowledge, for I have often heard him doing so, knowing what he had himself told me of his embarrassments and anxieties; and in my astonishment I have asked him afterwards how on earth he managed to carry it off so well.

Easy and winning in his manners, he is always ready for any kind of conversation, for there is no subject of which he does not know something; his mind is cultivated, but it is a superficial cultivation; go deep into any subject, and you soon come to the end of his knowledge, and you then discover that he is a past-master in the art of disguising his ignorance under a flow of unmeaning words. Any one whom he wishes to captivate finds himself the object of all sorts of delicate attentions, offered so gracefully and naturally that it is impossible to resist them; he has in a supreme degree the talent of making himself all things to all men; in the houses where he visits he never
forgets to make himself pleasant to the old servants. His mode of expressing himself is clear and harmonious, yet perfectly natural; he has much eloquence, but it savours somewhat of art; just as, though perfectly gracious and polite, his manners retain a certain savour of natural coarseness. Nevertheless, he is full of delightful stories; he has the gift of extracting amusement out of the merest trifles, and with no apparent effort he can enliven even the driest and most perplexing matters of business.

This is a long list of agreeable qualities and of talents most useful to a courtier; it would be well if there were no other side to his character. But under these external attractions lie concealed nearly all the evil spirits with which the poets have peopled Tartarus: the most profound and unvarying duplicity; an ingrained perfidy to which nothing is sacred; a blackness of soul which makes one inclined to doubt whether he has a soul at all, and is a convincing proof that he believes in nothing; a contempt for virtue which never varies, while he gives himself up alternately, as the promotion of his own advantage and the fashion of the day dictate, to the most flagrant debauchery or to the practice of persistent and scarcely disguised hypocrisy. He is a man who sticks at nothing; who, if caught out, remains perfectly unabashed, and only pursues his object with more determination than ever. In the art of spreading lies and calumnies he is a past-master. Rarely, indeed, does he miss his mark; but if by chance he is exposed and rendered powerless he coils himself up like a serpent, preserving all its venom even amid the grovelling advances with which he seeks to regain your confidence; for he only makes them with the fixed design of strangling you at the first opportunity. And all this he does without the slightest malice, without hatred, without anger; he does it to his most confidential friends, who have not only never injured him, but to whom, by his own avowal, he is indebted for the most important obligations. The secret of this extraordinary perversity is his inordinate ambition, which leads him to devise the most incredible and perfidious plots to ruin any one likely to oppose him, or even, though quite unintentionally, to make his path less smooth and easy. With all this, he possesses an imagination at once vast, fertile, and ill-regulated, which embraces all things and not unfrequently
loses itself; it often becomes a torture to him, for it is alternately spurred on by the most unbridled audacity, and kept within bounds by a timidity which is stronger still; under these conflicting passions he groans, coils himself up, and hides himself, not knowing what to do or what is to become of him. But it is not often that this timidity of his is any protection to the victims of his crimes.

At the same time, in spite of his acquirements and natural talents, there is no man more thoroughly incapable in business matters. The fecundity of his imagination is such that he always has a number of schemes on foot at the same moment, all crooked, and interfering with each other; the result is a confusion and perplexity from which he cannot extricate himself. This is the secret of the useless marches and counter-marches with which he harasses his soldiers during a campaign; of the contradictory orders sent sometimes eight or ten times in one hour to the same troops, which exasperate the army and make him the laughing-stock of the men. In state affairs he takes up a project and pursues it enthusiastically for a week, sometimes perhaps for two or three weeks, during which time everything must give way to it and he thinks of nothing else; then another takes its place, to be followed by a third, and fourth, and so on. He is a man of whims and sudden impulses, who does everything by fits and starts; it is only when planning an intrigue, laying snares for an enemy or preparing a mine to explode under his feet, that he shows any pertinacity, but then he is pertinacious indeed; it is in such matters that he uses up the tenacity of purpose in which he fails when state affairs are concerned. The course of these Memoirs will afford ample illustrations of the truth of all that I have stated here; some will be read with horror; some with astonishment at the wild and absurd schemes put forward by him in all good faith.

Finally, incredible as it may seem in a man of his parts, accustomed from a very early age to take part in public affairs, he is, as we shall see, incapable of composing a clear and sensible paper on any subject whatever; incapable, indeed, of writing an ordinary business letter. He talks, argues, dictates, corrects, erases, and recasts his sentences, till there is nothing left of his composition; days
and months go by, his secretaries are driven to despair; but nothing, absolutely nothing, is brought forth. At last, when he sees that something must necessarily be published, he makes up his mind to have it written by some clever man whom he has unearthed, and whom he keeps locked up in a garret (even then he often makes him write and rewrite it ten times over); and then, with quiet effrontery, he produces the composition as his own.

With his open and engaging manners, so well qualified to throw dust into the eyes of the most cautious, and his cleverness in conveying an impression of his capacity, he is a man who thinks only of himself; he does nothing, however trifling and indifferent it may appear, without an object; he is capable of devising the most infernal plots, absolutely unscrupulous as to his methods of carrying them out; and it costs him no more to perform an act of injustice or treachery than to drink a glass of water. He is a specimen of what, thank God, is a rare type: he is a man who, with all the wickedness of the most infamous criminals, is lacking in what, for want of a better expression, I must call the virtue necessary to enable him to carry out a great crime; and who is, nevertheless, most dangerous to society, because, like the Sirens of the poets, if he lays himself out to charm anyone it is invariably with the fixed intention of destroying him. His reputation for personal courage has been clouded, to say the least of it, by his strange timidity as a commander; I leave this point to the judgement of those who have seen him under fire. Rather bitter jokes at his expense have sometimes been current among his troops.

With a disposition such as mine, straightforward, frank, natural, and far too simple, I was just the person to fall into the snares of the Duke de Noailles. As I have already said, he turned to me at once. I saw only his amiable side; his mask had not then been torn off, I did not know that he wore one, and as yet I was ignorant of the cause of his return. Of course I did not flatter myself that it was to any attractions of my own that I was indebted for these visits and advances on the part of a man with whom I had but a slight acquaintance, and who had been soaring to brilliant heights on the wings of favour, while I had been creeping in the dust; I understood quite well that he was seeking access through me to the Duke of Orleans...
and M. de Beauvilliers; and perhaps, in the long run, to the Dauphin. I guessed that he was following the advice of his mother, who was always friendly to me, though we were never intimate, and whose constant endeavour it was, though only by honourable means, to have as many friends and as few enemies as possible. I responded to his advances politely, but with no great warmth, though it seemed to me that they were made with a good deal of cordiality on his side. Talk about his campaigns and Spanish affairs served as an introduction; then he told me of one or two things which had occurred in Madame de Maintenon's room, a recess of the Court respecting which I had little information; this inspired me with a certain amount of confidence, which was increased by the opinions he expressed about the general position of affairs.

Having thus prepared his ground, this skilful musician proceeded to touch two chords in my nature which responded as melodiously as he could wish. One was connected with the degradation of the dignity of Duke and Peer; the other with the situation of his uncle, the Cardinal, to which I must recur later on. He knew, like a good many other people, that I had the maintenance of my dignity very much at heart; and his uncle, who was proud of him, like all the rest of his family, had already told him that I had taken his part. I imagined, therefore, that our opinions on these two highly important subjects were absolutely identical; to listen to him, no one, without penetrating into the depths of his soul, could have supposed that he did not feel the warmest sympathy for the Cardinal; or that on the other point he was not thoroughly alive to what constituted the real and solid greatness of his position; with such warmth and natural indignation did he express himself on the subject. These two points were the pivots of the friendship which sprung up between us; and he soon made use of them to attain his objects.

The first matter on which he took me into his confidence was that of the relations between himself and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, which he confessed were a source of embarrassment to him. He complained of their conduct, declaring that he was not to blame, and said he would be greatly obliged if I would do what I could to set matters right; not that he had anything to gain per-
sonally by a reconciliation, for it was not in their power to help anybody; but after their former friendship it was unpleasant to be on bad terms with them, especially on account of an obscure affair like that of Renault, with which he had had little to do. I promised to speak to the Duke and Duchess of Orleans; the more willingly, because I thought they had more to gain by a reconciliation than he had; for, not being aware as yet of his real situation, I did not doubt that, with his aunt’s assistance, he would soon be restored to favour; in which case he might be useful to them.

I had little difficulty in persuading the Duchess of Orleans; but the Duke, who was still sore about the Spanish affair, held out for several days. At last he yielded, and the Duke de Noailles thanked me warmly. He then suggested that the reconciliation had better not be too open, for fear of offending his aunt. In my ignorance of his real relations with her, I attributed this caution to the fact that he knew of some reason for the dislike felt by the King and Madame de Maintenon for the Duke of Orleans beyond those of which we were aware; this made me all the more anxious to see the reconciliation effected, for I hoped he would in time be able to smooth down Madame de Maintenon, and make her less bitter. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were of the same opinion; and consented to receive M. de Noailles on condition that he came to them quietly, at a time when they were alone; there were to be no explanations, nor any allusions to the past; and, so far as possible, he was to avoid letting the public into the secret of their reconciliation. He visited them accordingly, and I heard from both sides that all passed off well. His subsequent visits were very rare; on the 1st of January his turn came for duty as Captain of the Guard, and this furnished him with an excuse which he often begged me to convey to them.

He was much pleased with this first success, which strengthened the mutual confidence between us, and he now hoped to find me equally serviceable and fortunate in bringing him into contact with the Duke de Beauvilliers. Apparently he began to be afraid lest in course of time I should find out the reason of his leaving Spain (and, indeed, I had already found it out, though I had not thought proper to tell him so), for he broached the subject of his
own accord. He said his treatment had been wholly undeserved; there had been a settled design to ruin Aguilar, whose position had aroused much jealousy, and he had been included because it was thought that Aguilar's downfall would not be complete unless he were also got rid of. He did not know, he said, what had passed between Aguilar and the King; but, as for himself, he entirely denied any intention of supplying the King with a mistress, and he had never heard his friend Aguilar suggest such a thing. He was very much annoyed when I told him that I knew all about his adventure, but that I was none the less grateful to him for telling me about it. I accepted his denial of the scheme about the mistress for what it was worth; also his fervent protests against his being supposed capable of the folly of ambitious projects in Spain, when he had everything he could wish for in France. He did not succeed in convincing me; I had heard all about it on good authority, and the anger of his aunt, formerly so blindly devoted to him, was sufficient proof that what I had heard was true; I did not, however, think it advisable to touch the sore point too roughly. I looked upon what he had done as a piece of folly on the part of a spoilt young man, and I thought the touch of the whip which had fallen on him would be a useful lesson, by which, with his natural sense and ability, he would know how to profit.

He went on with his complaints and explanations on this subject for several days before he came to the point; but while he was thus beating about the bush I began to perceive his object, and that he meant to attain it, if possible, by means of the Duke de Beauvilliers. He dilated on the Duke's merits and the impression his virtuous character had always made upon him—he knew me too well not to speak with all his eloquence on that point—and finally expressed his wish for a closer acquaintance with him. He did it with great delicacy and many protestations of his reluctance to ask me to do anything embarrassing; and, as he is fond of talking, I let him go on, and, in the meantime, considered what I had better do. What decided me was my conviction that, as Madame de Maintenon's only nephew, and, till quite recently, so great a favourite of hers, he must sooner or later be restored to her good graces, and through her to those of the King and the Dauphiness. I reflected also that the Dauphiness was
volatile, incapable of a lasting friendship, and still more of a lasting hatred; that she was surrounded by the Noailles ladies; that the Duke de Noailles, as Captain of the Guard, must be brought closely under the notice of the Dauphin when he became King; and, being a man of ability and agreeable manners, could not fail to please him in the long run. All things considered, it seemed to me that, looking to the future as well as to the present, it would be better to have him on my side, and not put him in the position of a man whose advances I had contumuously rejected.

I agreed, therefore, to do my best to bring him and the Duke de Beauvilliers together; but, as he was well acquainted with M. de Chevreuse, I asked him why he did not address himself to him as the most natural channel of communication with M. de Beauvilliers. He replied quite simply that, since his return, he had noticed a certain coldness in M. de Chevreuse; and, considering the nature of the imputations made against him, he thought he stood in need of a mediator with him almost as much as with M. de Beauvilliers; in fact, he would be greatly obliged if I would use my good offices with them both. I agreed to this; for the two Dukes were inseparable, and I knew neither of them would come to a decision with regard to the Duke de Noailles without consulting the other. I could easily see, from the warmth of his thanks, that he attached far more importance to an alliance with them than he had to his reconciliation with the Duke and Duchess of Orleans. I felt, however, that there were great difficulties to be overcome; a man with such court connections and such religious opinions as those of M. de Beauvilliers could not feel drawn towards the son of the late Marshal de Noailles, the nephew of Cardinal de Noailles and Madame de Maintenon. I addressed myself, in the first instance, to M. de Chevreuse, who listened favourably to my arguments; but when I spoke to M. de Beauvilliers I found that I had not been mistaken; my proposals were taken in bad part, and, though I insisted on his hearing me to the end, all I could obtain was that he would take a few days to think it over. However, I had made sure of the Duke de Chevreuse; and I counted on him to overcome the hesitation of his brother-in-law.

It turned out as I had expected: M. de Beauvilliers allowed me to convey an answer to the Duke de Noailles,
...couched in terms rather warmer than those of common politeness; but, at the same time, he begged me to impress upon him the importance of not arousing curiosity by any sudden change in their outward relations to each other: they must not converse more in public than heretofore, and if private visits were exchanged they must be rare, and so managed as not to excite attention. They met accordingly; and the two Dukes were so much pleased with the Duke de Noailles that they both thanked me for what I had done. His delight and gratitude to me were beyond expression. He hoped, by means of the Duke of Beauvilliers, to obtain access to the Dauphin; and in his impatience asked me straight out to do what I could for him, saying that, after the obligations he had already received from me, he could hardly expect so great a favour at once; but he would leave it to me; and after the proofs of friendship which I had already given him he felt sure I should do my best. I put it to the Duke de Beauvilliers that the value of such a service would be doubled if granted without delay; and this consideration produced its effect. Within a week the Dauphin’s dry and silent manner towards M. de Noailles underwent a change; he came and told me so himself, in transports of delight and gratitude towards me and M. de Beauvilliers. Unfortunately for everybody, it is not worth while to say anything more on this subject.  

I must now go back for a little, to Cardinal de Noailles. Our ages and positions in life were so different that I had no sort of intimacy with him; in fact, I had rather a prejudice against him, on account of the deplorable weakness he had shown in allowing the destruction of Port-Royal-des-Champs, and in the affair of du Charmel’s banishment. But the treacherous attack of the two Bishops, carried on with such hypocritical insolence on their part, had aroused my indignation; I sympathised with the Cardinal, who, though obviously innocent, was struggling in their toils, hampered by his own Christian charity and his simple reliance on the goodness of his cause, as well as by a certain natural slowness of disposition. We had many common friends of both sexes, who talked to me about the affair. Father Tellier had also artfully sounded me on the subject; but, artful as he was, he had not suc-

---

1 Because the Dauphin died so soon afterwards.
ceeded in disguising the rascality of the proceedings. He had persuaded the King to forbid the Cardinal to appear at Court. This shocked me so much that I went to the archiepiscopal residence one morning at the Cardinal's hour for receiving visitors, and assured him of my sympathy with him in his annoyances. He was extremely gratified by my visit, and especially by my disregard of personal consequences in going to his house so openly, as he told me himself. He talked to me at some length about his affair; and from that moment an intimacy sprung up between us which became closer as time went on, and ended only with his death. It was not till some time afterwards that the King deputed the Dauphin to inquire into the affair.

No sooner had the Court returned to Versailles from Fontainebleau than the mine, so artfully prepared, exploded, and produced all the effect which the engineers had anticipated. The King was overwhelmed with hypocritical letters from Bishops trembling for the faith; who, finding it gravely imperilled by Cardinal de Noailles, had, as they declared, no other resource than to throw themselves at the feet of the Church's eldest son, the destroyer of heresies, the Constantine, the Theodosius of our age; to implore that protection which he never refused to sound and wholesome doctrine. These pathetic entreaties were supported by representations of the terror felt by poor unknown Bishops at finding themselves suddenly called upon to dispute with the Archbishop of the capital see, adorned with the Roman purple, and rich in all the influence which family connections and friends could bestow. There was a terrible commotion; and the King, to whom Father Tellier brought fresh handfuls of these letters every day, really believed that the cause of true religion was lost.

But in the midst of their triumph, the conspirators met with an accident which would have ruined them if the Cardinal had only known how to profit by it. It happened that the original letter from Father Tellier to the Bishop of Clermont, begging him to write to the King, and enclosing a draft of what he was to say both to the King and himself, fell into the Cardinal's hands. No exposure could be more complete; the plot was laid bare, and it was impossible for its authors to deny or extenuate it. The Cardinal had only to go to the King and read these
imported documents to him, without, however, letting them go out of his own possession; comment briefly on the treacherous scheme devised by his enemies, regardless of the repose, not only of the Church, but of the King himself; and, finally, demand justice for himself and the banishment of Father Tellier. If he had done so, and afterwards held up the plot to the deserved indignation of the public, Father Tellier would have been ruined, and the Cardinal himself in a firmer position than ever.

Unfortunately, he made too sure that he had his enemies in his grasp; instead of going to the King at once, he waited for his usual day for an audience; and, in the meantime, talked of the affair, and showed the documents to various persons. Father Tellier got wind of it; the extremity of the danger gave him fresh energy; he was beforehand with the King, and such was his influence over him that he contrived to bring him round to his side. The Cardinal found himself forestalled, and was thunderstruck at the King’s cold reception of such a barefaced imposture. Yet, if he had only been able to see it, the King was shaken and disturbed in his mind; he should have made a vigorous appeal to him on the spot, and he would have carried his point by assault; instead of doing so, he behaved with meekness and submission, and thus threw away all his advantage. Father Tellier, who, notwithstanding his effrontery and cunning, had trembled for the consequences of this interview, breathed again when he saw that nothing followed. He turned the interval of a week which elapsed before the Cardinal’s next audience to good account, and he and his friends got off with the most terrible fright they ever had in all their lives.

The Dauphin was not to be taken in like the King; he and the Dauphiness talked over this affair quite openly, and he told me, and others also, that Father Tellier ought to have been dismissed. This, and other remarks of his, made me suspect that he had imbibed a strong distrust of the Jesuits, so far as this affair was concerned. This suspicion was confirmed during the very last interview I had with him on business, which was only five or six days before the Dauphiness was attacked by her fatal illness. The Cardinal’s affair had not been touched upon at all; but, as we were putting away our papers, he mentioned it, and we had rather a long conversation on the subject.
during which he said a very remarkable thing. Praising the piety, candour, and gentleness of Cardinal de Noailles, "Nothing will ever make me believe," he said, "that he is a Jansenist!" This conversation ended by his ordering me to read up the history of the liberties of the Gallican Church, and to make myself master of the subject. I was also to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the affair of Cardinal de Noailles; for he said it was progressing far too slowly, and he intended to finish it as soon as possible with my assistance. He had occasionally mentioned the affair to me, but had never given the slightest hint that he meant to consult me about it; I attribute this design to the suspicions aroused in his mind by the discovery of Father Tellier's letters. He ordered me to go to Paris and consult the best authorities; and also to obtain all books likely to throw a light on the subject of Rome, and the liberties of our national Church. I promised him to lose no time in carrying out his orders; in fact, I was just setting out for Paris when I was stopped by the news of the Dauphiness's illness; and a few days later the whole design was brought to an end by the most fatal misfortune which could have happened to France.

The first days of the New Year were marked by a change in the office of First-President of the Parliament of Paris. Pelletier, who had succeeded Harlay in that post, had for some time felt unequal to his duties; his nerves had been shattered by the accident, which I recorded in its proper place, when the floor of his dining-room gave way while he was giving a dinner-party; his health had broken down, and he sent in his resignation on New Year's Eve. Through the influence of M. du Maine, to whom it was important to have a First-President well inclined towards him, the post was given to President Mesmes. This magistrate will figure so often in the course of these Memoirs that it is necessary to describe him.

These Mesmes are peasants from Mont-de-Marsan; in spite of the pedigree fabricated and circulated by the more fortunate branch of the family, they still have relations in that district who have never emerged from their original condition, and are liable to the poll-tax. The first member of the family who did not wear wooden shoes was professor of law in the University of Toulouse; he was employed in her affairs by the Queen of Navarre, sister to Francis I, and
by her influence was appointed Civil-Lieutenant of Paris. He had three grandsons, who did a good deal to raise the family. The eldest, the Sieur de Mesmes, was a deputy of the tiers état at the last assembly of the States-General held at Paris in 1614; he died in 1650, having married an heiress, the only daughter of Gabriel de Fosse, Knight of the Order, and widow of Gilles de St. Gelais; and left two daughters, one of whom married the Marshal-Duke de Vivonne. Madame de Mesmes by her first marriage had an only daughter, the Duchess de Créquy, Lady of Honour to the Queen. The next brother was the celebrated d’Avaux, who assumed the title of Count on the strength of his diplomatic missions. He was Registrar of the Order, and Superintendent of Finance; but in the latter office he was merely a figure-head, as he himself confesses in his letters; Servien, with whom he was always on bad terms, had all the real authority. He died unmarried in 1650.

The third brother was known as the Sieur d’Irval, but he took the name of Mesmes on the death of his eldest brother, whom he succeeded as président-à-mortier. He had two sons; the younger, who never married, was that self-styled Count d’Avaux who accompanied King James to Ireland as Ambassador, and was afterwards Ambassador in Holland; I have often had occasion to mention him; he died in 1709. The elder married the daughter of La Bazinière, trésorier de l’épargne, and Grand-Master of the Ceremonies to the Order.

La Bazinière got into difficulties, was arrested, and sent to the Bastille. He was a rich financier of luxurious tastes and expensive habits; he played high, often at the Queen’s table; he would sometimes leave her in the most familiar manner before the game was finished, and make her wait while he went out to regale himself on refreshments which he had brought into the anteroom, and which he invited the ladies to share. He was so good-natured and obliging that people overlooked impertinences of this sort; very hospitable and generous, and so popular that everybody did what they could to save him. It was clearly proved that there was no dishonesty on his part, only gross carelessness and confusion in his accounts; after a time he was released, and, though reduced to comparative poverty, he was always welcomed in the best society for the remainder of his life, which lasted some fifteen or
sixteen years. I have seen him visiting my father with a neat equipage; and, though very old, he was extremely tidy and well-got-up. His son-in-law, who predeceased him, left three sons; the eldest was the new First-President in question; the second was the Abbé de Mesmes, a very debauched fellow; the third was a Knight of Malta, of much the same character, who afterwards became Maltese Ambassador through his brother's influence, and was loaded with benefices and commanderies. There were also two daughters; one an Ursuline nun, the other, Madame de Fontenilles, whom I shall have occasion to mention. These necessary preliminaries concerning his family having been disposed of, I now come to the First-President himself.

During his father's lifetime he was known as the Seigneur de Neuichatel. He was a man of colossal figure; his manners were attractive, and so was his face, though strongly marked by small-pox; as he advanced in years there was something very dignified in his bearing. He never cared for studying anything but the ways of good society, in which he became very popular; he obtained admission to the best and most lively Court circles. Of other matters he never learnt anything at all. He was extremely debauched, and his father took such a dislike to him in consequence that he hardly dared show his face in his presence. The father used his stick to him freely, and would sometimes throw a piece at his head at dinner, in the presence of distinguished guests, who used to interfere and try to reconcile them; but the son was incorrigible, and thought of nothing but amusing himself and spending money. Living in this licentious way he became intimate with the most distinguished young men about the Court, and cultivated their society as sedulously as he avoided that of lawyers, or anything savouring of the law-courts. Even when he became président-à-mortier by his father's death he made little alteration in his mode of life; he liked to fancy himself a seigneur, and lived accordingly.

By degrees he made the acquaintance of M. and Madame du Maine, who, for reasons of their own, wanted friends in the Parliament, and were glad to have a président-à-mortier in their train. He, on his part, thought the King's favourite son would be an influential patron, and set himself to gratify all M. du Maine's fancies. He introduced his brother, the Chevalier, to him; and they were invited to
all the festivities at Sceaux, which always lasted till daylight. The Chevalier was not ashamed to take part in comedies, nor the President to play the buffoon, though only among a select few; he actually allowed himself to be painted in an historical picture, wearing a mountebank's costume, side by side with the Swiss porter in his livery. This exposed him to a good deal of ridicule in society, and greatly offended his colleagues in the Parliament. He knew it; but, with his ambitious views for the future, he dared not break away from M. and Madame du Maine. As he advanced in seniority, however, among the présidents-à-mortier he realised that it would be wise to frequent the law-courts rather more; and, while still keeping up his connection with the great world, he condescended to behave rather more graciously to barristers and other lawyers of distinction; he also set himself to learn the jargon of the courts, and to find out the weak sides of his more influential colleagues.

He was a very clever man, of a ready wit and great acuteness; he spoke easily and agreeably, and was always ready with a repartee. But he carried audacity to the verge of effrontery; he knew no shame, had no heart and no sense of honour; in his manners and morals he was a coxcomb. He cared nothing for his word, and would throw over his friends or be faithful to them as best suited his own convenience. With all this, he was excellent company and a charming guest; he had exquisite taste in furniture, in jewellery, in the arrangement of festivities; in everything, in short, which society likes. He was affable and polite; charming in his manners, though not towards everybody indiscriminately. Lastly, he was vainglorious in the extreme, yet he always seemed to have a respect for the real nobility, and the attention he showed to a Minister or any one in high position at Court was almost servile. Nothing hits off his chief absurdity better than one of those noëls published in great numbers one year, making fun of many persons well known at Court ¹ and in Parisian society.

¹ Here is one made about Saint-Simon himself:

Suivi de sa cohorte
Saint-Simon éperdu
S'écriait de la porte:
"Eh quoi! point de carreaux!
Nous voulons soutenir les droits de la pairie.
Ici nous protestons,
who were supposed to be brought up one after the other to the manger at Bethlehem. I forget exactly how these verses ran, but they began: "I am M. de Mesmes," and the last line was: "I come to invite the Babe to a Lenten supper." Enough about this magistrate, whose great ambition was to pass himself off as a man of quality and a courtier, and who was often laughed at for his pains by those who really were so.

During the first week of this year Madame de Mailly, Lady-in-Waiting to the Dauphiness, had to submit to an unpleasant mortification. The expenditure on the Dauphiness's wardrobe was more than double what it had been in the time of the last Queen, in spite of which she was so badly supplied that it was a public scandal; every day her ladies had to lend her cloaks, muffles, and other feminine adornments. Madame de Mailly was indolent, and left the management of the wardrobe entirely to one of her maids. Desmarets had continual squabbles with the Lady-in-Waiting about the heavy expenses, for she used to importune him for money with considerable haughtiness; at last he grew tired of it, and complained to the King and Madame de Maintenon. They consulted the Dauphiness, who had borne with Madame de Mailly for many years, but whose patience was at last exhausted. The end of it was that the administration of the wardrobe was given to Madame Quentin, First Chambermaid; and Madame de Mailly's maid was dismissed, for it was discovered that she had been feathering her own nest at the expense of the Dauphiness and the tradesmen. Madame de Mailly wept and declared that she was disgraced. She went to Madame

Don, don,
Et n'adorerons pas,
La, la,
Le Dieu, fils de Marie!"

(Followed by his train,
Saint-Simon, horror-stricken,
Cries out from the threshold:
"What! no hassocks!
We must maintain the privileges of the Peerage.
We hereby protest,
And refuse to adore
God, the son of Mary!")

He would not adore the Divine Babe because no hassock had been placed for him, to which, as a Duke and Peer, he was entitled at public worship!
de Maintenon and made such a fuss that some trifling concessions were made to her; but she did not succeed in recovering any real authority over the wardrobe. Nobody pitied her; for her excessive pride had alienated everybody, and, moreover, people were indignant at seeing the Dauphiness so badly served.

Another domestic storm arose about the same time. The Duchess of Berry, who had complete ascendancy over her father and mother, was herself governed by one of her maids, a very clever woman in an evil sort of way, named de Vienne: her mother had been wet-nurse to the Duke of Orleans, and she herself was treated by him with some consideration, for at one time he had found her to his liking. The Queen-mother had given Monsieur a very beautiful and valuable pearl necklace; the Duchess of Orleans was very fond of it, and used often to wear it. That was quite enough to make the Duchess of Berry want it herself; to annoy her mother the more, she asked her for it, knowing that she would meet with a refusal. She then told her that she meant to have it all the same, for it really belonged to her father, and she would get it from him; which in fact she did. There was a stormy scene between them. The Duchess of Berry wore the necklace continually, and made a point of showing it to everybody. Matters went so far that Madame spoke to the King about it, and apparently she did not confine herself to the business of the necklace. The Duchess of Berry could not face the King's displeasure, and took to her bed, where the Dauphiness went several times to admonish her. The Duke of Berry was too much in love not to share her grief; and the Duke of Orleans was almost distracted among them all. Matters much more serious than pearl necklaces were in question. The King insisted on the dismissal of the chambermaid, and spoke roughly to the Duke of Berry when he tried to put in a word for her.

The Duchess of Berry was beside herself with rage at this order, which was an intolerable affront to her pride; but it was in vain for her to shriek and weep, and anathematise her father and her husband for sacrificing her to their weakness; the woman had to go, and she herself was forced to beg her mother's pardon and restore the necklace. The Duchess of Orleans received her with great kindness, which was entirely thrown away, and promised
to make her peace with the King. She took her into his
dprivate room two days afterwards, because the King in-
sisted on making her feel her disgrace. He spoke to her
in a fatherly manner, but at the same time as her sovereign;
after a few days she reappeared at his supper and in public,
as usual; but she had great difficulty in concealing the
rage which devoured her.

Madame de Saint-Simon, who held herself, as far as
possible, aloof from the affairs of a household where she
had everything to lose and nothing to gain, had no part
in this adventure except that she was the unwilling witness
of floods of tears and transports of fury. For some time
I had made a point of never speaking to the Duke of
Orleans about anything which concerned his daughter, and
he did not venture to say a word to me, but I never saw
a man look so ill at ease. The story of all that passed in
the Duchess of Berry's rooms would fill a volume, and
would certainly astonish my readers; but, after all, it is
hardly worth writing. I content myself with recording
such matters as became public, or were for some reason
more particularly worthy of note.

At the beginning of this year the King adopted a new cus-
tom of dining once or twice a week in Madame de Mainte-
non's rooms, and he continued to do so for the rest of
his life. In summer these dinners took place at Trianon
or Marly, but he did not sleep there. The guests were
very few, and always the same: the Dauphiness, who,
unfortunately, was present only on the first occasions;
Madame de Maintenon; Mesdames Dangeau, de Lévi, d'O,
and de Caylus. No one was admitted, not even the maître
d'hôtel on duty; the dishes were handed in at the door to
Madame de Maintenon's servants. These dinners were
prolonged sometimes half an hour more than the usual
time; when the weather was bad the King played after-
wards at brelan or reversi with the same ladies, for very
small stakes. The chosen ladies were a good deal envied,
but this favour led to no others; they did not even ven-
ture to speak to the King at dinner. About this time
several persons of both sexes were expelled from Paris
for keeping faro banks; the game was very properly pro-
hibited, and this example caused it to cease altogether.

On Monday, the 18th of January, the King went to Marly;
I purposely note this visit. The Court had hardly settled
down there when Boudin, First Physician to the Dauphiness, whom I have mentioned elsewhere, warned her to be on her guard, for he had received certain information that an attempt was to be made to poison her and the Dauphin. Not content with speaking to her and to the Dauphin, he talked of it publicly in the Saloon with a terrified air, and alarmed everybody. The King sent for him; he persisted that the information was to be trusted, though he did not know where it came from—very contradictory statements, for if he did not know the source of his information how could he tell that it was trustworthy? His friends persuaded him to hold his tongue; but the matter had already become public. The curious part of it is that, within twenty-four hours after Boudin’s statement, the Dauphin received a similar warning from the King of Spain, equally vague, mentioning no names, but assuring him that the information was genuine. In this letter the Dauphin was the only person clearly mentioned, the Dauphiness was only hinted at. So, at least, the Dauphin told me; and I never heard that he said more to any one else. People affected to despise these mysterious warnings; nevertheless, everybody was struck by them, and a cloud of suspicion and terror seemed to brood over the ordinary occupations and amusements of the Court.

D’Antin lost his eldest son, Gondrin, who left a family by his wife, a sister of the Duke de Noailles; the same who, long afterwards, married the Count de Toulouse. She was so afflicted by the loss of her husband that she fell ill, and her life was despaired of. The last Sacraments were brought to her bedside, all her family being present. Her mother, the Maréchale de Noailles, was kneeling at the foot of the bed in floods of tears: in the transports of her grief she prayed God, out loud, to take her and all her other children if He would only spare this one. La Vallière, who overheard her, came up to her and said, in a lamentable voice: "Do you include your sons-in-law in that offer, Madame?" None of those present could resist an outburst of laughter, in which the Maréchale herself joined; the story immediately went the rounds of the Court, and, as the invalid soon recovered her health, everybody laughed heartily at it.

Rally, First Equerry to the Duke of Berry, died rather suddenly at Marly. The post carried with it considerable
advantages which were an attraction to persons of the highest quality. The Chevalier de Roye and the Marquis de Lévi applied for it, among others. Both received a distinct promise from the Duchess of Berry, and talked of it confidentially among their friends; but, while each of them made sure of receiving it, d’Antin applied to the Duchess of Berry on behalf of his cousin, Sainte-Maure, who had remained behind at Versailles unwell; and the appointment was immediately given to him. The other applicants were extremely angry; not content with letting the public know of the promise made to each of them, they told the Duchess of Berry herself what they thought of her conduct. Madame de Lévi and Madame de Roucy also spoke to her in the most haughty manner, telling her that henceforth they would make their curtsies to her in public, but would never see her anywhere else, for they wanted nothing from her and could not trust her. She was very angry, and complained of being treated with disrespect; but she was neither liked nor respected, and no one attached any importance to her. People knew too well how matters stood between her and the King, Madame de Maintenon, and the Dauphiness. The King declined to interfere, and the general verdict was that she had only got her deserts. She tried afterwards to make up to Madame de Lévi, but her advances were received with contempt. She never forgave this; but Madame de Lévi only laughed at her, and went on talking about her as before; rather too freely, perhaps, and she treated her with too little respect when they happened to meet.

I have so often spoken of Marshal Cattinat, his virtue, his modesty, his unselfishness, and his great talents as a commander, that I need only note the fact of his death at a very advanced age at his house near St. Denis, which he had not quitted for some years. He had never been married, and was not well off. He led a simple, frugal life, at peace with himself, and holding the world’s opinion in contempt; he recalled the memory of those great men who, after the best-deserved triumphs, used to return quietly to the plough, caring little for the ingratitude of those Romans whom they had served so well. Cattinat’s philosophy was conjoined with sincere piety. He was a man of much ability and sound common sense. He never forgot the humbleness of his origin; his dress, his equipages, and his
household were all simple in the extreme, as were his appearance and bearing. In person he was tall, thin, and dark-complexioned; his air thoughtful and rather slow; his eyes were fine and full of intelligence. He deplored the errors of the time, which he saw follow each other in endless succession: the deliberate discouragement of all zeal; the spread of luxury; the prevailing ignorance; the confusion of ranks; the inquisitorial methods of the police. Looking at the signs of the times, he thought he discovered every element of the impending destruction of the State; and used to say that the kingdom would never be replaced on a sound foundation till there had been a very dangerous outburst of disorder.
CHAPTER XVI

1712

The Dauphiness unwell on arriving at Marly—A shooting accident—A mysterious snuff-box—The Dauphiness becomes worse—The last Sacraments suggested—She refuses her usual confessor—Father Noel sent for—The Dauphin also ill—The last Sacraments administered to the Dauphiness—Her death—Description of her person and character—Anecdotes about her—Grief and gloom of the Court.

As I have already mentioned, the King went to Marly on the 18th of January. The Dauphiness arrived there early, and went to bed immediately, as her face was very much swelled; she got up again at seven, because the King wished her to do the honours in the Saloon. She played at cards with her head all wrapped up; saw the King in Madame de Maintenon’s room shortly before his supper, and then went to bed. Next day she only rose for a short time; played cards and saw the King, and had her supper in bed. On the 20th she was better, and the swelling had gone down; she was rather subject to it on account of her bad teeth. On the following days she went about as usual.

On Saturday the 30th the Dauphin and the Duke of Berry went out with M. le Duc for a battue. There was a hard frost; it chanced that M. le Duc and the Duke of Berry were placed at a considerable distance from each other on opposite sides of a sheet of water. The Duke of Berry fired, a shot glanced from the ice and struck M. le Duc in the eye, destroying the sight. Next day the Duke of Berry went to throw himself at the feet of Madame la Duchesse; he had not ventured to do so on the very day of the accident, nor had he seen M. le Duc, who bore his misfortune with much patience. The King, the Dauphin, and the Dauphiness all went to see him on Monday, the 1st of February, after which the King returned to Versailles. The Duke of Berry was terribly grieved about the
accident. M. le Duc suffered a good deal, and it was some time before he was quite well.

On Friday, the 5th of February, the Duke de Noailles gave the Dauphiness a handsome snuff-box, full of excellent Spanish snuff; she took some, and thought it very good; this was towards the end of the forenoon. On going into her own room, which nobody entered, she put the box on a table and left it there. Towards evening she had some shivering fits, and went to bed; she was too unwell to get up again to go to the King's room after supper. She was feverish all night, but rose at her usual hour next morning, and passed the day as usual; towards evening, however, she again became feverish. Next day, Sunday the 7th of February, the fever seemed to have diminished; but about six o'clock in the evening she was seized with a sharp pain below the temple; the part affected was only about the size of a small coin, but the agony was so great that when the King came to see her she had to beg him not to come in. The excruciating pain lasted without intermission till next day; snuff and smoking tobacco were tried, as well as opium, and she was twice bled in the arm; but nothing did any good. When the pain had subsided a little she seemed more feverish; she said she had never suffered so much in child-birth.

This violent attack of illness set all the attendants talking about the snuff-box which the Duke de Noailles had given

1 The Duke of Berry seems to have been a dangerous shot. When a boy of thirteen he wounded a beater while shooting rabbits with his brothers; his tutor took his gun away, whereupon he flew into a violent passion. For this double offence the King ordered him to be confined to his room for a week. After he was grown up he shot another beater at Fontainebleau, and wounded him so severely that he had to give him an annual pension for the rest of his life. He was a very good shot, however. On one occasion his shoulder had become so sore from firing that he was unable to use a gun, and went out with a pistol. He succeeded in killing thirty-eight pheasants, flying; and two or three days later, being still disabled, he killed seventy-two.

There was very good shooting round Paris. Saint-Simon, in another place, says that game did not thrive at Versailles, and had to be hand-reared; if so, they must have turned out birds in enormous quantities, for Dangeau mentions that on one occasion the King, while shooting in his private park, put up 5,000 partridges and 2,000 pheasants at once. Dangeau often records heavy bags. On the 9th of August, 1689, 1,200 head were killed on the plain of St. Denis; the number of guns is not mentioned; but Monseigneur killed over 300 to his own gun, and M. de la Rochefoucauld over 200. On another occasion over 1,500 partridges were killed there, of which the Duke of Berry killed nearly 300; but Dangeau says he was not shooting so well as usual, for he fired nearly 700 shots.
her. As she was going to bed on the Friday, the day on which she was taken ill, she had asked Madame de Lévi to bring the box from her room, telling her she would find it on the table. Madame de Lévi went, but the box was not there; and, to cut the story short, though it was searched for everywhere no one ever saw it again. This mysterious disappearance, coupled with the sudden illness of the Dauphiness, gave rise to the darkest suspicions. They did not touch the person who gave her the box, or if they did they were hushed up so completely that I never heard of them; in any case, the rumours alluded to were confined to a very small circle. The King was not aware that the Princess was in the habit of taking snuff. She did it openly, because Madame de Maintenon knew all about it; but if it had come to the King's ears he would have been very angry. It was for fear of getting her into trouble that the story of the box was hushed up.

During the night of Monday and the whole of the next day she was very drowsy. The King came frequently to her bedside; she was in a high fever, and during her brief waking intervals her mind wandered a little. Some marks which appeared on the skin gave rise to the hope that it might turn out to be measles, for the complaint was very prevalent at Versailles and Paris; but this hope soon vanished. She had a bad night on Tuesday; the King came to see her early on Wednesday morning; an emetic had just been administered, which produced all the effect that could be desired, but it gave no relief. The Dauphin did not stir from her bedside, till at last the doctors forced him to go into the gardens for fresh air, which he greatly needed; but his anxiety drove him back almost immediately. She had another very bad night; at nine on Thursday morning the King went to her room; Madame de Maintenon hardly ever left it, except while he was there. The Princess was so ill that it was suggested to her that she should receive the Sacraments. She seemed surprised, and asked questions about her condition. These were answered in such a way as not to alarm her more than was unavoidable; nevertheless, the proposal was insisted on, and she was told that there should be no delay. She thanked her advisers for their sincerity, and said she would compose her mind.

Shortly afterwards it was feared that the end was ap-
proaching. Father de la Rue, a Jesuit, was her confessor, and she had always seemed to like him; he drew near and exhorted her not to delay her confession. She looked at him and said she understood; but that was all. He then proposed that it should be done at once, to which she made no reply. As a man of tact he saw what she meant, and like a gentleman he gave way at once. He said perhaps she had some repugnance to making her confession to him; he entreated her to do exactly as she wished, and not to be afraid of any consequences; he would take all the responsibility, and would go at once to fetch any priest she liked to name. Then she said she wished to confess to M. Bailly, priest of the mission of the parish of Versailles. He was a man highly respected, confessor to many persons in regular attendance at Court; but, to use the language of the day, he was not clear of the suspicion of Jansenism. Unfortunately, he had gone to Paris. The Princess seemed disappointed, and disposed to await his return; but, on Father la Rue remonstrating with her, she asked for a priest named Father Noël; Father la Rue immediately went in search of him, and brought him to her bedside.

It is easy to imagine the sensation caused by this change of confessors at a moment so critical and terrible, and the surmises to which it gave birth. I shall return to the subject later on, for I must not interrupt a story so full of painful interest. The Dauphin had broken down. He had concealed his own illness as long as possible in order to remain by the sick-bed; but he was in a high fever, which could no longer be disguised, and the doctors forced him away to his own room, being anxious to spare him the melancholy scene which they foresaw only too clearly.

The confession lasted a long time; Extreme Unction was administered immediately afterwards, followed by the sacred Viaticum, which the King went to meet at the foot of the great staircase. An hour later the Dauphiness asked for the prayers for those at the point of death. She was told that she was not yet in extremity, and she was advised, with consoling expressions, to try to sleep. Seven doctors were called in to consult, in the presence of the King and Madame de Maintenon; some of whom had been sent for from Paris. They advised unanimously that the patient should be bled in the foot before the next access of fever, and, in case it proved unsuccessful, that an emetic should be
administered very early next morning. The bleeding took place at seven in the evening; it was followed by a feverish fit, which the doctors considered less violent than the preceding ones; nevertheless, the night was terrible. The King came very early to see the Dauphiness; at nine o'clock the emetic was administered, but produced little effect. She grew worse and worse as the day went on, with few intervals of consciousness. Towards evening the attendants completely lost their heads, and let a number of people into the room, although the King was present. Shortly before she breathed her last he went out, got into his carriage at the foot of the great staircase, with Madame de Maintenon, and drove off to Marly. Both were plunged in the most bitter grief, and they had not the courage to go to the Dauphin.

Although the late Princess was but a child when she came to France, she had been well trained for her position, and no one ever profited better by the instruction she had received. Her sagacious father, who knew our Court thoroughly, had carefully described it to her, and pointed out the only means by which she could make herself happy there. Her natural cleverness and quickness of perception enabled her to take advantage of his counsels; her many amiable qualities won all hearts; and the influence which she acquired over the King and Madame de Maintenon, and over her husband, procured her the homage of all the ambitious. From the first moment of her arrival she had set herself to acquire this influence; and so long as she lived she never lost sight of the necessity for maintaining it. She was gentle, timid, and so kind-hearted that she could not bear giving pain to any one; but she was adroit. Lively and volatile as she was, she had nevertheless the capacity to conceive far-sighted designs, and to carry them out with determination and perseverance; if necessary for her object, she could submit without apparent effort to the most irksome constraint, though no one suffered more cruelly from it than she did. She was thoroughly unselfish; to give way to others came naturally to her; she did so even with the members of her own household.

Strictly speaking, she was ugly. She had pendulous cheeks; her forehead was too prominent, her nose of no particular shape, and her lips were thick; she had dark brown hair, with well-placed eyebrows of the same colour;
and her eyes were very fine and expressive. She had lost many of her teeth, and those which remained were much decayed, a defect which she used to make fun of herself. She had a lovely skin and complexion; not much bosom, but what there was was admirable. Her neck was long, with a suspicion of goitre which was rather becoming; she carried her head in a manner at once graceful and dignified. Her smile was most expressive; her figure tall, slim, and perfectly modelled; and her gait was that of a goddess moving over clouds. In short, she was charming to the last degree; every step was graceful, and every gesture; she could not talk of the commonest things without pleasing. She was delightfully natural; sometimes she had an air of ingenuous simplicity, always preserved, however, from insipidity by her unmistakable wit and intelligence. Her charming ease of manner was not only attractive in itself, but she seemed to communicate it to every one who came near her. Though she never seemed to take any trouble about it, she tried to make everybody like her, even the most insignificant and apparently useless people. To watch her in conversation, one would have thought that her whole attention was given to the person with whom she happened to be talking. Her youthful gaiety and vivacity were animating and infectious; light and active as a nymph, she seemed to be everywhere at once; she was like a whirlwind sweeping about, imparting life and movement to everything in its path. She was the star of every public function, the life and soul of every festivity; when she appeared at a ball every eye was fascinated by her graceful dancing. She was fond of cards; it amused her to play for small stakes, for she found amusement in everything, but she preferred to play high, and she was a capital player, quick and accurate; a good loser, and punctilious in paying what she had lost. But she was just as cheerful, and seemed to be quite as much amused, when she spent an afternoon, as she sometimes did, in reading and conversing with her "serious ladies," as people used to call the older Ladies of the Palace.

She spared no pains, and often risked her health, to please the King and Madame de Maintenon; her complaisance for them was indefatigable, and long acquaintance with their characters had taught her how to regulate her behaviour with them; to be lively or quiet, as suited their mood.
For their sake she would sacrifice any pleasure or amusement, even, I repeat, her health itself. In this way she became familiar with them to a degree never approached by any of the King's children, not even by his bastards. In public her behaviour to the King was grave and deferential, and she treated Madame de Maintenon, whom she always called "Aunt," with timid respect; in private, she used to flutter round them, chattering; perched herself on the arms of their chairs by turns, sometimes on their knees; she would throw her arms round their necks, kiss them, caress them, rumple their clothes, rummage the papers and letters on the table, and, if she saw that they were in a good humour, read them—sometimes rather against their will—and discuss their contents. She was always admitted, even when couriers arrived with important despatches, and could obtain access to the King at any moment, even when he was holding a Council.

She might, if she had chosen, have made or marred the fortunes of a good many people, including even Ministers; but her natural inclination was always to help those in difficulties, and find excuses for them; the only exceptions were when she had taken a violent dislike to any one, as she did to Pontchartrain, "your nasty one-eyed man," as she called him to the King; or when she had a serious reason for desiring his downfall, as in the case of Chamillart. She used to say to the King and Madame de Maintenon anything that came into her head. Hearing them one evening speaking in friendly terms of the English Government (for it was at the time when we were hoping to obtain peace through the good offices of Queen Anne), "Aunt," she broke in, "it cannot be denied that England is better governed under a Queen than under a King; and, Aunt, do you know why that is?" fluttering and frisking about the room as she spoke. "It is because under a King the country is really governed by women, and under a Queen by men!" The odd part of it is that they both laughed, and quite agreed with her.

In serious memoirs such as these I should never venture to record the anecdote which follows, if it were not the best possible illustration of the freedom of her manners with them. I have described elsewhere the arrangement of Madame de Maintenon's room, and the position of the chairs in which she and the King sat on each side of the fireplace.
One evening, when a play was to be acted at Versailles, and the Princess had been chattering away in her usual fashion, Nanon, Madame de Maintenon's old chambermaid whom I have mentioned several times, came into the room. The Princess, who was in full dress, with her jewels on, went at once and stood with her back to the fire, leaning against a little screen which stood between the two chairs. Nanon, with her hand in her pocket, went and knelt behind her. The King, who was nearest to them, asked what they were doing. The Princess laughed, and said it was only what they often did when she was going to the play. The King persisted in his inquiries. "Do you really want to know?" said she. "Well, as you have never noticed it before, I will tell you that I am having an enema administered." "What!" said the King, in fits of laughter, "you are actually taking an enema, there, on the spot?" "Yes, indeed I am!" she replied. "And how do you manage it?" he asked, while all four laughed heartily. Nanon used to bring the syringe under her apron, raise the Princess's petticoats a little, while she held them as if warming herself, and slip the syringe underneath. The petticoats fell down again, and Nanon carried off the syringe as she had brought it. All passed quite unperceived; they either took no notice, or thought that Nanon was making some adjustment of her dress. It is an odd thing, but she was in no hurry to get rid of the water thus injected; she used to retain it throughout the play, and sometimes till after the King's supper; she said it kept her cool, and prevented the stuffiness of the theatre from giving her a headache. She used to go on just the same after this discovery.¹

The Princess thoroughly appreciated the positions of Madame de Maintenon and Mademoiselle Choin. One evening, as she was preparing to go to bed, where the Duke of Burgundy was awaiting her, she was chatting with Madame de Nogaret and Madame de Chastelet, seated on her close-stool (for it was there she liked best to talk freely), and she expressed her wonder at the astonishing careers of those two old witches. Then she said, laughing, "I should like to die before the Duke of Burgundy, provided that I could see what went on; I am sure he would marry a Sister of Charity, or one of the sisters who guard the grating

¹ Madame also tells this story, with strong disapproval. She says it is an illustration of the Dauphiness' dirty habits.
at the convent of Sainte-Marie!" Madame de Nogaret told me the story next day. Though she sometimes ran great risks by trusting too blindly to her husband’s passion for her and to the discreet silence of everybody who came near him, she took as much trouble to please him as she did to please the King himself, and felt the keenest interest in his success and personal reputation. We have seen how deeply distressed she was by the events of the campaign of Lille and their consequences; and how usefully and energetically she worked to restore the credit of the Duke of Burgundy. The King could not do without her. Very often his tenderness and consideration for her made him insist on her going to some ball or party, but he found everything dull while she was away; even if she was absent from his public supper, which very rarely happened, he was graver and more silent than usual. Accordingly, though she delighted in going to entertainments, she was careful not to indulge in them too much; indeed, she never did so without the King’s express wish. She made a point of seeing him when she went and when she returned; and, if some ball in winter kept her up too late, she still contrived to be at his bedside as soon as he was awake, to amuse him with an account of the party.

I have said so much elsewhere of her difficult relations with Monseigneur and his private circle that I will not return to the subject now; I will merely say that she took such pains to conceal the constraint she felt at Meudon that the bulk of the Court never found it out; she very cleverly adopted an air of freedom with him, and of familiarity with the persons in his Court most opposed to her, though she had to proceed with the greatest caution. She was perfectly conscious of the hostility of those who surrounded Monseigneur, and after his death she had quite made up her mind to pay them out some day. One evening, at Fontainebleau, where all the Princesses and their ladies sat in the King’s room after supper, she had been chattering away and playing all sorts of childish tricks to amuse the King, when she noticed the Princess of Conti and Madame la Duchesse making signs to each other and shrugging their shoulders with contemptuous disdain. When the King went out as usual, to feed his dogs in a back room, she took Madame de Saint-Simon by one hand and Madame de Lévi by the other, and, indicating the Princess of Conti
and Madame la Duchesse, who were at no great distance:
“Did you see them? did you see them?” she said. “I
know as well as they do that I have been behaving in a
silly and absurd way; but it amuses the King, and noise
is necessary for him.” Then, leaning on their arms, she
began jumping and singing: “Oh, I laugh at them! Oh,
I do not care a straw for them! and I shall be their Queen;
and I do not care what they do, now or ever!” The two
ladies kept whispering to her to hold her tongue, for the
Princesses could hear her, and everybody was looking at
her; they told her, in fact, that she was crazy (for she
never minded what they said to her); but she only jumped
the more and kept on singing louder than ever: “Oh,
what do I care about them! I laugh at them, and I shall
be their Queen!” and she only stopped when the King
came back.

Alas! so she thought, the charming Princess! and who
would not have thought so too? Within a very short time
it pleased God to dispose otherwise, to our great mis-
fortune. She was so far from foreseeing her early death
that on Candlemas Day, as she was sitting with Madame
de Saint-Simon, waiting till it was time to go to hear the
sermon, she began talking of the number of people she had
known about the Court who were now dead; and went on
to discuss what she would do when she grew old, and the
sort of life she would lead; saying that Madame de Saint-
Simon and Madame de Lausun would be almost the only
persons left of those she had known in her young days, and
they would have to talk to each other of those old times;
and so on, till they went to church.

She was really fond of the Duke of Berry, and at one
time liked the Duchess too, and hoped to treat her like a
daughter. She always treated Madame with great con-
sideration, and loved Monsieur tenderly; he returned her
affection, and spared no pains to procure for her all the
pleasures and amusements in his power. This had con-
siderable influence on her feelings towards the Duke of
Orleans, in whom she took a real interest, quite indepen-
dent of the intimacy which sprang up afterwards between
the Duchess of Orleans and herself. She always retained
a strong affection for the Duke and Duchess of Savoy, and
for her own country. She showed great prudence and self-
restraint at the time of the rupture between France and
Savoy, and during all the events which followed it. The King was very considerate in avoiding all talk about Savoy in her presence; she preserved an eloquent silence on the subject, only occasionally she let fall some remark which showed that, while she had become a thorough Frenchwoman, she could not banish from her heart all feeling for her father and her native country. 1 I have already noticed the constant correspondence and close intimacy which she kept up with her sister, the Queen of Spain.

With all these striking and amiable qualities she combined a few feminine weaknesses. By that I do not mean that she could not keep a secret; on the contrary, she was close as wax; but in other respects she had some touches of human frailty. She was fickle; her friendship was to a considerable degree a matter of habit; she liked people only so long as she was in their company, so long as they amused her or could be useful; the only exception to this rule that I can call to mind was Madame de Saint-Simon. She herself used to plead guilty to this defect in her character, with an ingenuous grace which almost made it tolerable.

There was another thing. She tried, as I have already said, to make everybody like her; unfortunately, she was unable to keep herself from liking certain other persons rather too much. For some time after her arrival in France she had been kept in strict seclusion; then she was surrounded by old ladies with past histories, of which they were supposed to have repented, but their romantic minds nevertheless still retained a hankering after gallant adventures, though old age had put them beyond their reach. Later on, when she began to go into society, favour rather than merit had determined the choice of young ladies to be her companions. She always took her colour from her surroundings; it is unfortunate that those responsible for her education did not know how to turn her impressionable disposition to good account, for it is a fact that she found quite as much amusement in reading and sensible conversation as in the looser talk which her younger companions indulged in on the sly. She did not go with them

1 According to the historian, Duclos, she supplied her father with information respecting military preparations in France which she had acquired while rummaging the King's papers. After her death the King found proofs of this among her private papers, and said to Madame de Maintenon: "The little rogue was betraying us!"
of her own accord, for she was restrained by her natural
timidity and a lingering sense of delicacy; she was led
away by them, rather against her will. It must be con-
fessed that she allowed herself to be led very far; a Prin-
cess less universally beloved, not to say idolised, might
have found herself in very serious difficulties. What
occurred when she was on her death-bed pointed to mys-
teries of this kind, and at the same time threw a strong
light on the tyranny with which the King regulated the
spiritual concerns of his family. What was his astonish-
ment, and that of the whole Court, to hear that, at that
awful moment when earthly fears vanish, she had insisted
on changing her confessor; and had refused even to re-
cieve the last Sacraments from the hands of one of his
Society!

As we have seen elsewhere, the only persons who re-
ained in ignorance of her conduct were her husband and
the King. Madame de Maintenon knew all; but it was
the object of her life to prevent anything from coming to
their ears, though she availed herself of the Princess's fears
of them to keep her within bounds as much as possible.
She loved the Princess, or rather, she adored her; her
charming manners had won her heart; she found her of
great assistance in keeping the King amused; indeed, she
herself found amusement in her company; more than that,
astonishing as it may seem, she sometimes appealed to her
for counsel and advice. Notwithstanding these affairs of
gallantry, no woman ever seemed to care less about her
appearance than the Princess, or took less pains about
her dress. Her toilet lasted but a few minutes; indeed,
it was only for the sake of the Court that she prolonged it
as much as she did. She never cared for jewellery, except
for balls or public functions; at other times she wore as
little as possible, and then only to please the King.

With her passed away all gaiety and joy, all amusements,
all that lent grace and charm to the Court. She had been
its animating spirit; her impulse was felt everywhere;
there was not a nook or corner which did not seem per-
vased by her presence. When she was gone, gloomy
darkness set in and brooded over the surface of the Court;
henceforth it dragged on but a languishing existence, if
indeed it could be said to exist at all. Never was a Prin-
cess so universally or so deservedly lamented; the public
grief for her was bitter, and has never passed away; nor has the lapse of time done anything to fill the cruel void left by her departure.¹

¹ There are many interesting allusions to the Dauphiness scattered about in Madame's letters. She used to be out with young people in the gardens of Marly till three or four o'clock in the morning; these nocturnal adventures never reached the King's ears. But, says Madame in another letter, "during the last three years of her life she was much changed for the better; she indulged in no more escapades; no longer drank to excess" (a curious illustration of the manners of the time). "Instead of behaving like a wild creature, she became reasonable and polite, and bore herself in a manner more becoming to her station."
CHAPTER XVII

1712

The Dauphin leaves Versailles—My last sight of him at Marly—His interview with the King—The doctors advise him to take to his bed—His last illness—Untimely optimism of the Duke de Chevreuse—I am provoked to unbecoming anger—Death of the Dauphin—His history and character—Early years—His conversion to religion—His views on various subjects.

The King and Madame de Maintenon, plunged in the deepest sorrow—the only real sorrow the King had ever experienced in his life—went to Madame de Maintenon's room immediately on arriving at Marly; he supped in his own room, and afterwards spent a short time with the Duke of Orleans and his natural children. The Duke of Berry, in great grief himself, and deeply concerned for his brother, had stayed at Versailles with his Duchess; who, though really delighted at her deliverance from a Princess so much better beloved than herself, was clever enough to disguise her want of heart, and behaved with tolerable propriety. They went next morning to Marly, in time to see the King when he awoke.

The Dauphin, prostrate with grief, and feeling very unwell himself, did not leave his room, the only persons admitted being his brother, his confessor, and the Duke de Beavilliers. The latter had been lying ill at Paris for some days, but he made an effort to leave his sick-bed in order to see his pupil and admire his greatness of mind, which was never more conspicuous than on this dreadful day. Though they little thought it at the time, this was their last meeting in this world. Cheverny, d'O, and Gamache spent the night in the Dauphin's rooms, but saw him only at intervals. Next morning, Saturday the 13th of February, they implored him to go to Marly, so that he might be spared the horror of hearing noises in the room overhead, where the Dauphiness was lying dead.
He went out at seven in the morning, by a back entrance to his rooms, and was carried in a chair to his carriage. A few courtiers, with more zeal than discretion, were standing about, and bowed to him; he returned their salutations politely. His three menins accompanied him in the carriage. He got out at the chapel and heard Mass; thence he was carried in a chair to a window of his own apartments, by which he entered. Madame de Maintenon came at once to see him. The anguish of this interview may be imagined; she could not bear it for long, and went away.

After this he had to endure the visits of the Princes and Princesses, who had the discretion to stay only a moment or two; the Duchess of Berry took Madame de Saint-Simon with her, and the Dauphin turned towards her with a look which expressed their common grief. For some time he was alone with the Duke of Berry. As the hour of the King's lever was approaching his three menins went in to him, and I ventured to accompany them. He made me a sign of recognition, with an air of gentle affection which went to my heart. But I was horrified at his appearance: his eyes were fixed, and there was something wild in his looks; his face was altered, and I noticed that it was marked by reddish, or rather livid, blotches. His eyes were full of tears, which he was trying to restrain.

An instant or two later a message came to say that the King was awake. At this news he turned round in silence; but did not stir from his place. Only the three menins and Duchesne were present besides myself; the menins suggested once or twice that he should go to the King, but he paid no attention. I went up to him and made signs to him to go; then I spoke to him in a low voice. As he still stood in silence, I ventured to take his arm, and represented that the King was expecting him, and most certainly wished to see and embrace him; that he must go to him sooner or later, and that it would come with a better grace if he went at once. While thus speaking, I took the liberty of pushing him slightly; he gave me a look which cut me to the heart, and moved off. For a short distance I followed him, and then went out to compose my feelings. I never saw him again. God grant that I may see him to all eternity, in that place to which His mercy has doubtless called him!
The Princes and Princesses, with those who had the privilege of the *grandes entrées*, were assembled in the small saloon between the King's apartments and those of Madame de Maintenon. As soon as she heard that the King was awake, she crossed this saloon and went in by herself, followed soon afterwards by the others. When the Dauphin entered the King's room it was already crowded. Directly the King saw him he called him up, and embraced him tenderly several times; but few words passed between them, and those were broken by sobs and tears. As soon as the King was able to look at the Dauphin he was alarmed by the same symptoms which we had noticed previously. He ordered the physicians to feel the Prince's pulse; they said afterwards that they had found it very bad indeed, but at the time they merely said that he would do well to go to bed. The King again embraced him, begged him affectionately to take care of his health, and ordered him to go to bed; he obeyed, and never rose from it again. By this time the morning was far advanced; for the King had passed a bad night, and it was late before he awoke. In the afternoon he went to see the Dauphin, who was very feverish. The only persons admitted to the sick-room were the three *menins* for a very short time, the Duke of Berry, the confessor, and the Duke de Chevreuse; the Dauphin's time was spent in prayer and in listening to religious books.

Next day, Sunday, the physicians were very uneasy; the Dauphin himself told Boudin, in the presence of M. de Cheverny and Duchesse, that from his sensations he felt sure that the design of which he had been warned had been carried out. On Monday there was no change for the better; the King was bled, and he and Madame de Maintenon saw the patient several times, separately. During Tuesday he became worse; outwardly he did not appear so feverish, but he felt as if consumed by an internal fire, and the pulse was hard and very irregular. Blotches similar to those on his face spread to the rest of his body, and people tried to flatter themselves with the hope that it might turn out to be measles; but the doctors could not forget, though it was not generally known till afterwards, that the same marks had shown themselves on the body of the Dauphiness.

I heard all that was passing through Cheverny; Boulduc
also came and spoke to me whenever he could be spared from the sick-room. He was one of the King's apothecaries, who always attended us, as he had my father before me; he was quite as skilful as the best physicians, as we had found out by experience; and was, moreover, a very capable, discreet, and honourable man. He concealed nothing from Madame de Saint-Simon or myself; he had told us from the first what he thought of the Dauphiness' illness, and after the second day he spoke with equal plainness about the Dauphin. I had, therefore, given up any real expectation of his recovery; yet one goes on hoping against hope to the very last.

On Wednesday the fever increased in violence, and the Dauphin was in great pain; late in the evening he sent to ask the King's permission to receive the Holy Communion at an early Mass in his own room, without ceremony or attendants; this was not generally known, however, till next day. That evening I went late to see the Duke and Duchess de Chevreuse, who had rooms in the next pavilion to ours. I was in a state of extreme depression; I hardly went into the King's presence at all, and did nothing but go several times a day to ask for news; the only persons I cared to see were those who, like M. and Madame de Chevreuse, were in as great affliction as myself, to whom I could talk freely. Madame de Chevreuse, like myself, had given up all hope; but her husband, always sanguine and ready to see the bright side of everything, would insist on trying to prove to us, by medical and other arguments, that there was more reason to hope than to fear. At last I lost my temper at his tranquil way of talking, and spoke to him with somewhat unbecoming rudeness; rather to the relief, however, of Madame de Chevreuse and the few other persons present. I went home to pass a cruel night.

Next morning, Thursday the 18th, I was told very early that the Dauphin had heard Mass and communicated immediately after midnight; that he had passed two hours in prayer, and that his head had afterwards wandered. Later on, Madame de Saint-Simon came and told me that he had received Extreme Uction; last of all, that he had expired at half-past eight. I cannot set down what my feelings were; if these Memoirs ever see the light, long after I am gone, my readers will enter into my sentiments and those of Madame de Saint-Simon. I will merely say
that for several days we hardly spoke a word; my only wish was to give up everything and retire from the Court and the world. In spite of Madame de Saint-Simon’s influence over me, it took all her tact and wisdom to prevent me from doing so.

The late Prince came into the world with a terrible disposition; those who saw him in his early youth trembled for the future. He was passionate to the last degree; in his fits of anger he would vent his fury on everything that came in his way, even on inanimate objects. He could not bear the slightest contradiction; if the weather interfered with his wishes he would go into transports of rage which threatened to tear his body to pieces. He was extremely obstinate; extremely voluptuous; ardent in his pursuit of women; and, what is very rare, this propensity was combined with another equally strong in a different direction. He delighted in wine and good cheer; his love of hunting was excessive; and music threw him into a sort of ecstasy; he was no less fond of play, but it was dangerous to sit down with him, for he could not bear losing. In short, he was a slave to pleasures of every description. His temper was often sullen, and naturally inclined to be cruel. His raillery was savage; he delighted in drawing out and mimicking any little personal absurdity, and he did it with a skill which left his victim stupefied. From his exalted heights men of all classes and stations appeared to him like atoms, with whom he had nothing in common; if he recognised his brothers as occupying a region intermediate between himself and the rest of mankind, it was as much as he could bring himself to do, although rather ostentatious pains had been taken to let them grow up together on a footing of absolute equality. His lively and acute intelligence shone in everything he said; even in his fits of fury his answers were extraordinarily clever, and his reasoning just and to the point. His understanding made light of the most abstruse branches of learning; its range was prodigious; it was indeed too extensive, for it prevented him from applying himself properly to any particular subject. He had considerable taste and skill in drawing, to which he was allowed to devote himself rather too much, for it is probable that it did a good deal to injure his figure.

In person he was rather below the middle height. His
face was long and dark, the upper part of it perfect, with extremely fine eyes; his look was striking and attractive; usually gentle, but always penetrating, with something touching in its expression. His countenance as a whole was agreeable, dignified, and so intelligent that it seemed to kindle intelligence in others. The lower part of his face, which was rather pointed, was not so good as the upper part; his nose, though long and high, was not handsome. His hair, of a dark chestnut colour, was so thick and curly that it stuck up exceedingly. His mouth and lips were attractive so long as he did not speak; but, though his teeth were not bad, the upper jaw was too prominent, which produced an unpleasant effect when he spoke or laughed. He had good legs, and the best-shaped feet I ever saw, except the King’s; but his legs were rather too long for his body. When he left the nursery he was quite straight, but before long it was noticed that he was becoming crooked. For a long time he was made to wear an iron cross and collar, and no sort of bodily exercise was neglected to improve his figure. Nature prevailed, however; he became humpbacked, and one shoulder grew so much higher than the other that it made him lame; not that his legs were of unequal length, but because there was not the same distance between his shoulders and hips, so that he was all on one side.\(^1\) His lameness did not prevent him from walking fast and for long distances; he was fond of walking, and also of riding, though he never looked well on horseback. It is rather surprising that, with all his cleverness and pious humility, he never realised his shape as others saw it; or perhaps he could not bring himself to do so. This was a weakness which forced people to be on their guard against indiscreet remarks; it also gave a good deal of trouble to his valets, who did their best, by the arrangement of his clothes and hair, to conceal these personal defects; but they had to be careful not to let him see that they perceived what was so clearly visible. From this we may conclude that it is not given to any man to be quite perfect in this world.

\(^{1}\) Madame says: “I remember that the Dauphin once took to squinting because a lady had told him that he had fine eyes; but it was unnecessary, for the worthy fellow (le bon sire) was quite ugly enough without taking pains to make himself more so. He had an ugly mouth, and an unhealthy complexion; he was very small, humpbacked, and deformed. . . . He had many good qualities; he was very charitable, and assisted many poor officers without any one knowing of it.”
The education of a young Prince of such abilities, combined with such a temper and such ardent passions, was no easy task; the Duke de Beauvilliers, thoroughly realizing his responsibility, applied himself to it with admirable skill, patience, and industry. Finding that the regular sub-governors were of little assistance to him, he sought help wherever he could find it. Fénelon, Fleury the sub-preceptor, who has left such a valuable History of the Church, Moreau, first valet-de-chambre, a man very superior to his station in life, though very modest, and the Duke de Chevreuse, were among those employed under the superintendence of the Duke de Beauvilliers; and the history of their labours, animated by a common zeal, would form a very curious and instructive work. But God, to whom all hearts are open, and who imparts His grace according to His divine pleasure, had decreed that the character of this Prince should be the work of His own right hand; and between the ages of eighteen and twenty He wrought a complete change in him. Out of the depths emerged a Prince gentle in all his ways, penitent, modest, kindly, and affable towards others; austere towards himself so far as the duties of his station would allow, sometimes, indeed, carrying his austerity and humility rather beyond that limit. Conscious of his responsibilities, he thought only of combining his duties as a son and a subject with those to which he would be called hereafter. The days were too short for him; he found all his strength and consolation in prayer, and his safeguard against temptation in religious reading.

At first his apprenticeship in religion, and his fear of being led astray by his love of pleasure, made him shy and inaccessible; the strict watch which he thought it necessary to maintain over himself kept him shut up in his own room, as in a sanctuary where temptation could not reach him. How strange the world is! It would have abhorred him if his nature had remained unchanged, yet after the change it felt inclined to despise him. The Prince knew it, and felt it keenly; but he gladly laid this sort of disgrace at the foot of his Saviour's Cross, and made use of it to mortify himself by the bitter recollection of his former pride. What inflicted the sharpest sting was the cold treatment he had to bear from his nearest relations. The King, with his mechanical devotion, could not look on
without ill-concealed displeasure while the young Prince cast unintentional blame on his conduct by the contrast between it and his own. He was not pleased when he saw his grandson deny himself the pleasure of a new bureau, in order to give the money it would have cost to the poor, or modestly decline his offer to regild and decorate his little suite of rooms. We have seen how annoyed he was at the Prince's too obstinate refusal to go to a ball on the day of the Epiphany. That was indeed the mistake of a novice; he ought, from motives of respect—I will even say, of Christian forbearance—to have complied with the wishes of the King his grandfather; nevertheless, it was an act of courage to expose himself to the danger of making the King dislike him, and to the pitiful ridicule of the Court.

Monseigneur was another thorn in his side. Engrossed in sensual pleasures and a mere tool in the hands of others, whose policy, long before the campaign of Flanders, had for its object to keep the young Prince in the background, he saw nothing in him beyond his outward austerity of manners, and feared him as a censor. The Duchess of Burgundy, also alarmed at his austerity, did all she could to soften it; she employed all her own charms, and the importunities of the young ladies of her household, to allure him to pleasures and festivities, to which he was naturally much inclined. These daily temptations were followed by the remonstrances of that devout witch, Madame de Maintenon; by the King's cutting sarcasms; by the marked alienation of Monseigneur, and his equally marked preference for the Duke of Berry, who was petted and favoured, amid the malignant applause of his Court, while the eldest son was treated like a tedious and unwelcome guest. A man who can bear such trials day after day, and yet remain unshaken, must have a courageous spirit; if he stands firm when all worldly support is withdrawn from him, he must be powerfully sustained by an invisible Hand.

By degrees, however, the harsh exterior of his virtue became softer, without any impairment of its solidity; he began to feel that it was not right to displease the King and Monseigneur, and that there was some danger lest he might give others a distaste for religion. He understood at last that there is such a thing as giving up religious
practices for God's own service, and that for a man to do his duty in that state to which God has called him is the most acceptable form of piety. Accordingly, he set himself to study such things as would be useful when he should be called upon to govern; he went more into society, and he did so in such a gracious manner that people began to understand his reasons for holding himself aloof hitherto; and the world, which always likes to be appreciated, began to be reconciled to him.

During his first campaign in Flanders, under Marshal Boufflers, he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the troops; and still more so during his second, when he took Brisach in conjunction with Marshal Tallard; he exposed himself freely, much more so than was at all pleasing to Marchin, who had been appointed to act as his Mentor. The disasters of the succeeding years made it impossible to place him at the head of an army; at last, in 1708, it was thought that his presence might restore discipline and revive the spirit of the troops. I need not repeat how my knowledge of court intrigues enabled me to foretell the consequences of this decision, in my conversation with the Duke de Beauvilliers at Marly; nor how an organised and hellish cabal managed to discredit the heir to the Crown to such a degree that, even in his father's house, it was dangerous to say a word in his favour. This was a terrible trial for the young Prince, who saw men of all parties combined against him; while the truth, on which alone he could rely for his defence, was buried out of sight by enchantments like those of Pharaoh's magicians. He felt it cruelly; but he bore it with the patience and charity of a Christian, who traces the hand of God in all things, and humbles himself before it.

At last his virtue met with its due reward even in this world; and it was the sweeter because, far from doing anything to hasten it, the Prince still kept himself in the background. I have already described this happy revulsion of public feeling; and told how Court and Ministers were at his feet, while the King came to treat him as a beloved and trusted coadjutor in the administration of affairs and the dispensation of favours. It was then that he applied himself more closely than ever to studying the art of government; he gave up science altogether, in order to divide his private hours between prayer, which he
abridged, and the pursuit of knowledge, to which he devoted more time than ever. The remainder of his time was spent in paying respectful attentions to the King and Madame de Maintenon, and in presiding over the Court, where he strove to make himself accessible and popular. The more favour the King extended to him the more careful he was to behave with deference and moderation, never asking for anything, and avoiding any appearance of presumption.

He did not allow his confessor to influence him where public affairs were concerned. I have already mentioned two instances of his opposing the Jesuits with all his might in important cases which they brought before the King in Council. Perhaps he would have submitted more readily to the Archbishop of Cambrai; but this is a mere surmise, founded on the implicit confidence he placed in the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers, especially the latter. He knew that the two brothers-in-law consulted the Archbishop about everything, about their domestic affairs as well as about the most important state business; and I believe he used to ask his advice through them, but as to this I cannot speak positively. There were, however, certain matters in which he did not give way to the Duke de Beauvilliers, such, for instance, as concerned the policy of the Court of Rome and the affair of Cardinal de Noailles; some others, also, in which he was influenced by his liking for certain persons; here I speak of what I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears.

My own acquaintance with him was due entirely to M. de Beauvilliers, to whom I was, and I say it without mock humility, absolutely inferior; nevertheless, he has often consulted me as to the best means of bringing certain matters to the Prince's notice; and more than once, when I told him what had passed during my private interviews, he confessed that the Prince had never spoken so freely to himself. This was certainly not because the Prince had a higher opinion of me. If I thought him capable of such a gross error of judgement I should be so ashamed of it that I should take good care to say nothing about it; but I lay stress on this little detail, which could be known to no one but myself, because it shows that, however great the confidence he placed in certain persons, he never allowed himself to become blindly subservient to them—a mistake
into which so many Kings have fallen, to the grievous misfortune of their subjects. He was like a bee, gathering honey from flowers of many different kinds; he wished to know mankind, and to extract from each individual such information and instruction as he was capable of giving. He used often to have a confidential talk with one person or another, when he wanted information on some particular point; but he was careful not to allow these talks to become habitual in any individual case. I never heard of his discussing affairs habitually with any one except the Ministers, and the prelates engaged with him in the affair of Cardinal de Noailles; and if he had done so it could not have escaped my notice.

With these exceptions, I was the only person who had free access to him in private. A volume would not suffice for a full description of what passed at these interviews. What a sense of duty they revealed in him! what unselfishness! what industry! what a reflection of the divine nature showed itself in this candid, simple, yet courageous soul! In these confidential moments one could trace the effect of a wise, laborious, and Christian education on the mind of an intelligent disciple, born to be a leader of men. The petty scruples which hampered him in public were laid aside; he was determined to find out all he could about the men he would have to deal with in the future; and, in order to elicit an unbiased opinion, he used to begin the discussion by a free expression of his own.

These tête-à-tête conversations used to range over an immense variety of subjects, and if the memory or information of his interlocutor had been found wanting on any point, he would have gone away very ill satisfied with himself, and the Prince would have been disappointed. Yet it was impossible to prepare oneself beforehand. One went there expecting an interview of half an hour or so, to discuss some particular subject; and one found oneself drawn into a conversation lasting two hours or more. He always brought it back to the main topic in the end, but in the meantime he used to lead it into all sorts of by-paths; and very often it was in these parentheses that he was seeking the information he really wanted. One had to be careful to avoid all unnecessary verbiage; he would not allow compliments or flattery, nor did he like anecdotes, or any approach to jesting; the talk had to be concise
and to the point, and, however widely it might stray from
the original topic, it was never without a definite object.
In these conversations all arrangements for the future
were discussed, changes in the present system decided
upon, and men chosen for particular posts after a searching
inquiry into their qualifications. Very often, though he
never let it appear, these matters had already been talked
over with the Duke de Beavilliers; sometimes with him
and the Duke de Chevreuse, though it was a rare occurrence
for them both to be with the Prince at the same time.
Sometimes, on the other hand, he kept something back from
them, though not often from M. de Beavilliers; but, what-
ever he did, one might place the most implicit confidence
in his secrecy.

With all his good qualities, this admirable Prince was not
without a touch of human frailty; he had his faults, and
some of them were not very becoming. People did not
make sufficient allowance for them, because they would not
bear in mind that his character had originally been entirely
made up of vices and defects; they did not consider what
an effort so prodigious a change must have cost him, and,
seeing him so much improved, they were dissatisfied because
he had not attained to absolute perfection. I have hinted
elsewhere at some of these faults, which were, in spite of
his age, merely childish errors, of which he was rapidly
curing himself. Another, of greater consequence, which
reflection and experience would certainly have corrected,
was that he sometimes took a fancy to persons whom he
could not really esteem, and admitted them to great famili-
arity. His scruples and qualms of conscience, and his
exaggerated regard for petty devotional observances, were
diminishing every day; he had quite abandoned the
opinion that Ministers, Ambassadors, and Generals should
be chosen rather on account of their piety than for their
capacity and experience. He was now convinced that a
man may be thoroughly honourable, and well qualified for
employment, without making a parade of religion; and he
realised the danger of making hypocrites. Having strong
passions himself, he could make allowances for others in
the like case, and did not esteem or like them the less on
that account.

There never was a man who appreciated order more
thoroughly, or better understood in what it should consist;
it was his great object to re-establish it, to do away with the existing confusion, and set every person in his proper place. Though not yet the master, he was most careful, so far as he was concerned, to treat age and merit, birth and rank, with the precise deference due to each, and that in the most marked manner, on every opportunity. To explain his designs in full would expand these Memoirs too much; a special book would be required, and, if it were written, its readers would be overwhelmed with regrets for what might have been. Without going into detail, however, I cannot refrain from mentioning some of his ideas.

The degradation of the nobility was odious to him; nor could he tolerate the modern fashion of considering official dignity as the only source of distinction, while noblemen, gentlemen, and seigneurs are treated as on one common level. He looked upon this obliteration of ranks as a serious danger for a kingdom which is nothing if not military. He remembered that the monarchy had more than once owed its preservation entirely to the nobles, who were ready and willing to march to the rescue of the State from their respective provinces, without difficulty and without confusion, because each knew his superior, and was ready to obey him. He saw that under the present system such organised assistance was impossible; because there was no longer any organisation; each man thought himself as good as his neighbour; none could command, because none would obey. He deplored the impoverishment of the nobility, and the deterioration of their spirit caused by the mésalliances to which they were too frequently reduced by sheer necessity. It grieved him profoundly to see the French nobility, once so honoured and illustrious, reduced almost to the level of the common herd; distinguished from it, indeed, merely by the fact that, while a man of the people is free to engage in trade or to follow any profession, including that of arms, the nobleman can choose only between a life of ruinous idleness, which makes him a burden to the community and an object of contempt, or of risking his life in the wars, subject to the insults and caprices of Secretaries of State and their underlings. Above all, he thought it an intolerable insult to the profession of arms that a veteran officer, covered with wounds and glory, should, if not noble, be subjected to the poll-tax like any peasant in his parish, without any possibility of obtaining an exemption,
though exemptions, sometimes hereditary, are granted freely to holders of the most petty offices in the law or the department of finance. I have myself known officers of distinction, retired with a pension and the cross of St. Louis, in this position.

He could not reconcile himself to the prevailing system by which no man could take a leading part in the government of the country unless he had filled the office of maître-des-requêtes, and the administration of all the provinces had been entirely surrendered to the younger members of the same magistracy. He thought it strange that these lawyers should be allowed to exercise an authority and power far exceeding those of the Governors of provinces; while the latter had been deliberately stripped of all their privileges, so that nothing now remained to them except their salaries and the empty title of Governor. I mentioned not long ago what he thought of the authority and privileges of the Secretaries of State and other Ministers; and we have seen how he expressed himself, on the occasion of the imposition of the new tithe, concerning tax-gatherers and questions of finance generally. When he contemplated the immense number of persons employed in collecting taxes, ordinary and extraordinary, and their methods of doing so, the multiplication of law-courts and officials of all kinds, the delays in the administration of justice, the chicanery of lawyers, and the consequent ruin of great numbers of people, he was almost tempted, in his impatience, to wish for the time when it would be in his power to remedy these evils.

Observing that those parts of the kingdom which had Estates 1 of their own were the most prosperous, he had formed the project of dividing the whole country into groups of provinces, of equal wealth so far as it could be arranged; the finances of each division to be administered by its own Estates, assembled under a simplified system, which would prevent confusion and disorder; and he proposed that from each of these provincial assemblies should be chosen representatives, to form the States-General of the kingdom. I cannot refrain here from quoting a noble saying of his, that "A King is made for his subjects,

1 Certain provinces and districts such as Brittany, Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc, and others, had estates of their own, and settled how the contributions assessed to them should be raised. These contributions were known as "dons gratuites," free-will offerings; but the province which refused to pay would have fared badly.
not the subjects for their King." He was not afraid to say this is public, even in the Saloon at Marly; it was a saying worthy of a Prince conscious of his responsibility, of one who intended to be a father to his country; but it was a saying which, in any reign but his own, would have been regarded as a frightful blasphemy; and unfortunately God did not permit him to reign. He intended to call the States-General together from time to time. Not that he attributed any kind of power to this body, august as its representative character makes it; he was too well acquainted with history for that; he knew that it has merely the right of submitting grievances, making remonstrances, and, if the King chooses to allow it, of proposing legislation. But he would have enjoyed presiding over the representatives of the nation thus assembled; he thought it would be an immense advantage to be informed of grievances by deputies who knew them by personal experience, and to be able to consult with them about the remedies to be applied. He was determined, however, to recognise only three Estates of the Realm, and to prevent certain classes from separating themselves from the third Estate, as they have recently shown some inclination to do.

With regard to ranks and dignities, we have already seen that foreign titles, whether genuine or assumed, were not at all to his liking. Moreover, it was not his intention to make the first dignities of the kingdom too common. He wished to have it in his power to show favour to the chief nobility by granting distinctions; and it annoyed him to find that under the present system it was impossible to reward a real seigneur, of high birth, except by giving him the first and greatest distinction of all. His design was to follow the example of England, though not entirely according to the English model, by instituting dignities inferior to that of Duke; some of them hereditary, each with rank and privileges peculiar to its own degree; others for life only, like the rank of non-verified or brevet Dukes. There would also have been special distinctions, inferior to that of Marshal of France, for the military profession. The Order of St. Louis would not have been granted too lavishly; and that of St. Michael would have been raised from the mire into which it has fallen, and restored to honour; the Order of the Holy Ghost would consequently have been reserved for those for whom it was originally intended.
The Dauphin could not understand how the King, out of complaisance for his Ministers, could have allowed the Court appointments, with the exception of a few principal ones, to become so degraded. He would have taken pleasure in being surrounded and served by real seigneurs; he would have raised some of the inferior appointments to greater honour, and created some new ones for persons of quality of less distinction. But he did not approve of perpetuities; he thought it was not right that an office or Governorship should acquire a quasi-hereditary character from the custom of appointing a son to succeed his father. It was his intention, by degrees, to free all appointments, whether military or about the Court, from the liens and charges with which they were burdened, in order to abolish the system of purchase; this change would not have been favourable to those brevets de retenue and reversions which do so much to deprive young men of all incentives to ambition.

With regard to military matters, he disapproved strongly of the system of promotion by seniority established by Louvois, which he thought tended to discourage zeal and emulation, and to favour mediocrity; he considered, indeed, that our military disasters since the opening of the century might be traced entirely to the inferiority of the Generals produced under this system. His sublime maxim that "Kings were made for their people, and not the people for their King," was so deeply impressed upon his mind that it had produced a horror of luxury and war. He sometimes expressed himself too warmly on the latter point, for all truths are not fit to be proclaimed openly in the ears of the world; and people used sometimes to whisper malignantly that he was not fond of war. In the administration of justice he was careful to maintain that impenetrable bandage over the eyes which is its only security. He took great pains to master all the cases which came before the King for decision in the Councils of Finance and Despatches; in the more important ones he consulted professional men, in order to have the benefit of their experience, but without slavish complaisance with their opinions. At least once a fortnight he used to receive the Holy Communion with striking humility and earnestness, always wearing a short cloak and the Collar of the Order. Once or twice a week he saw his Jesuit confessor; these interviews sometimes lasted a long time, but of late he cut them down a
good deal, though receiving the Communion more frequently.

His conversation was pleasant, and always suited to his company. He was fond of walking, and it was during his walks that he talked most freely. He was always glad to find somebody who could talk about scientific subjects; but it was by way of relaxation and improvement; he was a listener rather than a talker on such matters. But what he sought most in conversation was useful knowledge; he liked to meet people with whom he could discuss military, naval, or commercial affairs, and acquire information regarding foreign countries and Courts; very often he would talk over events in history, or incidents in campaigns long gone by. He acquired much instruction during these walks of his; at the same time they made him very popular, and raised great hopes regarding his future. For a long time, he had given up going to theatres; as a substitute he used to play cards for very low points, within reach of the slenderest purses, so that as many persons as possible might have the honour of playing with him. He had a strong inclination to the pleasures of the table and the chase; he went out hunting without much scruple, but he was always on his guard against the other indulgence; when he did give way to it, however, he was excellent company.

He understood the King's character thoroughly; he respected him, and towards the end he had a filial affection for him. He treated him with attention and deference as a loyal subject, but nevertheless as one conscious of his own position. He cultivated the good graces of Madame de Maintenon with the polite attention due to their respective situations. To Monseigneur he behaved with dutiful respect; but it was not difficult to perceive that he was ill at ease with him, and with the whole of the Meudon circle, especially with Mademoiselle Choin. It always amused him, as indeed it amused everybody, to observe that Monseigneur, who was extremely proud, and had never been able to bring himself to show more than ordinary civility to Madame de Maintenon, had nevertheless his own Maintenon in the person of the Choin, and compelled his children to treat her with as much respect as the King exacted in the case of Madame de Maintenon. He had a strong affection for his brothers, and a most passionate
love for his wife. His grief for her loss wrung every fibre in his nature; his sense of religion enabled him to restrain it, but not without a most dreadful internal struggle. In this terrible sorrow he did nothing petty or unbecoming; one saw in him a man beside himself with grief, forcing himself to maintain a calm exterior, but perishing in the attempt.

The days of his affliction were cut short, as were those of his own last illness. From the first he never expected to recover; he told his doctors so, and did not conceal the grounds for his belief, in which he was confirmed by his sensations throughout. What a shocking conviction to have concerning the cause of his wife’s death and his own! and yet, good God, what a noble example he set in his last moments! How quietly and tenderly he spoke of the future, and with what detachment from the things of this world! How warmly and sincerely he gave thanks for having been spared the awful responsibility of bearing the sceptre! What ardent love for God he showed, and what a perfect, humble resignation to His will! What a clear perception of his own sinfulness and unworthiness, but also what magnificent trust in God’s infinite mercy! what pious fear, yet what holy and humble confidence! How instant he was in prayer! With what fervent desire he waited for the last Sacraments! how peaceful, how resigned he was! how patient, how gentle, how kind to every one who came near him! towards the end how ardently he longed for the presence of God!

This was the last chastisement, under which France finally succumbed; God showed her a Prince of whom she was unworthy. Earth itself was not worthy of him; he was already ripe for a blissful eternity.
CHAPTER XVIII

1712

General grief in Europe—The Pope officiates at a special memorial service for the Dauphin—The snuff-box again—The Archbishop of Reims accuses the Duke de Noailles of poisoning the Dauphiness—I beg him to keep silence—Illness of the two infant sons of France—Death of the elder—The younger is saved by an antidote—The bastards as Princes of the Blood at the funeral ceremonies—My unfortunate position—My alarm lest the King should discover certain papers—M. de Beauvilliers adroitly prevents discovery—Marshal Villeroi recalled to Court—Horrible rumours afloat—Medical discussion on the result of autopsy of the Dauphiness—Post-mortem examination of the Dauphin—Pagon and Boudin positive that he was poisoned—Maréchal alone contests their opinion—The Duke of Orleans accused—His position and that of M. du Maine contrasted—Which was most likely to be the poisoner?—The cabal at work—The Duke of Orleans publicly insulted—The Duchess of Orleans sends for me—By d’Effiat’s advice the Duke of Orleans asks the King to hold an inquiry and send him to the Bastille—I disapprove of d’Effiat’s counsel—What I would myself have advised—Impossibility of explaining my views to M. du Maine’s sister—The King consents to send Humbert to the Bastille—The Duke of Orleans cut by everybody—In spite of numerous warnings I continue to associate with him as usual—Bold and incisive speech of Maréchal to the King, who revokes his order about the Bastille.

The consternation and mourning caused by this event were sincere and widespread; the Dauphin was lamented not only in France, but in foreign countries and by foreign Sovereigns. The Pope was so much grieved that he resolved, amid general applause, to dispense with the usual formalities of his Court; he assembled a Consistory, in which he deplored the loss which the Church and Christendom had sustained, and announced that, in consideration of the eminent virtues of the late Prince, he intended to officiate in person at a solemn funeral service in his own chapel. This was attended by the Sacred College and the whole of the Roman Court, and every one was pleased at such an unwonted mark of respect.

I must now go back a little. The Dauphiness died, as I have said, at Versailles between eight and nine o’clock on
the evening of the 12th of February. I had retired to my room, overcome with grief, when the Archbishop of Reims, who was always admitted, came in. He shared in the general sorrow, which no one could help feeling; but he had a personal motive in addition; his sister-in-law, the Countess de Mailly, with whom he had always been on very affectionate terms, had lost her post of Lady-in-Waiting by her mistress's death. She had told him about the affair of the snuff-box. He had been for a long time in the poor Princess's room; and he now proceeded to tell me that the Duke de Noailles, as Captain of the Guard, had also been there, and he had observed his behaviour particularly. He seemed inquisitive, he said, though rather ill at ease, and gave his opinion very decidedly, but very calmly, that the end was approaching. After remaining some time he had gone out, and returned with the King; he still seemed embarrassed, but it was not difficult to detect a look of satisfaction. In short, the Archbishop spoke as if he attributed the misfortune to him; indeed, he said so plainly.

I must here observe that these Maillys hated the Noailles family; they were annoyed because Madame de Maintenon did not treat the Countess de Mailly, the daughter of her first cousin, with the same degree of favour as the Duchess de Noailles, who was her own brother's daughter. The Archbishop had also a private grievance of his own. Before he was raised to the episcopate he had warmly opposed Cardinal de Noailles in an assembly of the clergy. The Cardinal had at first answered him mildly, and attempted to reason with him; but at last, stung by some rather unbecoming remarks which the Abbé, as the Archbishop then was, addressed to him, had administered a sharp rebuke, which the other never forgave. The Archbishop had himself told me about this quarrel. I now reminded him of it, to make him doubt his own impartiality; but, seeing that he only became warmer and more positive, I told him at last that no one would ever believe the Duke de Noailles to be capable of such an abominable crime. I pointed out that he had not the slightest motive for desiring the death of the Dauphiness, who had always treated him with favour, and among whose Ladies of the Palace were three of his own sisters.

It was useless for me to talk. The cause of the recall of the Duke de Noailles was beginning to leak out; and the
Archbishop declared that his motive was to govern the Dauphin without a rival: just as if the Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse would not have been quite as much in his way as the Dauphiness. The Archbishop stuck to his point about the snuff-box, a matter which has, in fact, remained unexplained to this day. I begged him, at any rate, to keep the most profound silence about this horrible suspicion of his; and he did so, but none the less he died some years later in the firm conviction that it was justified. None of those who came to hear eventually of the snuff-box story—and there were a good many—ever suspected the Duke de Noailles for an instant; and I was so far from it myself that our friendship remained unaltered. Intimate as it was up to the time of the King's death, it so happened that neither of us ever said a word to the other about this fatal snuff-box.

On Tuesday, the 23rd of February, the two bodies were borne to St. Denis in the same hearse. The King nominated the Duke of Orleans to accompany the body of the Dauphin, and four Princesses to accompany that of the Dauphiness, namely, Madame la Duchesse, Madame de Vendôme, Mademoiselle de Conti, and Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Yon. The funeral procession entered Paris by the St. Honoré gate at two in the morning, and left by the St. Denis gate at four; it arrived at St. Denis between seven and eight o'clock. All was quiet in Paris, and there was no confusion.

On the 27th the King returned to Versailles. He gave out that he would not receive the formal respects of the courtiers, as on the occasion of Monseigneur's death; but wished the whole Court to be assembled when he arrived, so that he might see everybody at once. The Princes and Princesses of the Blood, with the bastards, awaited him in his own rooms; the Duchess du Lude and the Dauphiness's ladies, with other grand officials, at the door of his private room; gentlemen, in his antechamber, and in other rooms of the same suite up to the door of Madame de Maintenon's rooms. All were in mantles and long cloaks. The King arrived at four o'clock, went up to his rooms by the private staircase, and then walked slowly through the rooms to see everybody. The Duchess du Lude was the only person he embraced; he told her he did not feel up to talking, but would see her presently. Half an hour later Madame
de Maintenon sent for her and the other ladies of the late Dauphiness to her rooms. The King spoke kindly to them all, and kept the Duchess du Lude back when the others retired; he made her sit down, and she remained for some time with him and Madame de Maintenon. He often saw her afterwards in private, but never in public except on the rare occasions when her health allowed her to go to Marly. On the following days he received the formal condolences of the foreign Ministers, the Parliament, and other public bodies.

On Sunday the 6th the two infant Sons of France, who had been unwell for some days, became seriously ill, with the same eruption, resembling measles, which had appeared on the Dauphin and Dauphiness. They had been sprinkled at their birth, but not baptized; the King ordered Madame de Ventadour to have the ceremony performed at once, the name of Louis being given in both cases, and it was done, the Duchess hastily collecting as many persons of distinction as she could find. She held the Dauphin at the font, in conjunction with the Count de la Mothe; and the little Duke of Anjou, now King, was held by the Marquis de Prie and the Duchess de la Ferté.

On Tuesday the court physicians held a consultation with five doctors from Paris; but the King nevertheless held the Council of Despatches, went out shooting in the afternoon, and transacted business with Voysin in the evening. Bleeding and other remedies were resorted to in the case of the little Dauphin, but they proved useless; he died that same evening, shortly before midnight. He was aged five years and some months, and was well-made, strong, and tall for his age. His quickness and cleverness inspired great hopes; but he showed signs of obstinacy and extreme pride which were disquieting. The Duke of Anjou was not yet weaned; the Duchess de Ventadour, with the assistance of the women of the Bed-chamber, took possession of him, and would not allow him to be bled or physicked. The Countess de Vérue, when on the point of death from poison at Turin, had been saved by a counter-poison administered by the Duke of Savoy; and she had brought some of it with her on her return to France. Madame de Ventadour asked for it and gave some to the Duke of Anjou; but only to him, because the Dauphin had been bled, and this remedy is incompatible with bleed-
ing. He was very ill, but recovered, and is now King. He heard the story afterwards, and has always showed a real regard for Madame de Vérué and everybody connected with her. The body of the little Dauphin was taken to St. Denis and placed by the side of his father and mother. The Duke of Anjou, now the only survivor, succeeded to the rank and title of Dauphin.

I have omitted to relate what passed at the King's awakening on the morning of the Dauphin's death, because it would be merely a repetition of what occurred after that of the Dauphiness. The King embraced the Duke of Berry several times with the utmost tenderness, saying, "You are the only one left to me." That Prince was bathed in tears; it is impossible to feel more bitter or more lasting grief than he did. The Duchess of Berry, though she behaved with propriety, was in reality delighted that she and her husband had become the first in rank. The horror of these successive deaths caused indescribable affliction at the Court of Spain.

After the deaths of the Queen, the Bavarian Dauphiness, Monsieur, and indeed at all royal obsequies except those of Monseigneur, when it was dispensed with on account of the small-pox, there had been a great deal of ceremonial. The Sons of France, accompanied by all the Princes of the Blood and all Dukes, had gone in state to sprinkle holy water on the corpse; the body had been followed to St. Denis in like manner by Princes of the Blood and Dukes; or, in the case of a Princess, by Princesses, Duchesses, and ladies of quality, in many carriages. On this occasion the ceremonial ought to have been doubled; but, on the contrary, it was cut down and abridged to the utmost, in order to spare the King's feelings, and remove all painful objects from Versailles as soon as possible. No Prince of the Blood was present at any of the ceremonies; but, notwithstanding his grief and uneasiness of mind, the King did not forget to make his two natural sons enact the part of Princes of the Blood, one, at the funeral procession to St. Denis, the other at the sprinkling of holy water on the body of the Dauphiness.

The King announced that no one was to drape his carriages, except the Duke and Duchess of Berry; as all members of their Households had of course to do as they did, a question arose about Madame de Saint-Simon. She
said she ought not to drape her carriages; the Duke and Duchess thought she ought, and quoted the example of the Duchesses de Ventadour and Brancas, who draped when Madame died. To this it was replied that those ladies were separated from their husbands, and had their own carriages; whereas Madame de Saint-Simon and I lived together, and in that case the wife's carriages are supposed to belong to the husband. Great negotiations ensued, for the Duke and Duchess of Berry made it a point of honour that Madame de Saint-Simon's carriages should be in mourning; at last they begged it of us as a favour, and we had to give in. So our establishment was "party per pale," as it were; my carriages, and those which were common property, were not draped, while Madame de Saint-Simon's own were all in black, which looked rather ridiculous.

M. de Beauvilliers was ill in bed; for the sake of quiet he was at his own house at the foot of the Rue de l'Orangerie. His grief was bitter; I cannot describe, far less could I imitate, his courage, piety, and quiet resignation. On the day of our Dauphin's death I shut myself up in my room and only left to join the King in his walk in the gardens of Marly, as he passed near my pavilion. I was impelled partly by curiosity; but my annoyance when I saw him looking much as usual was such that I could not bear it for more than a few minutes. I returned to my room, and hardly left it again during the remainder of the stay at Marly, except to spend the afternoon with the Duke de Beauvilliers. I confess that I went by a roundabout way, between the canal and gardens of Versailles, so as to reach his house without seeing any funeral preparations. It was weak of me; but I was not sustained by the superior piety of the Duke de Beauvilliers and Madame de Saint-Simon, who nevertheless suffered as much as I did. The fact is that I was in despair, which will not surprise those who know what my prospects had been; it will only surprise them that I was able to survive such a complete overthrow of all my hopes. I was at the same age exactly as my father had attained when he lost Louis XIII; he, at least, had long enjoyed the favour of his Sovereign; but, as for me, "gustavi paullulum mellis, et ecce morior!" 1

1 "I have tasted a little honey, and lo! I must die." An abbreviated quotation from the Vulgate: 1 Sam, xiv. 43.
That was not all. There were in the Dauphin's despatch-box certain confidential treatises which he had asked me to draw up for him. Relying on his secrecy, I had expressed my thoughts without reserve, and any one who knew them would at once detect me as the author. There was one very long document in particular, which would alone suffice to ruin me irretrievably if it fell into the King's hands. He knew my handwriting; if he did not know my opinions with the same certainty, he could make a pretty good guess at them; for my actions had betrayed them on several occasions, and some good friends of mine about the Court had not allowed his suspicions to drop. The Duke de Beauvilliers was involved in this peril, as was the Duke de Chevreuse to a certain degree. If the King saw these papers he would at once discover the secret of my intimacy with the Dauphin, and our confidential talks about matters the discussion of which would have displeased him extremely; and, as yet, he had no idea that I had seen more of his grandson than any other courtier. Knowing the old friendship between the Duke de Beauvilliers and myself, he would never believe that I could have obtained this confidential access to the Dauphin without his assistance; and yet it was the Duke de Beauvilliers himself who must carry this despatch-box to the King; its key was already in his possession, having been given to him by Duchesne immediately after the Dauphin's death. We were, therefore, in a state of cruel suspense; to all appearance it would have been safe to lay long odds that I should be banished from the Court for the remainder of the King's reign.

Yet I must say that my mind was so taken up with the thoughts of my personal loss, and, still more, of the loss the nation had sustained by the death of this incomparable Dauphin, that fear of what might follow the opening of the despatch-box hardly affected me; it was only by an effort that I could think of it at all. My impulse was to go away and never again expose myself to the disappointments of this vain, deceitful world. Even when I had made up my mind to remain at Court, everything seemed insipid; I cared nothing for my position with regard to the Dukes of Berry and Orleans; though, considering the respective ages of the King and the little Dauphin, many of the greatest personages would have given a good deal for the influence which I possessed over those two Princes. My grief was
such that I lost all prudence and self-restraint; in spite of myself, I betrayed all that I had hitherto concealed so carefully, and let the world into the secret of my immense personal loss. Madame de Saint-Simon was equally grieved; but, being naturally stronger, more sensible, and more under the influence of religion, her mind was less absorbed by one subject; and the fright about the despatch-box consequently made more impression upon her.

The Dukes de Beauvilliers and de Chevreuse, with their wives, were the only persons in the secret, and there was no one else to whom we could go for advice. M. de Beauvilliers decided not to let the despatch-box go out of his hands till he should be well enough to take it to the King himself; hoping for an opportunity during the interview to mix up the papers, and keep the dangerous ones from the King’s eyes. It would not be easy; for he did not even know how the documents were arranged in the box; but it was our only chance. In this state of uncertainty we remained for more than a fortnight; it was not till the last day of February that he was well enough to see the King. My rooms were near his, opening into the middle of the gallery in the new wing, on the same floor as the King’s apartments. On his return from the King he came to my rooms, and told me that he had been ordered to bring the despatch-box to Madame de Maintenon’s room next evening. He said that, while he could answer for nothing, he would do his best to prevent the King from seeing anything in my handwriting; and would come to us immediately after the interview and tell us all about it.

As may be supposed, we awaited him impatiently, and took care to be alone. He arrived at last, and before sitting down made a sign that all was well. He told us that, most fortunately, the upper layer of papers in the box, to a considerable depth, consisted of memoranda of all sorts, financial schemes, and reports on the administration of some provinces; these he had purposely read at length, in order to weary the King; and so far succeeded that, after a time, he became convinced that all the papers in the box were of the same sort. He made the Duke read out the headings of a few more; and then said it was not worth while to go through them all, and the best thing would be to throw them into the fire at once. The Duke said he did not wait to be told twice; the less so, because he had
already seen a paper in my handwriting peeping out, though he had promptly covered it up; no sooner had the King given the word than he gathered up the documents which he had already read and placed on the table, put them back in the box, and shook out the whole contents into the fire, between the King and Madame de Maintenon. In doing so he took care that my principal treatise, a bulky document, should be covered up by others; which he held down with the tongs so that not a scrap of my writing should become visible; and he did not leave the fireplace till the whole mass was safely consumed. We embraced each other with a feeling of relief corresponding to the peril we had incurred.

Before proceeding with my story I must mention an event which produced some important consequences later on. Since his last campaign in Flanders Marshal Villeroy had been languishing in the most profound disgrace; sometimes at Villeroy, but usually at Paris. At rare intervals he put in an appearance at Versailles, but never slept there; still more rarely he went to Fontainebleau, but never for more than one night; Marly had long been out of question for him. The King’s manner towards him was dry and silent; it seemed as if the sight of him recalled unpleasant recollections; but Madame de Maintenon was still friendly. Their common hatred of Chamillart had revived their old familiarity; she saw him from time to time, and they corresponded regularly; as she was always influenced by personal liking in the choice of her advisers, she used to consult him about the wretched state of public affairs, and he sent her his opinions in writing. All this was a secret from the general public, but not so for the sharper observers about the Court; I had known about it for a long time, and the King himself was not in ignorance, for Madame de Maintenon would not have dared to do a thing habitually without telling him, lest he should discover it for himself. She hoped to find some opportunity of restoring the Marshal to favour; she even showed the King some of his papers, getting Voysin to support the views expressed in them; but, so far, without success.

The present sad crisis made her the more eager, for her own sake. The death of the Dauphiness had left a terrible void; it was difficult for her to know what to do with the King in these first moments of his sorrow. He was not
easily amused; and her own spirits were so cast down that
she found no resources in herself. The transaction of
business with Ministers was not enough to fill up the long
winter evenings; and when the weather was too bad for
the King to go out he used to come to her room before three
o'clock, and not leave it till he went to supper at ten. It
would not have been easy to get him to admit any one to
their privacy; and, indeed, she did not know whom to
choose, for no choice was free from danger. She thought of
multiplying the private dinners at Marly or Trianon, to
give the King more opportunities for walking and seeing
fresh faces; but among the First Gentlemen of the Chamber
and other Grand Officials who had a right to accompany him
on such occasions there was not one capable of amusing him.
The Duke de Noailles, indeed, was always present, as Captain
of the Guard on duty; but since his recall from Spain
he had not been on the old footing with the King or herself.
She could think of no one but Marshal de Villeroy; he had
been brought up with the King, and had always been on
familiar terms with him till his disgrace; he was full of
old stories of their younger days, in which the King took
great delight; he knew all the gossip of the town and Court;
he could talk of music, of hunting; in short, his memory
was a sort of general warehouse, which could produce any-
thing required at a moment's notice. Another recom-
modation was, that she had nothing to fear from him; to
whatever degree of favour he might attain, she knew she
could always make him do as she pleased.

Accordingly, she determined to make a final effort to
overcome the King's reluctance to see him. She descanted
on the value of old friends and old servants, on the Marshal's
life-long attachment, and his grief at not being with the
King in this hour of distress; whatever mistakes he might
have committed, she said, his heart was in the right place;
in short, she used her eloquence to such purpose that, on
the very morning of the Dauphin's death, the guests at
Marly were almost petrified with astonishment at seeing
Marshal de Villeroy appear, and the King receive him with
as much kindness and familiarity as he could show to
any one, in that moment of anguish and depression. He
never again left the Court; he was admitted to Madame de
Maintenon's room, being the only man who had that privi-
lege; in a word, he became the favourite of both the King
and Madame de Maintenon: a circumstance which as we shall see, produced results of very great, too great, importance.

My hand is almost paralysed when I think of the horrible things I am now about to relate. I would gladly suppress all mention of them; but they were talked of throughout Europe, and had such important consequences that it is impossible to omit them in a story of the events which I have witnessed during my life. The sudden and rapid nature of the Dauphiness's illness, which completely baffled the doctors, produced a bad effect on minds already impressed by the warning so lately received by Boudin, and repeated in the subsequent letter from the King of Spain. The King's anger at the Princess's change of confessor, which would have been harshly visited on her if she had lived, gave way to grief for her loss; or perhaps I should say, for the loss of his own happiness and amusement; he determined, if possible, to find out the cause of this great misfortune, so that either his suspicions might be set at rest, or he might be enabled to take precautions against further disasters of the same kind.

Accordingly the Faculty received the most precise instructions what to do from his own mouth. Their report, after the post-mortem examination, was not reassuring: they could find no natural causes to account for death; only some strange appearance in the inside of the head, near the spot which had given her such acute suffering. Fagon and Boudin felt sure she had been poisoned, and told the King so plainly, in the presence of Madame de Maintenon. This opinion was confirmed by the gloomy silence of Boulduc, and the few other doctors who had been present at the autopsy. Maréchal alone said that the signs of poison were very doubtful; that he had found similar marks in other bodies which he had opened, in cases where there was not the slightest ground for suspicion. He told me the same thing, adding that, nevertheless, he could not give a decided opinion one way or the other; but he said it was cruel to confirm the King in a suspicion which would make him uneasy for the rest of his days. Maréchal had a warm dispute with Fagon and Boudin, but the King was not to be appeased by his arguments; he was determined to find out the perpetrator of this infernal crime.

Boudin, furious at having lost his office and all his hopes
of advancement, as well as a Princess who had always treated him with kindness, went about like a lunatic, declaring that she had undoubtedly been poisoned; some of the doctors who had assisted at the autopsy whispered the same thing to their friends; in less than twenty-four hours the rumour had spread like wildfire through the Court and Paris. The public grief for an adored Princess was now quickened by indignation; and the general terror was increased by the sudden illness and death of the Dauphin.

The King gave orders for a post-mortem examination in this case also, and it took place in the Dauphin’s own room at Versailles. The result was horrifying. The principal organs had lost all consistency; the heart, when handed to the Duke d’Aumont to be placed in a separate vase, melted away and fell to the ground; the stench was dreadful, and filled the whole of the vast suite of apartments. The doctors made their report to the King the same evening in Madame de Maintenon’s room. Fagon, Boudin, and several others declared without hesitation that the Dauphin had died from the effect of a subtle and violent poison, which in his case had consumed all the internal organs, while in that of the Dauphiness the head was the only part attacked. Maréchal, who had opened the body, stoutly maintained the opposite opinion; he said there were no distinct traces of poison; he had opened other bodies which presented exactly the same appearance; in those cases, as in that of the Dauphin, the cause of death was a natural poison; the patients had suffered from high internal fever, and the whole of their blood had become corrupt in consequence. He said that, although he had rarely seen corruption so far advanced as in this case, it was merely a question of degree; he had seen the very same thing in other persons who had undoubtedly died a natural death, and there was no reason to suspect anything but natural causes in this case. Fagon and Boudin replied angrily; Maréchal grew warm in his turn, and stuck to his opinion, telling the King and Madame de Maintenon, in the presence of the other doctors, that he was simply stating what he believed to be the truth; that what the others said was merely guess-work; and he implored the King, for the sake of his own health and comfort, to dismiss from his mind these terrible suspicions, which he believed to be entirely unfounded, and which
would make him miserable for all the remainder of his life.

Maréchal told me all this immediately; adding that, though he really believed the Dauphin's death might be attributed to natural causes, he confessed he did not feel quite sure of it; but he had expressed himself so strongly, not only out of compassion for the King, but also because he was indignant at the conduct of certain people who had been plotting, ever since the Dauphiness was taken ill, to bring an accusation against the Duke of Orleans. He said he gave me this warning as the Prince's friend as well as my own: for Maréchal was honest and downright, and, though perfectly respectful, and incapable of forgetting his position, he was rather coarse, and did not always consider the propriety of his expressions. ¹

In spite of my seclusion, I had already heard what people were whispering about the Duke of Orleans. At first it was whispered; but before very long it was said aloud, and the rapidity with which this horrible accusation spread from the Court to Paris, and thence to the remotest corners of the provinces and even to foreign countries, reminded me of the swiftness with which similar calumnies had been spread, at the time of the campaign in Flanders, against the honour of him whom the whole world was now mourning. The well-organized cabal of that day had the art of disseminating any rumours which suited its purpose with inconceivable swiftness. It had indeed been stricken down, and its detestable hero forced to carry his intrigues to Spain; but, though stricken, it had not been destroyed. Its hopes had been blighted for a time, but M. du Maine, Vaudemont, his niece, Madame d'Espinoy, and other members of the Meudon clique, were still alive, and had never ceased to hope against hope for some favourable chance which might restore their fortunes. The recent lamentable events seemed to offer the chance they wanted, and they availed themselves of it eagerly; the cabal revived, and, with Madame de Maintenon at its head, what could they not aspire to! and, indeed, to what did they not attain!

We have seen how strongly the Dauphin disapproved of the elevation of the bastards; he had not, indeed,

¹ It shocked Saint-Simon to hear a man in Maréchal's position call himself the friend of a Prince,
announced any intentions with regard to them, but even in the King's presence he had not been able to conceal his disapproval of the latest honours conferred upon them; nor was the Dauphiness more favourably inclined towards them. M. du Maine, the most timid of men, though the most indefatigable worker underground, lived in a state of perpetual terror for the future. His children were growing up; the King was an old man; he trembled when he thought of the change which was inevitably approaching, and his terror made him exaggerate its proximity. He saw no way of escape, for there was no one in the confidence of the Dauphin and Dauphiness who could be of the least assistance to him. To him, therefore, the news of their deaths came as a most welcome deliverance; his spirits revived amid the general lamentation; but, being a past-master in the most treacherous practices (I will not say the most criminal, because no whisper to that effect has ever reached me), he thought it would be to his advantage to cast suspicion on somebody, and more particularly on the Duke of Orleans. If he could succeed in making the King and the public believe the Duke guilty of such an atrocious crime he would have nothing to fear from his influence; perhaps the same unknown hand which had delivered him from the persons he most feared might also rid him of the Duke of Berry; but, if not, there was reason to hope that grief for his brother's death would make that Prince hate and fear his supposed murderer, and then it would be easy to circumvent a man of his weak and facile character. Having reduced the Duke of Orleans to this cruel position, M. du Maine proposed to offer his warmest sympathy to his sister in her misfortunes, and, through her, to make her husband believe that he was anxious to help him; in this way he hoped to bring off the marriage between the Prince de Dombes and a sister of the Duchess of Berry, which, though earnestly desired by the Duchess of Orleans, had hitherto been prevented by the Duke's opposition.

The Princes of the Blood were all children, with the exception of M. le Duc, who was only twenty, and the King looked upon them as of no account; nor was his mother, Madame la Duchesse, in a position to say anything to the King. Madame la Princesse, who never had sense enough for anything except continual prayer, trembled before her daughter, Madame du Maine; her other daughter, the
Princess of Conti, had spent all her life at Paris engaged in her domestic affairs, and would never dare to approach the King. Madame de Vendôme was of no account; nor were the daughters of Madame la Duchesse, because of their youth. There was, therefore, a clear field before M. du Maine, and he knew how to avail himself of it. Madame de Maintenon had eyes only for him; since the death of her dear Dauphiness he was the only person in the world that she loved. She hated the Duke of Orleans as much as ever; we have seen the cause of this hatred, and some of its effects. Her beloved nurseling had, therefore, no difficulty in making her believe any story against him; or, if they did not believe it themselves, they behaved as if they did, and led the King and the public to believe it.

There was no mistake as to who originated this horrible calumny, or who assisted him to spread it; in the King’s private circle they made no attempt to conceal it. Madame de Maintenon spoke angrily to Maréchal in the King’s presence, telling him that they well knew who had done the deed, going so far as to mention the Duke of Orleans by name. The King made a horror-struck gesture of assent, as if he had no doubt about it; and they seemed displeased when Maréchal ventured to protest against such an accusation. Meanwhile Fagon nodded his head approvingly. Boudin declared wildly that there could be no doubt about the Prince’s guilt, and only shrugged his shoulders impudently when Maréchal had the courage to rebuke him. Such was the full story of the scene when the doctors brought their report of the post-mortem examination; Maréchal wisely did not tell me all at first, but, seeing how the storm was rising, he confided everything to me later on.

The Duke of Maine talked of this scene in the King’s rooms; it is true he did so with an affectation of secrecy, nevertheless, his remarks were repeated by the valets. Bloin and other confidential members of the Household said openly that neither the King nor Madame de Maintenon doubted the truth of this horrible accusation; Fagon lent it his authority by his obstinate silence and eloquent gestures when the subject was mentioned in his presence; Boudin went about declaiming against the Duke of Orleans; and between them they struck such terror into the hearts of the other doctors that not one of them dared say a
word. This terror spread to the rest of the Court, as soon as it was seen that every one connected with Madame de Maintenon said the same thing, the more forcibly because it was said with an air of horrified reserve, and that the friends of the Duke and Duchess of Maine, and even their servants, were openly clamouring for vengeance against the Duke of Orleans. It was the story of the campaign of Lille over again; it became the fashion to repeat this calumny, just as it had been at that time to calumniate the Prince whom we were now mourning; and again the clamour was so loud and so persistent as to stifle all contradiction.

I have already pointed out how the prospects of M. du Maine were affected by the deaths we were now lamenting; those of the Duke of Orleans were influenced in a manner diametrically opposite. If he had really been the infernal monster he was made out to be, the most profitable stroke for him would have been to get rid of the King, in order to set the Dauphin and Dauphiness on the throne, and so free himself from the power of his implacable enemy, Madame de Maintenon. The time has not yet arrived for a detailed description of his character; it is sufficient here to show briefly that nothing could have been more contrary to his own interests than the crime so foully imputed to him.

The Dauphin had always been favourably inclined towards the Duke of Orleans; partly because the Duke de Chevreuse spoke highly of him; for his eldest son, the Duke de Montfort, was very intimate with him; and M. de Chevreuse himself delighted in conversing with him about history and science, and very often about religion, to which he hoped to convert him. The Archbishop of Cambrai also liked his society, and the liking was mutual; so that the Duke of Orleans openly took his part at the time of his disgrace, and never ceased to do so. These things had endeared the Duke of Orleans to the whole of the little flock, in spite of his very different morals; and we know what their influence was with the Dauphin. Apart from their assistance, the two Princes used often to meet in the evening at the Princess of Conti's, where they would sit together in a corner to discuss scientific subjects; and no one could talk of such matters more intelligently and agreeably than the Duke of Orleans. As I have already mentioned, M. de Beauvilliers, anxious to promote a friend-
ship which he believed to be of advantage to the Royal Family, had asked me not long ago to caution the Duke of Orleans about the licentious remarks he sometimes made, which the Dauphin disliked. I did so, and he corrected himself so completely that the Dauphin expressed his satisfaction to M. de Beauvilliers.

The Dauphiness also was always friendly to the Duke of Orleans. She had been very fond of Monsieur, her maternal grandfather, and included her uncle in this affection; so that she always took his part with the King and Madame de Maintenon, even when he was on the worst of terms with them; and they took no offence because of her near relationship to him. In his turn the Duke of Orleans spoke up manfully for the Dauphin at the time of the campaign of Lille, and this made a new bond between him and the Dauphiness. Not long afterwards the Duke of Orleans was in a very perilous position in consequence of the Spanish affair; Monseigneur, who wished to push the matter to extremities, met with the most steady resistance in the Council from his son; and his daughter-in-law took up her uncle's cause most warmly, though she knew that in doing so she was incurring Madame de Maintenon's displeasure. These things have all been mentioned in their proper place; I merely recapitulate them now to show that the Duke of Orleans had at least as much to hope, as M. du Maine had to fear, from the accession to the throne of the Dauphin and Dauphiness; the contrast between their interests is self-evident.

Let any one consider all this; let him further reflect that the Duke of Orleans had an assured position, which nothing could disturb, and which must descend to his children; let him compare this position with that of M. du Maine; and then let him ask himself which of the two was more likely to be the poisoner! But this is not all. Let my readers remember how Monseigneur had persecuted the Duke of Orleans, how he had endeavoured to bring him to the scaffold, and how nearly he succeeded; let them further remember how I found the Duke of Orleans shedding tears in a back room on the night when Monseigneur died; how astonished I was; how I tried to make him ashamed of himself, and what he replied! Good God! what a contrast between these tears shed for the loss of an enemy, who would soon have become his master,
and the farcical account of the scene by the King’s death-bed given by M. du Maine, who had just left the room, when he mimicked the coarse peasant who had been called in to administer a quack remedy, and the discomfiture of Fagon, so cleverly and funnily that the shouts of laughter were overheard in the Gallery, to the scandal of everybody! This was an actual fact, and a very characteristic trait; the details will be found in their proper place if I am spared to continue these Memoirs up to the time of the King’s death.

But M. du Maine had one great advantage, and he made the most of it; appearances were against the Duke of Orleans. Forced when very young to contract a marriage which he knew from the public outcry, as well as from his mother’s anger, to be unworthy of him, he had abandoned himself to the wildest debauchery; partly to escape from the intolerable ennui of the Court, partly because he fancied that, by neglecting his wife, he might redeem himself from the discredit he had incurred in the eyes of the world by marrying her. To while away the time which he was forced to spend at Court he took to scientific pursuits, among others, to alchemy—not with any notion of making gold, for he always laughed at that delusion, but merely to amuse himself with curious experiments. He fitted up a laboratory, and engaged an expert named Humbert as his instructor, a man distinguished as much for his high character as for his scientific knowledge. He carried on his researches quite openly; he used to talk of them freely, and often brought people in to see Humbert and himself at work.

At one time he had set his heart on raising the Devil, in which he admitted he never succeeded; but, after his liaison with Madame d’Argenton, he was more successful with other forbidden inquiries, capable of a sinister interpretation. I have mentioned some very singular revelations of the future, as well as of things actually occurring in another place, obtained in his presence by means of a bowl of water, which he related to me just before his departure for Italy. All this, however, was merely by way of amusement, without a trace of any criminal intention. Then followed the Spanish affair, from which he never entirely cleared himself in the eyes of the King; and the horrible rumours about the relations between his daughter and
himself, which he treated with too much indifference. All these things combined made the growth of suspicion easy, when the seed was once sown; people recalled the sinister circumstances which had accompanied the death of Monsieur's first wife, and began to mutter that the Duke of Orleans was not Monsieur's son for nothing.

Public opinion turned against him with extraordinary rapidity. So early as the 17th of February, when he went with Madame to sprinkle the body of the Dauphiness with holy water, the crowd made insulting remarks as they passed, which they heard distinctly, though they took no notice; but their embarrassment and indignation may be readily imagined. It was worse when he went alone, on the 21st, to perform the same office for the Dauphin; the mob shouted the most atrocious insults at him, pointing their fingers at him with the coarsest epithets. No one in the crowd attempted to remonstrate; they seemed to think they were showing him a favour by not tearing him to pieces. Again, as the funeral procession passed along the roads, the cries of the people were those of indignation rather than of grief, and insulting remarks were heard. Some precautions against violence had been taken quietly in Paris, and the mob had to content itself with insulting gestures and atrocious outcries against the Duke of Orleans; nevertheless, as the procession passed the Palais-Royal the hooting and disturbance became so violent that for some minutes there was reason to fear the worst.

As may be supposed, M. du Maine knew how to profit by this public excitement; by the gossip of the cafés; by the feeling in the Saloon of Marly, and in the Parliament, where the new First-President was offering him the first-fruits of his attachment; and by all the reports, which soon came in, of public opinion in the provinces and foreign countries. He had sown the seed, and the harvest surpassed his utmost expectations. The death of the little Dauphin added fresh fuel to the fire; M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon, with Bloin and their other trusty confidants, made the most of it; the King was in a state of dejection, fear, and general uneasiness; and this was the condition to which they had intended to reduce him, to make him more pliable to their wishes. Marshal Villeroy, though Monsieur had honoured him with his friendship and the Duke of Orleans had always treated him with consideration,
was too grateful to his protectress for his unexpected restoration to favour to contradict her in any way; he well knew her hatred for the Duke of Orleans and her blind devotion to her darling M. du Maine; and accordingly he distinguished himself by his violence against the Duke of Orleans. Harcourt behaved with more moderation in public, as was to be expected of a man of his sense and cleverness; nevertheless, he took care not to offend the calumniators, whose cause was indeed identical with his own and that of his friends, Vaudemont, Tessé, Tallard, Madame d’Espinoys, and the Rohans.

The Duke de Noailles was in an uncomfortable position, like that of a man holding a wolf by the ears. He was on duty; and, consequently, often with the King and Madame de Maintenon in their moments of privacy. He was on bad terms with them, and anxious not to displease them; yet he dared not appear to acquiesce in the sentiments they often expressed in his presence, because he did not want a fresh quarrel with the Duke of Orleans. His situation with them gave him an excuse for keeping silence, but these occasions recurred too frequently for his comfort. The 1st of April, when he would be relieved from duty, seemed a long way off; perhaps he still felt the weight of the fatal snuff-box, although by this time it was a long way from his pocket. He had a slight inflammation of the face; and, though it was accompanied by no other symptoms, he gave out that it was an attack of apoplexy. The doctors did not agree in this opinion; but, contrary to the usual practice of apoplectic persons, who, as a rule, deny that there is anything the matter with them, he insisted that it was so; and towards the beginning of March he obtained leave to go to Vichy. Here he remained a long time, till the fury of the public should be abated and their conversation be turned to some other topic, as always happens in the long run. Then he came back, completely cured, because there was nothing the matter with him when he went away; and since then there has never been any question of his taking precautions against apoplexy.

I must now go back a little. One evening, when I had just returned to Marly from visiting M. de Beauvilliers at Versailles, I found a message from the Duchess of Orleans saying that they were distressed at not seeing me, and begging me to go to them, as they had something particular
to tell me. Although Maréchal had told me what was being said about the Duke of Orleans, I had not been to see them since the Dauphin's death; for my spirits were so depressed that I really did not feel up to talking; my mind was confused, and I could not see what advice to give them. I sent a reply asking the Duchess to excuse me for that evening, and saying that I would call on them next morning. When I went I found her in the greatest distress. She told me that the Marquis d'Effiat had come from Paris on the previous evening on purpose to warn them of the horrible rumours that were going about; he said the King and Madame de Maintenon were not only convinced from the doctors' report that a crime had been committed, but they believed all that was being said about the Duke of Orleans; and public feeling was so much excited that, in spite of the unpleasant nature of the task, he had thought it necessary to warn them. He advised that the Duke of Orleans should speak to the King and demand an inquiry; he should ask permission to go to the Bastille; and also that Humbert, with such other of his servants as the King might think proper, should be placed under arrest until the whole matter was cleared up.

"And what does the Duke of Orleans think of doing, Madame?" I exclaimed. "He went to the King this morning," she said, "and found him very grave, reserved, and short in his manner; he would say nothing in reply to his complaint and demand for justice." "And the Bastille, Madame, did the Duke say anything about that?" I interrupted. "Yes," she said; "but the King would not listen to him; he treated his request with an air of disdain; which he would not modify, though the Duke of Orleans urged the matter strongly. The Duke then asked that at any rate Humbert should be sent to the Bastille and examined; which the King curtly refused. At last he yielded so far as to say that he would not have him arrested, but would send orders to the Bastille that he should be received if he chose to go there of his own accord." I said I was sorry they should have been in such a hurry to act in accordance with advice which seemed to me to be very bad indeed.

I must explain that this Marquis d'Effiat was a clever, intriguing, unprincipled man; living in open contempt of morality and religion; very ambitious; caring little by
what means he attained his object, so long as he did attain it. He had formerly done a good deal of dirty work for the Chevalier de Lorraine; in conjunction with whom he had governed Monsieur and his Court with a rod of iron; the Duke of Orleans had got into the habit of fearing him and admiring his cleverness, and used to put up with considerable insolence from him. In spite of vices very repugnant to the taste of the King and Madame de Maintenon, they used to treat him with favour and distinction, because he had assisted the Chevalier de Lorraine to overcome Monsieur's opposition to his son's marriage; for the same reason he had always been favourably regarded by the Duchess of Orleans. He was secretly enlisted among the followers of M. du Maine; and, through his intimacy with the Chevalier de Lorraine, had become the friend of Marshal de Villeroy to such a degree that the Marshal actually admired him. The advice he had now given to the Duke of Orleans was so bad that, coming from a man of his cleverness and knowledge of the world, it seemed to me that there was something very suspicious about it.

By acting as he did, the Duke of Orleans lowered himself to the position of a servant in a house where something had been stolen. He ought to have taken up the matter with a high hand, as a Prince conscious of his dignity and innocence; he should have proudly demanded justice of the King before all the persons assembled in his room after supper, defying any one to bring the slightest shadow of proof against him. If refused, he should have talked openly about the subject in public; and, without bringing any specific accusation against M. du Maine, should have directed attention to the manner in which their respective prospects had been affected by the recent events. This would have frightened M. du Maine, who was not remarkable for courage, and reduced him to the defensive; very likely he would have thought it advisable to throw water on the fire he had set alight; he would, at any rate, have been obliged to behave with circumspection, for he knew that public opinion was by no means favourable to him.

The Duke of Orleans should also have reminded the King, and informed the public, of the letter from Prince Eugène discovered in Mercy's despatch-box after his defeat by du Bourg, at the time of the conspiracy in Lorraine, which contained a remarkable sentence to this effect, that "if
it were found impossible by other means to compel France to accept the terms proposed, recourse must be had to the grand remedy." There was no occasion to spare the Court of Vienna, which was doing its best to prevent the English Government from making peace; the Duke of Orleans should have explained this mysterious sentence by the well-known readiness of the House of Austria to resort to poison for the removal of those who stood in its way, as exemplified in the cases of the Queen of Spain and the Electoral Prince of Bavaria; and suggested a motive in this case, namely, that, if the elder branch of the Royal Family came to an end, the King would be forced to recall the King of Spain and leave that country to the House of Austria. This explanation of Prince Eugène's letter was in all probability the right one; it would have made considerable impression on sensible and moderate people; and, if accompanied by obscure hints at the coincidence of M. du Maine's interests, up to a certain point, with those of the House of Austria, it would have had the effect of keeping M. du Maine quiet, and imposing caution on the King and Madame de Maintenon.

No doubt the result would have been a violent quarrel between the Duke of Orleans and M. du Maine, but an open quarrel would have disarmed the latter; he was only to be feared when he worked in darkness. He would not have found many people to take his part. The Count de Toulouse was a man of honour and courage, but he neither loved nor esteemed his brother, and it is doubtful whether he would have taken up the cudgels for him; the quarrel over M. le Prince's inheritance had thrown all the Princes of the Blood to the side of the Duke of Orleans; the Duke of Berry was his son-in-law, and still passionately in love with his wife; and, as for the servile herd of courtiers, always anxious to please when they can do so without danger to themselves, they would have thought twice before siding openly against the Duke of Orleans in such a quarrel, considering the position which he and the Duke of Berry must hold after the King's death. No doubt this was what M. du Maine feared; this was the danger which he had warded off so cleverly by the insidious advice conveyed through d'Effiat.

But I was talking to his sister, who, though she neither liked nor respected him, yet (such is the marvellous working
of pride) counted her husband and children as nothing in comparison with him. I could not suggest to her any of the considerations which I have just set down; I had to content myself with disapproving d'Effiat's advice, for such reasons as occurred to me on the spur of the moment, and said I thought it a pity that they had acted on it so hastily. While we were thus conversing the Duke of Orleans joined us; I never saw a man so utterly dejected or so beside himself with indignation. He repeated what I had already heard about his interview with the King, and told me that he had immediately ordered Humbert to present himself at the Bastille. I expressed my disapproval, as I had done to the Duchess; but very mildly, because the thing was done; and I saw that no vigorous action was to be expected from him in his present state, which filled me with compassion. I told them what I had heard from Maréchal, without, however, mentioning M. du Maine. I only brought in his name when talking with the Duke of Orleans alone that same afternoon. Next morning I heard that the King had told him curtly that he had hanged his mind about Humbert, and that it would be useless for him to go to the Bastille, as he would not be admitted; on his attempting to remonstrate, the King had turned his back on him and left the room. Humbert had already presented himself at the Bastille, in compliance with his orders, but was refused admission.

From that day the Duke of Orleans was cut by everybody; in the King's room and in the Saloon he was surrounded by empty space. If he drew near to a group of courtiers they turned on their heels and dispersed, without the slightest regard for appearances, to reassemble immediately in another part of the room. Even the ladies avoided the Duchess of Orleans for a time; some of them never came near her again. After his first great blunder there was nothing for it but to wait till the storm blew over; but it was not to blow over in a hurry, it was stirred up too sedulously for that. The same thing went on till the very last visit to Marly during the King's reign, when the monarch's end was visibly approaching. Whenever the denunciations of the Duke of Orleans seemed to be dying out in Paris and the provinces clever emissaries were sent out to stir them up again, while others repeated their echoes in the Court; and this continued without
intermission till some time after the King's death. In short, I was the only person, I say absolutely the only person, who continued to see the Duke of Orleans as usual, both in private and in public. I used to go up to him as if nothing had happened; sit down with him in a corner of the Saloon, where we were certainly in no danger of being interrupted, and walk with him in the gardens, in full view of the King's windows. He heard that La Feuillade, at Paris, was talking of him in a most insulting manner, and was so transported with fury that I had the greatest difficulty in dissuading him from having La Feuillade beaten by his servants. This was the only occasion in his life when I ever saw him really angry with any one, or go to such extremities.

Meanwhile M. de Beauvilliers, the Chancellor, and other friends of both sexes were perpetually warning me of the danger I was incurring by conduct so opposed to public sentiment and so likely to displease the King and Madame de Maintenon. It was all very well, they said, to see the Duke of Orleans from time to time, and avoid breaking off all relations with him; indeed, it was only right and proper that I should do so; but to associate with him continually and publicly, in the King's gardens, and in full view of the whole Court, was simply folly; it could do him no good, and might give such offence as to ruin me altogether. However, I was not to be persuaded; it seemed to me that, if one has a friend in such a cruel position, it is not enough merely to abstain from cutting him; I felt that my own self-respect required me to draw closer to him than ever, not only to afford him such consolation as was in my power, but to mark my indignation at the manner in which he was calumniated. My friends did all they could to frighten me; I was told that the King was displeased, and that Madame de Maintenon took my conduct as a personal affront; but I turned a deaf ear, and continued to see the Duke of Orleans every day, usually for two or three hours. I shall recur to this subject again; it is now time to mention some of the occurrences of the year. I will only add now that it was again due to Maréchal that Humbert was not admitted to the Bastille.

When the King left the Duke of Orleans, after curtly refusing his request to be sent to the Bastille, he went into his dressing-room, where he found Fagon and Maréchal;
and, his mind being full of the subject, he told them what had just happened. Maréchal, with his honest freedom, asked him what he had decided; and, when he heard the King's reply, praised the straightforward conduct of the Duke of Orleans, but disapproved of the permission given to Humbert. "What do you expect from an inquiry, Sire?" he said boldly. "Do you mean to proclaim openly the suspected disgrace of your nearest relations? And what will be the end of it? You will find nothing, and the disgrace will recoil on yourself. If by any chance you did discover what people are trying to make you believe—and I will guarantee that you will discover nothing—what would you do? Would you have the Duke of Orleans beheaded; your own nephew, who is married to your daughter and has children by her? and proclaim his crime and infamy to the world? And if you discover nothing, as you will do, because there is nothing to be discovered, you will merely put it in the power of his enemies and your own to say that, if nothing was found out, it was because you did not choose to inquire too closely. Believe me, Sire, all this is horrible. Spare yourself all this needless torture; revoke the permission given to Humbert at once; and dismiss from your mind these atrocious suspicions and calumnies, which will only shorten your life, and embitter the remainder of your days!"

This bold and incisive speech, coming from a man whom he knew to be honest and really devoted to his person, had its effect upon the King. He said at once that Maréchal was quite right, he had only given way about Humbert because he had been teased into it; and he cancelled the order immediately. Maréchal told me all this next morning, adding that Fagon and Bloin had not said a single word. I embraced him cordially for his honest courage; and I took care to let the Duke and Duchess of Orleans know it without delay.
CHAPTER XIX

1712

Trifling successes in Flanders—Arrival of the galleons from America—An inappropriate reward for du Casse—Death of the Count de Brionne—Amusements resumed at Marly—Death of the Princess-Royal of England—I continue to show myself in public as the Duke of Orleans' friend—Reason why my conduct was displeasing to his enemies—I am informed of Madame de Maintenon's anger, and threatened with banishment—I yield to pressure and retire to La Ferté for a month—Mysterious arrest of a friar—He is examined by d'Argenson at the Bastille, and subsequently imprisoned for life at Segovia—D'Argenson's friendly messages to the Duke of Orleans—A scandalous matrimonial lawsuit—Shameful curiosity of the fashionable world—Death of Vendôme—His burial in the Escurial—His temporary lodgement in the Place of Decay likely to be permanent—Death of Harlay—A characteristic saying—Montesquiou wins a brilliant victory at Denain—Villars takes the credit for it—Death of M. de Soubise.

During the month of March we had two trifling successes in Flanders. The enemy bombarded Arras, hoping to destroy our magazines, but did little damage. Marshal de Montesquiou, hearing that they had thrown 800 men into the fort of Sluys, sent Broglie (now a Duke and Marshal of France), to attack them. On his march thither he encountered a party of 300 cavalry, who retired under the guns of Sluys; he then attacked that fortress, and carried it by storm, capturing the whole garrison and the party of cavalry. We were so little accustomed to success that this affair caused a great stir.

Better news still was that of the arrival of du Casse at Corunna with the richly loaded galleons which he had escorted from America. Their safe arrival was a great disappointment to the English and Dutch, who had been lying in wait for them for a long time; and a most welcome addition to the resources of Spain, where commerce was languishing and grave disorders were feared. The King of Spain was so overjoyed that he made du Casse a Knight

873
of the Golden Fleece, to the great scandal of the public; although his services were brilliant, that was not the appropriate reward for them. He was the son of a small tradesman who sold hams at Bayonne; he went over to America and became a filibuster; being very brave, he soon made a name for himself, and became the leader of those adventurers, besides acquiring great wealth. We have seen that he did good service during the expedition to Carthagena, and how he quarrelled with Pointis, who commanded it. Subsequently he entered the King's Navy, and continued to distinguish himself. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant-General, and would have been made a Marshal of France if his age had permitted him to go on service; but, having had to raise himself from the very lowest rank, he was too old by the time he reached the top. He was one of the best and most generous men I ever knew, and one of the most patriotic citizens; while perfectly free from servility, he never forgot his origin, though everybody made much of him as soon as his rank and services had brought him within reach of the Court and society.

A man died about this time, of better family than du Casse, who would, however, have gone on selling hams all his life if his father had sold them before him—the Count de Brionne. He was the best dancer of his day, though not very tall, and rather stout; a worthy sort of man, but as dull and tiresome as it is possible for a person to be. Nobody ever saw him except at the regular functions of the Court; he never entertained at his own house; his own family paid no sort of attention to him, nor did any one connected with the Great Stables. His father, the Grand Equerry, who was not of an affectionate disposition, used to complain that he drank up all his good wine; he was easily consoled for his loss.

On the 6th of April the King returned to Marly, and, though the bodies of the Dauphin and Dauphiness were still unburied, he gave orders that there should be no alteration in the usual amusements of the Saloon; he wished the Duke and Duchess of Berry to preside over tables for lansquenet and brelan; and there were to be tables set out for other games. He dined in Madame de Maintenon's room once or twice a week, and there was music there, to which her familiar ladies were admitted,
The King of England fell ill with small-pox at St. Germain, and was in such danger that the Sacraments were administered. For some unknown reason he followed the example of the Dauphiness, and refused the services of his Jesuit confessor; the parish priest was sent for, and he made his confession to him. Every precaution was taken to prevent the Princess-Royal, his sister, from catching the disease, but in vain; she was taken ill and died a week later, on the 18th of April. It was a severe blow for the Queen of England, especially as she had the sad prospect of being separated from the King, her son, owing to the stipulations in the approaching treaty of peace. The body of the Princess-Royal was buried without ceremony at the convent of Ste. Marie de Chaillot, to which the Queen used frequently to retire.

After what had happened to Father de la Rue during the last illness of the Dauphiness, Father Tellier thought some mark of distinction should be conferred upon him; the King, therefore, appointed him confessor to the Duke of Berry, and announced that for the little Dauphin he reserved Father Martineau, late confessor to him whom all Europe was mourning. About the same time the Jesuits, who never miss an advantage, made a great fuss about a paper in the late Dauphin's handwriting on Cardinal de Noailles's affairs, very unfavourable to the Cardinal, which they had discovered; they sent it to Rome, and had it printed. This document cannot have been found in the Dauphin's despatch-box, as we have already seen; it may have been discovered elsewhere, but it is not easy to get at the truth of the matter. I can, however, most confidently affirm the truth of my report of the Dauphin's sentiments, as expressed to me a very few days before his death. If the paper as published was really genuine, it may have been composed at the beginning of the affair, when the Dauphin was still influenced by the prejudices of M. de Beauvilliers and M. de Chevreuse; or he may have set down the case against the Cardinal, intending to record the arguments in his favour when he had heard both sides; however that may be, the notes unfavourable to the Cardinal were published, and the others, if there were any, carefully suppressed. I can only say that the opinion expressed in this paper was absolutely the reverse of those which he held at the time of his death, for he was quite
incapable of deceiving me; there was no reason why he should do so, especially as he wished me to assist him in deciding the affair, nor was a sudden change of mind at all in keeping with his character. The cabal opposed to Cardinal de Noailles made the most of this discovery, but their triumph did not last long; it merely enabled them to throw dust in the eyes of the public and gain a little time.

On Monday the 18th of April a service was held, and the bodies of the two Dauphins and the Dauphiness were interred at St. Denis, with great ceremony. M. de Beaufort-villiers had the courage to attend, bearing the train of the Duke of Berry. I went to see him next day, for his painful task had been too much for his health; as I embraced him, I said, "Well, so you have just buried the hopes of France!" He acquiesced; alas! if he had lived to the present time he would have even less reason to doubt the truth of my remark.

I will finish all that relates to this painful subject at once, though it will disturb the order of my narrative a little. The presence of the coffins in the choir of St. Denis had caused the anniversary service for Monseigneur to be postponed till the 2nd of May, when the Bishop of Metz officiated; the Duke of Berry, the Duke of Orleans, the Count de Charolais, and the Prince of Conti were present; the King also sent M. du Maine and the Count de Toulouse. On the 10th there was a solemn service at Notre-Dame for the Dauphin and Dauphiness, at which Cardinal de Noailles officiated; the Princes in attendance as mourners were the Duke of Berry, the Duke of Orleans, and the Count de Charolais; the Princesses:—the Duchess of Orleans, Mademoiselle de Bourbon, and Mademoiselle de Charolais. Cardinal de Noailles gave a superb dinner afterwards to the Princes and Princesses, with the principal ladies. Before returning to Versailles the Duke of Berry went to the Hôtel de Condé to see M. le Duc, who was not yet able to leave his room. Another service was held at the Saint-Chapelle on the 24th of May, at which Father de la Rue preached a funeral sermon for the Dauphin and Dauphiness; this caused some surprise, for, to say nothing of what had happened at the death-bed of that Princess, the function was hardly appropriate for her confessor.

I must now go back a little; that is, to the sojourn at
Marly during which, as I have already mentioned, amuse-
ments resumed their usual course even before the hopes of
France had been interred at St. Denis. My friends were
more uneasy than ever about my behaviour to the Duke
of Orleans; and, though I would not yield to their impor-
tunities, which I thought arose from the timidity natural to
courtiers, their unanimity gave me matter for reflection, for
I knew that, so far as some of them were concerned, they
could not have consulted each other. I still treated their
warnings about the wrath of the King and Madame de
Maintenon with contempt; I did not regard this danger
as really serious, for I could not understand what difference
it could make that I should see more or less of the Duke of
Orleans; he was cut in the most insulting manner by
everybody else, of all degrees; and it seemed to me that
my associating with him could not alter his position, nor
make him less guilty in the eyes of the world. But it was
just this point which constituted my crime, and caused
the uneasiness of my friends.

I have already said that I had been unable to control
my feelings at the death of the Dauphin; my seclusion
and my extreme sorrow, which I could not conceal, be-
trayed me. People began to have suspicions; and finally
discovered, though without having all the particulars, what
an immense personal loss I had sustained. Some even
went so far as to condole with me; for, though I kept my
doors shut as much as possible, I could not help receiving
a certain number of visitors; and some of them told me
they had come on purpose to express their sympathy. It
was in vain that I pretended not to understand them, and
changed the subject. Nobody believed me; and before
long the general conviction of the Court was that by the
Dauphin’s death I had been deprived of the most brilliant
and apparently certain prospects for the future.

This conviction was not to be reconciled with my be-
haviour towards the Duke of Orleans, if I believed him to
be the Dauphin’s murderer. I was too well known for
people to think for a moment that anything would induce
me to meet on friendly terms if I suspected him of so
execrable a crime; far less to associate with him day by
day in the closest intimacy, thereby defying, not only
public opinion, but those powerful influences which had
reduced him to the most humiliating solitude in the midst
of the Court, and even in the bosom of his own family. I had always been very intimate with him, and at the same time with the persons most in the confidence of the late Dauphin; it was therefore incredible that I should not have conceived some suspicion, if there had been the slightest real foundation for the accusation brought against him. Consequently, my conduct produced a certain effect on public opinion, which by no means suited the interests of M. du Maine, and gave great offence to Madame de Maintenon. This was what my friends perceived already; I would not believe their warnings for some time. In the end I saw that they were right, but I still paid no attention to them.

I was not insensible to the danger of incurring the enmity of those two powerful personages, and I was quite aware that they had the support of the King at their backs; but a change of behaviour towards the Duke of Orleans now would furnish them with a fresh weapon against him; and I could not bring myself to such a mean and cowardly action. After all, what I had to fear was merely that they would make my conduct a pretext for picking a quarrel with me, for I knew I was in no danger of being implicated in the accusation brought against the Duke of Orleans; I resolved, therefore, to take the risk, but at the same time to behave with prudence and avoid all other causes of offence. I was told several times that the King was displeased at seeing me walking in the gardens with his nephew, and Madame de Maintenon had expressed her surprise that I should be the only person to associate with him; indeed, she herself, and M. du Maine who sheltered himself under her wing, took care to let me hear anything likely to frighten me into altering my ways. This went on all through the interval between the two visits to Marly; during the second even greater pressure was brought to bear on me, because it was then that the funeral procession took place, and the outcries and insults of the mob were re-echoed at Court; and besides, Marly is so arranged that everybody could see me in my daily intercourse with the Duke of Orleans.

Matters came to such a pitch at last that M. de Beauvilliers came to me, some time after the funeral, and advised me to go away to La Ferté, without awaiting the return of the Court to Versailles, and remain there till the
storm which was gathering over my head should blow over. I held out for some days; but one morning he came to Madame de Saint-Simon, while I was attending the King's Mass, and told her he had certain information that Madame de Maintenon's wrath was on the point of exploding, and that, if I did not withdraw from the Court for a short time of my own accord, I should be banished altogether. He said he would undertake to keep me informed of what went on during my absence, and would let me know when it was safe to come back; he suggested that, as a pretext, I should plead urgent business at La Ferté, which required my immediate presence; he would himself go to the King and obtain leave of absence for me during the four or five days which remained of the stay at Marly; and, finally, he begged that all arrangements might be completed at once, so that I might start next morning. I found him still in my rooms when I returned from Mass. I saw that he was in great alarm; but this did not impress me so much as his decided and authoritative way of speaking, which was very unlike his usual manner. His tone and expression were evidently assumed deliberately; I perceived that he meant me to understand that he was the bearer of an order which he was not at liberty to avow openly.

Madame de Saint-Simon and I saw that we must give in. No sooner had we agreed that I should go than the Duke's face altered from an expression of extreme austerity to one of serene cheerfulness; I never saw such a rapid change in any man. He never said anything more to me on the subject; but I have always been convinced that he had been sent expressly by the King or by Madame de Maintenon, and that they had told him I should be sent away if I did not give in with a good grace. During the remainder of the day I let people know quietly that I was called to La Ferté by unexpected business; I paid my court as usual; went to see the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, made my preparations, and started next morning. I was away for more than a month, after which I was told that it was safe for me to return; why, I never discovered. I went straight back to the Court, and continued to see the Duke of Orleans in the same way as before my departure.

The end of his misfortunes was not yet in sight; he
was still to suffer for the too-witty jest which had aroused the implacable wrath of two all-powerful witches. Chalais, Madame des Ursins’ right-hand man, was despatched by her on a mysterious errand which had never been clearly explained. He set out on a journey which lasted nearly three weeks, travelling under an assumed name; and though he passed within two leagues of Chalais, where his parents lived, he gave them no sign of life. He spent some time lurking about in Poitou, and at last arrested a Franciscan friar in the monastery of Bressuire, who immediately exclaimed, “I am a lost man!” The name of the prisoner never transpired; nothing was known of him except that he was really a friar, and had lately returned from visiting several places in Italy and Germany, Vienna among the rest. Chalais had taken with him an officer of Dragoons who knew this man; he now sent the officer to Madrid, while he himself escorted the prisoner to Paris. He arrived at Marly on the 27th of April. Torcy took him into the King’s private room after dinner, where he remained for half an hour with the King, the meeting of the Council of State being delayed in the meanwhile. The prisoner had been consigned to the Bastille, in charge of d’Argenson.

A man like Chalais would not have been chosen for such a degrading task as the arrest of a miserable monk without some special object; and the ostentation of the subsequent proceedings also seemed purposely designed to produce an effect on the public mind. The immediate result was a fresh outburst of calumny against the Duke of Orleans: although this friar was far away at the time of the death of our Princes, it was said that he had been the tool employed to poison them, and that there was a design to poison other members of the Royal Family. These horrible rumours spread through Paris and the provinces with a rapidity which showed that they were propagated artificially; Madame des Ursins was as well served in Spain in this respect as Madame de Maintenon was in France. The public rage against the Duke of Orleans was dreadful; being powerless to avert the storm, he had nothing for it but to bow his head and wait for it to blow over. It could not make his isolation more complete than it was already; he was growing accustomed to solitude, and, as he had never in his life heard of this friar, he felt no uneasiness.

D’Argenson, who interrogated the prisoner several times,
was adroit enough to pay court to the Duke of Orleans by coming and telling him that he had discovered nothing to implicate him in the slightest degree, and would report to the King accordingly. He had always treated the Duke with consideration; like a sensible man, he saw the folly of this outburst, which was absolutely unfounded, and could not prevent the Duke of Orleans from becoming a very important personage during the minority of the next King; and he gladly availed himself, therefore, of this opportunity to establish himself in his favour. We shall see that this sagacious foresight was eventually the means of raising him to great distinction.

The friar remained in the Bastille for three months, during which he was allowed to speak to nobody except d'Argenson. After this, Chalais escorted him from Paris to Segovia, where he was imprisoned in a turret of the castle, which commanded one of the finest views in the world, being higher than the towers of Notre-Dame at Paris. He was still there, in good health, when I visited that fine castle ten years later. I heard that he used to go into furious outbursts of rage against the House of Austria, and curse its Ministers in Spain, who left him to rot in his prison. He read nothing but novels, and lived as wickedly as a rascal can do who is confined within four walls. It was supposed that he had bargained to poison the King of Spain and his sons; and his rage against the Court of Vienna seemed to lend colour to this theory, which was held by very sensible men on both sides of the Pyrenees. But the whole affair remained a mystery, and I shall therefore refrain from expressing my own opinion about it. This wretch remained in prison till he died, many years afterwards. Chalais no doubt obtained the good graces of the two old witches by undertaking a task at once so disagreeable and so degrading to a man of his quality. No doubt, also, by employing him they intended to draw public attention to this mystery, and to the execrable interpretation they ascribed to it; they may have succeeded in this, but public opinion was by no means favourable to the man who condescended to act as their police-officer.

It often happens that the most tragical events are followed by some farcical episode which diverts the public and turns their thoughts into a most unexpected channel,
Such an episode was now provided by the family of the Duke de Tresmes, and society derived a good deal of amusement from it. The Duke's eldest son, the Marquis de Gésvres, had married Mademoiselle Maserani, a very rich orphan, not in her first youth, whose father had been maître des requêtes. With her immense riches she thought she was going to be happy; she was not aware that such is not the usual lot of ladies who marry into the Portier family. Madame de Revel, sister to the Duke de Tresmes, a childless widow, and not well off, came to live with him, and tried to govern her new niece, who was not inclined to submit to her rule. Quarrels arose which increased in bitterness as time went on. The young wife was clever, which her husband's family were not; she contrived to enlist the sympathies of all her own relations; even her uncles, the Caumartins, who had arranged her marriage, and had always been intimate friends of the Duke de Tresmes, quarrelled with him on her account.

At last she left her husband and went to the house of her grandmother, from which refuge she commenced an action for nullity of marriage on the ground of impotence. It may be readily imagined what entertainment an action of this sort was likely to provide, and what indecent jokes it gave rise to. The Marquis de Gésvres denied that he was impotent; the Court ordered that he should be examined by surgeons, and his wife by a jury of matrons; and both examinations took place accordingly. It is impossible to describe the scenes in court. The best-known people in society flocked to hear the case; it was impossible to procure a seat, except by taking it quite early in the morning; and the reports of the evidence formed the only topic of conversation. The unfortunate Gésvres almost died of shame and vexation, and bitterly repented having allowed themselves to be dragged into such a dispute. It went on for a long time, with ever-increasing absurdity, and was not settled when the Marquise de Gésvres died. The malicious judgement of the public was that she was not in the wrong; and her husband has confirmed this opinion to a certain extent by not marrying again, though he has been a widower for more than thirty years. His brother, however, has children by his marriage with the eldest daughter of Marshal de Montmorency.

On the 29th of May news arrived that the Pope had
appointed eleven new Cardinals, one of whom was Cardinal de Rohan. He was the handsomest member of the Sacred College, but indeed he was the offspring of Love. His mother did not live to rejoice in his elevation; perhaps, in the place where she then was, it was a grief to her. That is one of the things into which we are not permitted to inquire.

In Spain, Vendôme was triumphant; not, indeed, over the enemies of the Spanish Crown, but he triumphed in our misfortunes. Considering the difference between his age and that of the Dauphin and Dauphiness, he had resigned himself to life-long exile; their unexpected deaths gave him fresh hopes, and he looked forward to returning to our Court and once more playing a leading part there. He had recently been given the title of Highness, with a patent granting him every rank, honour, and prerogative formerly enjoyed by the celebrated bastard, Don John of Austria; on the strength of which he expected to be recognised as a Prince of the Blood in France. He went to Madrid, to receive the congratulations of the all-powerful Princess des Ursins; but she had no intention of keeping him there, and, after settling all military arrangements with him, sent him back to the frontier. He himself was not sorry to go; for the Grandees and other great noblemen were by no means pleased at his sudden elevation, and avoided his society; moreover, he disliked the constraint of Madrid, where he could not indulge in his infamous pleasures so freely as in his own quarters.

There was nothing for him to do. The Austrians, weakened by the departure of the English troops, were in no position to take the offensive; and Vendôme, on the pretext that his arrangements were not complete, determined to enjoy himself in idleness; he retired, therefore, with two or three favourite valets, to Vignarez, a little seaport town in the kingdom of Valencia. He was extremely fond of fish, and indulged in it for a month to his heart's content; at the end of that time he fell ill, and, though it was thought at first that a little abstinence would put him to rights, the symptoms rapidly became alarming. He was unable to sign a will which was drawn up for him, or a letter begging the King to allow his brother to return to Court. No priest came near him during the last two or three days of his life, nor was there any question of sending for one. His
servants plundered the house and abandoned him; only two or three valets remained; and they, when it was evident his last moment was approaching, took everything they could lay their hands on; they even pulled off his bed-covering and dragged the mattress from under him. He implored them pitifully not to leave him to die naked on his straw mattress; I do not know whether he obtained this boon.

Thus died the most arrogant of men, on the 10th of June, at the age of fifty-eight. I have had too many occasions to speak of him; I will merely add that he was the luckiest of men, up to his very last days. But, with all the prodigious favours which were so blindly showered upon him, he was but a sham hero, pushed forward by a cabal; he was a very bad General, a most dangerous and mischievous subject, and the vices of his private life made him a disgrace to humanity. His death was felt as a relief and a cause for rejoicing by the whole of Spain.

Aguilar, the Duke de Noailles' friend, who had been recalled from exile to serve in his army, was strongly suspected of having poisoned him; but no inquiries were made, nor did he take any trouble to repel the accusation. The Princess des Ursins, who had used Vendôme during his lifetime to gain her own private ends, was a gainer also by his death. She had been glad enough to have him as a refugee, reduced by necessity to obey her in everything; but she did not care at all for him as a new Don John of Austria, at the head of the Spanish armies, after his restoration to his old position in France. She took no offence, therefore, at the universal joy for his death expressed by the Court, the army, and Spanish society in general; nor did the King and Queen express any displeasure. To keep up appearances, however, the greatest of all marks of distinction was conferred on this hideous monster after his death: it was ordered that his body should be conveyed to the Escurial. This was an unprecedented honour; he had not died in action, nor had any private person ever been buried in the Escurial, though there are several instances of it at St Denis. The only excuse for it was that it was the necessary consequence of the honours lately conferred upon his birth; and this gave such pleasure to the Duke du Maine when he heard of it that he could hardly contain himself.
If I am spared to continue these Memoirs up to the death of the Duke of Orleans I shall have occasion to describe my visit to the Escurial; in the meantime a brief explanation of this illustrious burial-place may be useful. In the Pantheon are placed only the bodies of kings and queens who have left descendants; the bodies of infants and childless queens are laid in another room, not on the same floor, but near the first. This room has a sort of antechamber, known as the "place of decay"; it has four bare walls, with a long table in the middle. The walls are very thick; a hollow is excavated to receive each body, which is then built in, so that there is nothing to be seen. When a sufficient time has elapsed for decay to have done its work completely, the wall is opened, the body taken out, and laid in a superb coffin on the table, whence it is removed to the inner room. When I visited the place the body of M. de Vendôme had been lying in the wall for nine years; the spot was pointed out to me, though there were no external marks to be seen. I asked the monks who showed me round how long it would be before he was promoted to another place. They put the question aside, but gave me to understand, with some show of indignation, that there was no intention of removing the body at all; they seemed to think that sufficient honour had been paid to M. de Vendôme by placing him in the wall, and that he might as well stay there.

Harlay, formerly First-President, died at Paris shortly afterwards. I have nothing to add to what I have already said about his character: I will merely relate one anecdote to illustrate the fallen position of this haughty cynic in his latter days. He rented a house adjoining the garden of the Jacobin monastery in the Faubourg St. Germain; these monks own several houses in the Rue St. Dominique and the Rue de Bac; and, in order to let them on better terms, they allow their tenants to use the monastery garden; in fact, this mendicant fraternity derives an income of 50,000 livres from the rents of these houses. Harlay's house, however, being situated in the Rue de l'Université, did not belong to them; and when he asked to be allowed access to their garden he was curtly refused. It occurred to them afterwards that, although he no longer possessed any influence himself, he had a son and a cousin who were conseillers d'État, and that it might be
just as well to keep on good terms with them. In dealing with monks no argument is so good as one which appeals to their interests; they thought better of their refusal, and the Prior, accompanied by some of the leading monks, went to Harlay to tell him that, if he liked, he might make a door through his wall into their garden. He looked askance at them, and said he had changed his mind; he did not want their garden.

The monks, rather taken aback, were proceeding to repeat their offer when he interrupted them. “Look here, fathers,” he said, “I am the grandson of that Achille de Harlay, First-President of the Parliament, who rendered such good service to his King and his country; and who, for having upheld the cause of the public, was dragged to the Bastille and on the point of being hanged by those scoundrels of the League. It would ill become me to enter into premises belonging to men of the same order as your Jacques Clément, even to pray there”; and with that he turned his back on them and left them confounded. This was the last of his characteristic sayings; soon afterwards he had a succession of slight apoplectic strokes, which affected his speech. In this state he would go on paying visits, and did not perceive that a good many doors were closed to him, even those of people who had formerly been glad enough to wait in his antechamber. At last he died, neglected and despised, to the great relief of his son and of the few persons whose relationship to him compelled them to keep up his acquaintance.

Prince Eugène was besieging Landrecies. The King was much displeased that Villars should allow the enemy, though deprived of the assistance of the English, to besiege and take our frontier towns without an effort to relieve them, and sent him repeated orders to fight a battle. Villars replied with his usual gasconades, but in the meantime kept on fumbling and retiring; he missed more than one occasion of bringing Prince Eugène to an action under favourable circumstances, to the great discontent of the army. Montesquiou thought he saw his way to take the offensive; he sent a secret despatch to the King with particulars of his plan, representing the urgent necessity for action, but telling him at the same time that he was sure Villars would not approve of his proposal. The King, to whom Montesquiou was well known, sent him
prompt orders to carry out his design, even in the face of Villars' disapproval; but, nevertheless, to avoid giving offence to him, so far as possible. Prince Eugène had conceived a great contempt for Villars, and this led him to commit a gross blunder: for the sake of greater convenience in foraging, he had posted his army behind the Escalillon, at too great a distance from his principal magazines at Marchiennes and Denain. The latter place was entrenched, and defended by a force of eighteen battalions and some cavalry.

Montesquiou urged Villars to attack Denain; and at once marched thither himself with a portion of the army under four Lieutenant-Generals and four maréchaux-de-camp, at the same time sending Broglio to seize a convoy of 500 carts carrying provisions to the enemy's camp, a service which was executed with promptness and success. On arriving before Denain Montesquiou at once attacked vigorously; Villars, who was marching quietly with the main body, was very angry when he heard the distant firing, and sent forward to tell Montesquiou to await his arrival. The reply was that "The wine was drawn, and there was nothing for it but to drink it." Montesquiou pushed his attack with such vigour that he carried the entrenchments and drove the enemy out of Denain with very heavy loss, capturing the whole of their artillery and magazines. Many of them were drowned while attempting to escape; Count Dohna, their General, among the number. To prevent Prince Eugène from interfering with his operations, Montesquiou had sent Tingries (afterwards Marshal de Montmorency) to hold a certain bridge; this he did with such pertinacity that Prince Eugène was unable to force a passage, and had to march to Denain by a circuitous route on the other side of the river, so that he arrived too late to save the place, and retired without venturing to attack. Villars also arrived when all was over; he at once sent Nangis, one of the four maréchaux-de-camp who had led the attack, with despatches to the King. The action was fought on the 24th of July; our loss was insignificant, that of the enemy very heavy.

Villars, taken aback at the result of a battle fought without his permission and rather against his will, was for leaving well alone; but Montesquiou, knowing that the King would back him up, sent off Broglio that same
evening with twelve battalions to attack Marchiennes, where the remainder of the enemy's magazines were. He followed him next day in person with eighteen more battalions and some cavalry; and, after what had already happened, Villars dared not offer any opposition. On Monday, the 1st of August, Artagnan arrived at Fontainebleau with a despatch from his uncle, Marshal Montesquiou, in which he announced that he had taken Marchiennes, with trifling loss to himself. The garrison, consisting of six battalions, were made prisoners of war, together with some strong detachments of infantry and a regiment of cavalry which were on their march to join Prince Eugène's army. The whole of the enemy's magazines were captured, including 150 barges loaded with provisions and ammunition, and 60 guns.

Montesquiou had all the credit for these two brilliant actions, which seemed to break the spell which had enchanted us, and put an end to our long series of misfortunes. The rejoicings at Fontainebleau were frantic; the King was so much affected by them that, for the first time in his life, he thanked the courtiers for their sympathy. Montesquiou had the good sense to take his triumph modestly, and leave all vapouring and gasconading to Villars; every one knew to whom the success was really to be ascribed. Prince Eugène, deprived of all his supplies, immediately raised the siege of Landrecies and retreated. Desertion was rife among his troops.

M. de Soubise did not long enjoy the pleasure of seeing his son invested with the Roman purple; he died on the 24th of August, at the age of eighty-one. He was originally a private gentleman with an income of 4,000 livres; when he died he was a Prince, with 400,000 a year. He owed this immense fortune to a prudence which few would care to imitate, and to his contempt of ordinary prejudices. Its source was the beauty of his second wife, and the cleverness with which she maintained her ascendancy when her charms had passed away; he connived at her conduct throughout, thereby earning for himself an epithet which, in Spain, is resented by the lowest classes as an unpardonable insult. I remember that, during my mission to Spain, the Marquis de Saint-Simon, who spoke the language very imperfectly, lost his temper with one of my coachmen,

1 It means a husband who connives at his own dishonour.
and called him a ——, using the word by mistake for another. The man instantly stopped his horses, got off the box, threw his whip in the young man’s face, and went off; nor was it for some days that we could appease him, and make him understand that the insult was not intentional. I fancy that M. de Soubise himself, though he deserved this epithet and did not mind profiting by what it implied, would not have allowed any one to apply it to his face; for he was a very brave man, and a good General.

About the same time I lost the Marquis de Saint-Simon, the head of our family. His father and elder brother had contrived to run through a fortune of 40,000 livres a year, without ever leaving their own property. This one held a commission in the regiment of Guards, and had attained, by seniority, to the rank of Captain and Brigadier; he was much liked and respected. He had dined with me at Fontainebleau four or five days before his death. I presented his young son to the King; he had not yet joined the service, and the King immediately gave him a commission as Lieutenant in the Guards.
CHAPTER XX

1712—1713

The treaty of peace with England—Difficulty of guaranteeing the King's renunciations with regard to the Spanish throne—The King's theories of government in conflict with those of the English—They demand the ratification of the States-General to the renunciation—The King's dislike to the proposal—It is finally settled that the renunciations shall be registered by the Parliament of Paris, the Peers being specially summoned—Ambassadors appointed—The Duke d'Aumont to London—The Duke of Hamilton to Paris—Murder of Hamilton by Mohun's second in a duel—The Duke of Shrewsbury appointed to Paris—Death of the Duke de Chevreuse—His family history—Marriage with an aunt—Money all-powerful at Rome—M. de Chevreuse and Port-Royal—His character and eccentricities—Death of the Duke de Mazarin—Of the Duke de Sully—A wedding feast in our rooms—An obstinate Abbé—Arrival of Ragotzi—His history—Appointment of Cardinals—The Chapter of Strasbourg—Ladies' fashions—Influence of a mad foreigner.

Terms of peace had been almost settled between France and England, when the misfortunes of our Royal Family gave rise to a difficulty which almost put a stop to the negotiations. The little Dauphin and the Duke of Berry were now the only representatives of the elder branch. If their august and precious lives should be cut short, the King of Spain was the natural heir to the Crown of France; but neither England nor any of the allied Powers could consent to allow the two principal kingdoms of Europe to form one combined monarchy. The King was in no position to contest the arguments of the English Government; but it was not easy to find a satisfactory way out of the difficulty. The allied Powers did not forget the futility of the King's previous renunciations, and were justly alarmed. By the Treaty of the Pyrenees, and by his marriage contract, which were signed at the same time, and solemnly sworn to by the two monarchs at a public interview in the Isle of Pheasants, in the Bidassoa River,
the King had renounced all rights which his Queen might hereafter inherit to any portion of the Spanish dominions. Nevertheless, within five years of the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, on the death of the King of Spain, he seized Franche-Comté and a large portion of the Spanish Netherlands, under the pretext of the Queen’s claim to them.

This was not all: Louis XIII, at the time of his marriage, had made a similar renunciation; yet Philip V had hardly arrived in Spain when the King, in defiance of this renunciation, caused the contingent claims of the Duke of Orleans to the Crown of Spain to be solemnly asserted and registered, although he derived them only from his grandmother, Louis XIII’s Queen. It is not surprising that, with such examples before them, the allied Powers should have sought for fresh guarantees. But the difficulty was to find them; if oaths sworn by all that men hold most sacred did not prove binding, it was useless to seek further in that direction. All that could be done was to surround the ratification of the treaty with the most solemn formalities which it was possible to invent.

The negotiations on this point were lengthy and tedious; for, although the King professed his willingness to do anything to ensure Europe against the danger of the two monarchies being ruled by one Sovereign, when it came to the point every demand made by the Allies was distasteful to him, and he would concede nothing. It was not that he sought a loophole in order to evade the renunciation; but he looked upon every attempt to guarantee and strengthen his promise as an affront to his supreme authority. He had not only made his power absolute, but he had succeeded in eradicating from the minds of men all recollections of the past, and even the very notion that any power could exist in France which did not emanate from himself. To hint that his authority required to be supported by some other was, therefore, to touch him on his most tender spot.

The English, who are not accustomed to such theories of government, stuck to their point, and proposed that the States-General of the Kingdom should be called together to ratify the renunciations. They said, very reasonably, that, for the safety and tranquillity of Europe, it was not sufficient for the King of Spain to renounce his rights to
the Crown of France, if the French nation did not also renounce him as its possible King by accepting and ratifying his renunciation; only by such a ratification could the double bond which united the Spanish branch with the kingdom of France be completely severed. Misled by the analogy of their own Parliament, the English erroneously attributed the same power to our States-General. According to their notions, no greater authority could possibly exist; they wished, therefore, to have the ratification of this assembly as a guarantee for the performance of the King's promises. But such a demand produced an indescribable effect on the mind of a Sovereign who, in his own eyes, was almost deified, and was accustomed to exercise the most unlimited despotism over his own family and over the nation. It showed him that there were people who actually believed that among his subjects might be found an authority capable of confirming and controlling his own; and such a belief was the most bitter affront that could be offered to him. It became necessary to explain the history and nature of our States-General to the English negotiators, and to show them that, even if the King could be induced to call that assembly together, it would not answer their purpose. In the end it was decided that the renunciations should be formally registered by the Parliament of Paris, the Peers being specially summoned for the purpose, in the presence of the Dukes of Berry and Orleans, the two Princes more immediately concerned.

In spite of the disputes on this point, negotiations for peace were so far advanced that the Duke d'Aumont was nominated Ambassador to England, and the Duke of Hamilton as English Ambassador at Paris. M. d'Aumont was at that time very intimate with the Duke de Noailles and myself; I shall have occasion to speak of him again. He was made a Knight of the Order just before his departure; this was the last occasion on which the King conferred that honour. The Duke of Hamilton was a rather young nobleman, a strong supporter of the Queen's party, and highly respected. He was a Douglas; Anne Hamilton, eldest daughter of James, last Marquis of Hamilton, who was created a Duke by Charles I, and subsequently beheaded, had married William Douglas, Earl of Selkirk. After the Restoration Charles II conferred the dukedom of Hamilton on this Earl of Selkirk, and the Duke of Hamilton now
in question was his grandson. The party opposed to the Queen, rendered furious by their failure to prevent the peace, did all they could to annoy Hamilton. He had lately gained a lawsuit against Mohun, one of their adherents, whom they forced, rather against his inclination, to challenge Hamilton. The duel took place, and Mohun was killed on the spot; but his second, Macartney, ran the Duke of Hamilton through from behind and fled. The Queen was deeply grieved and offended, for she knew who had instigated the crime; she appointed the Duke of Shrewsbury to be Ambassador in France, one of her most trusted Ministers, and head of the house of Talbot.

About the beginning of October the King went to stay for a week with the Count de Toulouse at Rambouillet, with a very small attendance. It was during this visit that news arrived of the death of Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer of England, the leader of the Whig party. His son had married the Duke of Marlborough's daughter, and the two men always lived in the closest confidence. His death was a great relief to the Queen and the new Ministry, and a severe blow to the Whigs; it put the finishing stroke to the downfall of the Duke of Marlborough. About the same time La Vrillière, whose affairs were embarrassed, sold his magnificent house in the Place des Victoires to the Count de Toulouse. D'Antin also bought a fine house in the same quarter, which had been built by Chamillart. The fact that these two men, who were necessarily so much about the King's person, should acquire residences at Paris caused some surprise, especially as d'Antin was nothing if not a courtier. Soon afterwards the King supplemented the Duke of Berry's modest apanage by the grant of a pension of 400,000 livres; he also ordered his band to be present every day at the Duchess of Berry's Mass, as at his own—a distinction which was very agreeable to her and the Duke of Berry. The Duke received the further favour of being admitted to the Council of Despatches, which is a stepping-stone to the other Councils.

M. de Chevreuse died at Paris on the 5th of November; and, though I have already related some anecdotes concerning him, I take this opportunity to give a more detailed account of a personage who figured prominently in many ways throughout his life, and with whom I was on terms of the freest and most confidential intimacy. He
combined great natural ability with a strong taste for study, especially that of science in all its branches; his mind was well stored with knowledge, and he had the agreeable gift of being able to express himself clearly and intelligibly on the most difficult and abstruse subjects. He had the further advantage of having been educated by the most skilful masters, who gave him their affection, and devoted all their talents to his improvement. His father, the Duke de Luynes, himself a very able man, was on friendly terms with the inmates of Port-Royal-des-Champs, which was near his country seat at Dampierre; and after the death of his first wife he retired thither, shared the penances of the solitaries, and assisted them in writing some of their books. He begged them to take charge of the education of his son, who was only seven years old at the time of his mother’s death; they did so at first from attachment to the father, but they were soon charmed with the docility and talents of their pupil, and took the greatest pains with him for his own sake.

The retirement of the Duke de Luynes to Port-Royal-des-Champs lasted for several years. His mother, so well known for the leading part she played in all the cabals and affairs of her time under the name of her second husband, the Duke de Chevreuse, could not bear to see her son buried alive, as it were. M. de Chevreuse, the last surviving son of the last Duke of Guise, lived with her on the most affectionate terms; and, having no children of his own, did all he could for his stepson, to whom she was devoted. He died in 1657, but his family were as much afflicted as M. de Chevreuse by the seclusion of M. de Luynes, which rendered his talents useless to the world. Finding their own remonstrances useless, they applied for help to my father, who was his most intimate friend; and his intervention proved more successful. The Duke de Luynes left Port-Royal, for which he always retained the most affectionate sentiments, and went to live in his mother’s house. There, with all his piety, he could not restrain himself from falling in love with his own aunt.

Madame de Chevreuse was the daughter of the second Duke de Montbazon, by a Lenoncourt. Her father had married again, and by his second wife, an Avaugour of the family descended from a bastard of Brittany, he had one son, M. de Soubise, whose death I recorded lately,
and two daughters. The elder was Abbess of the convent of Holy Trinity at Caen; the younger, who was forty years younger than her half-sister, Madame de Chevreuse, also wished to become a nun, and had actually taken the vows of a novice. The Duke de Luynes fell violently in love with her, forgetting all that the pious and learned inmates of Port-Royal had taught him about the government of his passions, and caring still less for what they might have had to say on the subject of a novice, sister to his own mother. Madame de Chevreuse was so much afraid lest a disappointment might drive him once more into retirement, that she persuaded her sister to relinquish the veil; and by dint of money, which is all-powerful at Rome, she obtained a dispensation for the marriage. It took place in 1661, and turned out very happily. Madame de Luynes was as virtuous as she was beautiful; she had two sons and five daughters, and died in 1684. The Duke de Luynes subsequently married a third time.

M. de Chevreuse, of whom I am now speaking, was in person rather tall, and well-made, with a noble and agreeable countenance. He was not well off originally, but became immensely rich by his marriage with the eldest and favourite daughter of M. Colbert, in 1667. Besides her dowry, and frequent presents of money from her father, he obtained in consideration of his marriage the dukedom of Chevreuse, by a new creation in his favour; the reversion of all the Duke de Chaulnes' property; the office of Captain of the Light Horse of the Guard, and, eventually, the Governorship of Guyenne. Madame de Chevreuse was of a dark complexion, tall, and well shaped. The King immediately appointed her Lady of the Palace to the Queen. She was a very amiable woman, and the King and Queen were both pleased with her; she was on good terms with the King's mistresses, and still more so with Madame de Maintenon. She was not very clever, but singularly honest and frank, and her virtue was always irreproachable. The Duchess de Beauvilliers was her sister; I have already spoken of the close union which existed between the sisters and their husbands, so that they had only one mind and one heart between them. I have also mentioned their conduct during the storm about Quietism, which made Madame de Maintenon their enemy for life; their devotion to the famous Madame Guyon and the Arch-
bishop of Cambrai, and the admission of M. de Chevreuse to the Ministry, which, though never publicly acknowledged, was complete and effective.

I have also had occasion to allude to the peculiar cast of his mind, and his perverse manner of reasoning. He was perfectly sincere, and honestly brought himself to believe in the absurdities which he sometimes tried to get other people to adopt; always arguing with the most persuasive gentleness, without a trace of assumed superiority. He used to reason with perfect logic; his deductions were unassailable if you granted his premises; you were lost if you did not stop him at once, for, if you admitted one or two apparently harmless propositions, he would proceed to build up a chain of reasoning so cleverly that, although you felt that he was wrong, it was impossible to discover a flaw in his arguments. As time went on he abandoned the doctrines of Port-Royal; up to a certain point, that is; for he always had a knack of reconciling apparently inconsistent opinions; but he never shook off his dislike for the Jesuits, though he carefully concealed it. He always retained his admiration and esteem for the inmates of Port-Royal; nor did he ever abandon the love of truth, piety, and pure morals he had imbibed from them. It was his propensity for perverse reasoning which made him fall a victim to the enchantments of Madame Guyon and the flowery attractions of the Archbishop of Cambrai; the same cause would, I feel sure, have made him an ardent champion of Law's system if he had lived to see that day; but his championship would have been absolutely disinterested.

He made a charming place of Dampierre; but before it was finished he lost M. Colbert, on whose taste and pecuniary assistance he had relied; and Dampierre became rather a burden to him. To please his father, he gave up a good deal of his own property to provide for his half-brother and sisters. He sustained heavy losses by the bankruptcy of the merchants who bought his timber, for he had extensive woods at Chevreuse and St. Léger. He took it into his head to make a canal to float his timber down to the Seine; but, when two-thirds of it had been completed, he discovered that he would never get a pint of water to run in it. All this cost a great deal of money; he was heavily in debt, and had eventually to sell the forest of St. Léger
and other property to the Count de Toulouse, so that his house at Dampierre was left with hardly any land belonging to it. In short, he was almost at the end of his resources, when he unexpectedly came in for the Governorship of Guyenne, as I have already mentioned. He managed his health in just the same way. When quite young he was attacked by gout; he had done nothing to deserve it, but it was hereditary in his family. He was alarmed by the example of his father, who was also crippled with gout, without having earned it; so he put himself on a diet which was successful in keeping off gout, but which he exaggerated to such a degree that in the end it killed him. M. de Vendôme, who used to meet him at dinner sometimes at Marly, told the King that M. de Chevreuse poisoned himself with chicory water during the meal in order to have the pleasure afterwards of tossing off a bumper of wine mixed with sugar and spice; and such indeed was his practice. In connection with his health, as in business matters, he never could leave well alone.

No man ever possessed his soul in peace as he did; to use the words of the psalmist, it was "always in his hand."\(^1\) The disorder of his private affairs, the storm which arose about Quietism and so nearly caused his downfall, the death of his children, even the loss of our admirable Dauphin, left him unmoved. He had a tender and feeling heart, but he never lost sight of the presence of God; he laid all his troubles at His feet, and every action of his life was regulated with a view to His will. He was always gentle and polite, even to his servants. When at his ease with his family, or intimate friends, he was merry and excellent company; but his contempt for the world made him shun society. It was almost impossible to get him out of his private study; and few people about the Court were aware that he kept a well-supplied table and an excellent cook. He himself invariably arrived late at dinner, only in time for the *entremets*, when he would hastily eat the back of a rabbit, or something grilled, whatever he thought least juicy; and, at dessert, some sweetmeats, which he fancied were good for his stomach; with a piece of bread carefully weighed, from which the crumb had been removed. He liked to eat in such a way that he

\(^1\) Ps. cxix. 109.
could work as well after his meal as before it, and very soon after it was over he would go back to his study. Shortly before midnight he would eat an egg or some fish, boiled or cooked with oil; never anything more, even on non-fasting days. He was always unpunctual, and slow in all he did; he never seemed to regard stated times and seasons as intended for him; he had some adventures in consequence which caused us great amusement in his private circle. Even M. de Beauvilliers, in spite of the deference with which he usually treated him, used to poke fun at him about them.

His horses stood often harnessed for twelve or fifteen hours. Once this happened at Vaucresson; he intended to return to Dampierre for dinner, but forgot all about it. The coachman and postilion grew tired of looking after the horses; about six o'clock in the evening the horses themselves were tired of standing. Suddenly a loud noise was heard, followed by a crash which shook the house; everybody ran out; there was the carriage upset and broken, the great gates smashed to pieces, the fences destroyed; in short, the damage was such as took considerable time to repair. M. de Chevreuse was perfectly unconscious of all the uproar, and greatly astonished when he heard what had happened. M. de Beauvilliers used to chaff him about it for a long time, and ask when he meant to pay for the damage he had occasioned.

He had another adventure at Vaucresson, of which he did not at all like to be reminded; he used to fidget about in the funniest way whenever it was cast up against him. About ten in the morning a M. Sconin, who had formerly been his agent, was announced. M. de Chevreuse sent to ask him to be good enough to take a turn in the garden, and come back in half an hour; he then went on with what he was doing, and completely forgot all about him. About seven in the evening M. Sconin was announced again. "In one moment," said M. de Chevreuse imperturbably; and in about a quarter of an hour he sent for him. "Ah! poor Sconin," said he, "how can I apologise sufficiently for having made you waste a day like this?" "Oh no, Monseigneur," said Sconin. "As I have had the honour of knowing you for a good many years, I thought the half-hour you gave me this morning might turn out to be rather a long one, so I went off to Paris and attended to
some business I had there, and I have only just returned." M. de Chevreuse was very much taken aback. Sconin told the story everywhere, and even M. de Chevreuse's own servants could not resist repeating it. M. de Beauvilliers used to make great fun out of it; but, accustomed as M. de Chevreuse was to jokes of this sort, he never could bear to have this story brought up. I have related these two anecdotes because they are the first which occur to my memory; but I could tell a hundred similar ones, equally characteristic.

The Chancellor used to say of these two brothers-in-law that they had but one heart and one mind between them; the same thought always occurred to them simultaneously; but, when it came to carrying their thought into execution, M. de Beauvilliers had a guardian angel who interfered to prevent him from acting in any way like the Duke de Chevreuse. This was literally true, as we shall see when I come to describe the character of M. de Beauvilliers; and it is singular that two men so frequently opposed to each other in action should have been able to pass their lives together in such constant and unbroken intimacy. They shared the same quarters at Marly; at Versailles they were close to each other. They almost always dined together, and not a day passed without their meeting three or four times; in short, their union was such that it was impossible to be admitted to anything but the most superficial acquaintance with one of them without the consent and approval of the other; and it was just the same with their wives.

M. de Chevreuse was an admirable writer; his style was easy, concise, and agreeable; his handwriting too, was clear, and that also is no very common accomplishment. He was not merely loved by his family and his servants; they adored him, for he was always affable, gracious, and obliging; but to those who did not know him intimately he seemed stiff, and there was something rather starched and pedantic in his manner which repelled them.

While we were at Fontainbleau this year I happened to go into his room, as I used to do without ceremony, and found him standing before a cupboard taking a dose of quinine on the sly; he reddened, and asked me, as a favour, to say nothing about it. I promised not to do so, but warned him that he would kill himself if he persisted in
taking quinine on an empty stomach. He confessed that he had been taking it for some months, and I could see for myself that he was cutting down his food; I told him that, if he went on, he would destroy the coats of his stomach; but, unfortunately, he had taken it into his head to adopt the diet of Cornaro, which may have suited the constitution of that Venetian, but which, undoubtedly, killed a good many other people: M. de Lyonne, the celebrated Minister, among the rest. Not long afterwards he was taken ill at Paris, and endured great agony with incredible patience and resignation. He received the Sacraments with ardent piety, and died in great pain, but with perfect tranquillity, surrounded by his family. His body was opened, and it was discovered that his stomach was ulcerated.

M. de Chevreuse, finding himself unable to break the chains which bound him to the Court, had tried to alleviate his bondage by spending as much time as possible at Dampierre, while the Court was at Marly; and the King, after vainly trying mild remonstrances, had found it necessary to secure his attendance by speaking in the tone of a master who means to be obeyed. Madame de Chevreuse remained equally undazzled by the distinction of being continually invited to the King's private parties. Notwithstanding Madame de Maintenon's hatred for the Dukes de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers since the affair of Quietism, she always liked Madame de Chevreuse, and was as anxious for her company as the King himself. Madame de Chevreuse took advantage of a long illness to withdraw herself from Court, under the pretext that her infirmities prevented her from wearing full dress. The King, however, was so desirous of her society that he did for her what he never did for any other lady: he dispensed with her attendance in public at Marly, and allowed her, both there and at Versailles, to appear in Madame de Maintenon's rooms, and at their private dinners and parties, in any dress she chose. Her grief for her husband's death was intense, and her mourning was a legitimate reason for absenting herself from Court; but she was compelled to interrupt it by repeated invitations; not indeed to parties, but to private interviews with the King. Her bondage was only ended by the King's death; after which she lived entirely at Luynes and Dampierre, with her family and a
very select circle of particular friends. Never was a woman so justly beloved by her family, or more respected by the world up to the very day of her death, which occurred in 1732. She was over eighty years of age, and had retained her faculties, both mental and bodily, to the last. After her death, her family, so closely united while she was with them, was soon scattered.

The Duke de Mazarin died at his country seat, whither he had retired more than thirty years previously. He was more than eighty years old, and so eccentric that, in spite of his admirable qualities, he was no loss to any one. I have heard his contemporaries say that no one could be wittier or more agreeable. He moved in the best society, and the King admitted him to his familiarity; indeed, in spite of M. de Mazarin's efforts to be forgotten, he never could help liking him and giving him tokens of his affection. He was very rich even before his marriage; he was the son of Marshal de la Melleraye, a man of the highest merit, whom he succeeded in his offices of Governor of Bretagne, Nantes, Brest, Port-Louis, and St. Malo, and Grand-master of the Artillery. Cardinal Mazarin, who was an intimate friend of the Marshal's, selected his son as the richest and best match for his niece, promising to make him his heir on condition that he assumed the name of Mazarin. The Marshal resisted as long as he could, for he said the idea of such enormous wealth terrified him; he felt sure it would crush his family, and be the cause of its ruin; but in the end he had to give way. After his wife's death, M. de Mazarin had a lawsuit with his son, in which it was proved that she had brought him a dowry of 28,000,000 livres, besides the Governorship of Alsace, Brisach, and Belfort, and the office of Grand-Bailiff of Haguenau, which alone was worth 30,000 livres a year. The King admitted him to all the Councils, and treated him with the greatest distinction in every way. He served with bravery, became a Lieutenant-General in 1654, and might easily have risen to the command of armies and the dignity of Marshal of France.

Unfortunately, his mind had a twist in it; and religion, which usually helps a man to turn his talents to good account, in his case served only to render useless the gifts he had received from nature and fortune. He took to dragging his wife about the country in the most scandalous
way; he became an object of ridicule to society, and made himself intolerable to the King, because he would insist on relating visions which he said he had seen, concerning the life he led with his mistresses. He retired to his country-seats, and became the prey of monks and hypocrites, who took advantage of his weakness and plunged their hands into his millions. He mutilated his statues and painted over parts of his finest pictures; he used, from time to time, to make all his servants change their offices by lot, in which way he thought he ascertained the will of God; so that his cook became his steward, and the man who polished the floors his private secretary. When the château of Mazarin caught fire, and people rushed to put it out, he was extremely angry, and tried to drive off the rascals who dared to oppose the decrees of the Almighty. He was delighted when any one went to law with him, because, if he lost his case, he ceased to possess property which did not really belong to him; if he won, his conscience was at rest, and he kept it without scruple. He drove the agents who managed his estate to despair by his interference, and the absurdities he wanted them to commit. Women and girls on his property were strictly forbidden to milk cows, for fear of putting improper thoughts into their heads. He tried to make his daughters have their front teeth extracted, because he was afraid they were becoming vain.

But there would be no end to the story of his mad freaks. He did nothing but move from one country-seat to another; and when his wife died in England he sent for her body, and took it about with him for several years. In the end he contrived to run through most of his millions, retaining only the Governorship of Alsace and one or two others. I remember seeing him once in my father's house, when he was made a Knight of the Order, in 1688; he was a tall, stout man, good-looking, and it struck me that his face denoted intelligence. After his retirement he only appeared at Court three or four times, for a few days; the King always received him with great kindness and distinction.

The Duchess de Charost died about the same time, at the age of fifty-one. For more than ten years she had been so ill that she could not leave her bed; she could not bear the light, or the slightest noise; she rarely spoke, and
then only a word or two; it was impossible to change her linen oftener than two or three times a year, and on each occasion she was so much fatigued that Extreme Unction was administered. Her husband’s care and attention for her under these circumstances were inconceivable, and most praiseworthy; she was deeply touched by them, for she retained her consciousness to the last. The Duke de Charost had married in 1680, when very young, his cousin, daughter of Prince d’Espinoy, who died three years afterwards, leaving two sons. He married this wife in 1692; she was a Lamet, and an heiress; her father, the Marquis de Baule, was killed at Neerwinden, and his Governorship of Dourlens passed to Charost and the only son he had by his second marriage.

The Duke de Sully was found dead in his bed towards the end of the year; he was forty-eight years old. For a long time he had been menaced with apoplexy, falling asleep everywhere and at all times. He was a man of honour, and would have been well received in all societies if he had not been so much given to obscure debauchery; but he ruined himself with the lowest women. He was son-in-law to the Duke de Coislin, but left no children; his brother, the Chevalier de Sully, succeeded to his dignity.

The Duchess of Berry was far advanced in pregnancy, and it became necessary to choose a governess for her child. She behaved in this matter just as she had done when it was a question of appointing a First Equerry. Besons was old and poor; he would have been glad to obtain the post for his wife, so as to leave her in a position to assist their family; he spoke to me about it, and Madame de Saint-Simon laid his application before the Duchess of Berry. She seemed flattered by the thought of obtaining the services of a wife of a Marshal; especially one who owed his bâton to the Duke of Orleans (though, indeed, he had well earned it): she spoke to Besons in the most complimentary manner, and begged him to apply to the King.

1 He was a very absent-minded person. Madame relates that when dressing one day to go to church he happened to forget to put on his breeches. It was in winter; when he arrived at the church he remarked to a friend how very cold it was. "Not colder than usual," was the reply. "Then I must be feverish," said the Duke, "for I am shivering." "Perhaps you are not so warmly dressed as usual?" said his friend, and, drawing aside the skirt of his coat, he showed him what was wanting. The coats of the period had very long, full skirts, so that the deficiency was not quite so conspicuous as it would be nowadays.
But, as a matter of fact, while professing the utmost eagerness to have the Maréchale de Besons, she had already promised d'Antin and St. Maure to give the place to their cousin, Madame de Pompadour, than whom no one could have been more unsuitable. She was a précieuse of the first order, so madly set on court distinction that she had married her only daughter to Dangeau's son, in order to obtain admittance to select circles, which she never succeeded in doing. She was entirely at the beck and call of Madame de Maintenon, partly through the influence of Madame de Dangeau, partly because she was the granddaughter of Madame de Neuillant, who had given Madame de Maintenon a home when she arrived from the West Indies; for Madame de Maintenon made a point of showing some gratitude. Pompadour himself was equally unsuitable. It may be said of him paradoxically that he was a very clever fool; he was just as silly about court society as his wife, and, since the deaths of the Dauphin and Dauphiness had put an end to his own post as menin, and that of his daughter as Lady of the Palace, he had lost his only connection with the Court. Both these appointments had been obtained through the Dangeaus. Moreover, he was Chalais' uncle, consequently under the influence of Madame des Ursins; and nothing could be more opposed to the interests of the Duke of Orleans and his daughter. But d'Antin, a courtier to the marrow of his bones, thought only of pleasing Madame de Dangeau, and Madame de Maintenon through her; and the Duchess of Berry was completely taken in by him. She continued to urge Besons to speak to the King; he did so, and was much surprised when the King told him that the Duchess of Berry had been deceiving him, for she had already asked his consent to the appointment of Madame de Pompadour, and he had granted it; adding that he would have gladly given it to the Maréchale de Besons if her name had been submitted to him earlier.

Besons was furious at this gratuitous deception, and let the Duchess of Berry know what he thought of it. Madame de Saint-Simon also spoke her mind to her, and informed her of the objections to the wise choice she had made; for though she was, of course, aware of Madame de Pompadour's connection with the Dangeaus, she knew nothing about Chalais, or Madame de Neuillant; or about the characters
of the persons themselves. She was sorry for what she had done, but it was too late; four or five days afterwards Madame de Pompadour's appointment was given out. Madame de Saint-Simon obtained the post of sub-governess for Madame de Vaudreuil, a woman of real merit. The place was rather beneath her, for her husband was a man of good family, and Governor-General of Canada; but she was not well off, and had many children, who have since advanced themselves by their own merits.

The Duchess of Berry had a little favourite named Forcadel, a pretty, clever girl, daughter of one of her principal chamber-maids; since her marriage she had kept this girl about her person, and sought to find a husband for her. She pitched on Mouchy, a man of quality, well advanced in years; high up in the service, but as great a booby as could well be found. He was a relation of the d'Estrees, and to please the Duchess of Berry they proposed the match. Everything was settled in a moment. The Duchess wished to amuse herself by being present at the wedding festivities, but did not know how to manage it; at last, by dint of entreaties, she induced Madame de Saint-Simon to lend our rooms for the purpose. The wedding feast was numerously attended; we had only twenty-four hours in which to prepare it, nevertheless it was magnificent. As our rooms were on the same floor as the tribune of the chapel, and close to it, the Duchess of Berry got all the amusement out of the ceremony which she had proposed to herself. The newly wedded couple slept in our rooms. As we shall see in due time, this Madame de Mouchy turned out a queer specimen.

The King suffered terribly from ennui during the hours passed in Madame de Maintenon's room in the intervals of business with his Ministers; the void left by the death of the Dauphiness could not be filled by the conversation of the few ladies who were occasionally admitted. Frequently there were musical performances, but he grew tired of them; and, for a change, the experiment was tried of having detached scenes from Molière's comedies acted by the musicians. Marshal de Villeroy, the only man admitted during these hours of privacy, did something to amuse the King by his chatter and his reminiscences of their younger days; and Madame de Maintenon, who had procured his return to favour, found him useful in suggest-
ing things to the King which she did not care to propose directly, and which did not come within the province of the Ministers. The state of utter impotence, to say the least of it, to which the Duke of Orleans was reduced, and the Duke of Berry’s terror of the King, which was sedulously kept up, opened a wide field to the unbounded ambition of the Duke du Maine and the doting fondness of his former governess. Marshal de Villeroy was an abject and clever courtier; beyond that he had no sort of ability; for that very reason he was just the tool they required, and Madame de Maintenon proceeded to make as much use of him as possible.

About this time the King announced, on his way to Mass, that he had given the Governorship of Guyenne to the Count d’Eu; so that the Duke du Maine’s two sons, who had already been granted reversions to the Government of Languedoc, and to the commands of the Swiss Guards and Artillery, were tolerably well provided for. Accustomed as the Court was to the gigantic favours heaped on these bastards of the younger generation, people were startled and displeased by this enormous addition to them; and M. du Maine could not help perceiving the real sentiments underlying their congratulations; rather to his embarrassment.

This surprise was followed towards the close of the year by another, still greater. It had long been the practice in the house of La Rochefoucauld to arrange so that all the wealth of the family should descend to the eldest son. Younger sons were of no account; they were driven into the Church or became Knights of Malta, while the daughters remained unmarried. The first Duke had four sons and six daughters; of the sons, one took Orders and became Bishop of Lectoure; another was well provided with abbeys, and the youngest was a Knight of Malta. Similarly, four of the daughters were abbesses, and another a nun; one of them, it is true, of a tougher character than the others, refused to be disposed of in this way and insisted on a husband; but they gave her no dowry, and Sillery, who married her, had to content himself with the honour of the alliance. The second Duke, so well known for his wit and the part he played in the troubles of the King’s minority, had five sons and three daughters; of the sons, three were Knights of Malta and the youngest became
a priest, which was far from being his proper vocation; all four had several abbeys apiece. The daughters remained unmarried; they lived to a great age, like three old witches, in a corner of the Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld, with barely sufficient means to provide themselves with food. The third Duke, the King’s favourite, whose death I shall have to record shortly, had only two sons; the elder was created Duke de la Rocheguyon, on his marriage with Louvois’ eldest daughter; the second, known as the Marquis de Liancourt, died unmarried.

The Duke de la Rocheguyon was not so discreet as his father. He had eight sons and two daughters; five of the sons died in childhood; the elder daughter became a nun, the second held out till she was twenty-five, and then married the present Duke d’Usèz, who consented to take her with a very small dowry. Of the three surviving sons, the eldest (originally the fourth), was an Abbé with benefices worth more than 60,000 livres annually, for the abbeys held by his uncles and great-uncles were given to him as they became vacant. The second had been sent into the Navy, and was known as the Count de Durtal; he was with du Casse in the expedition which escorted the galleons from America, and brought the despatch announcing their safe arrival; he is now the fifth Duke de la Rochefoucauld. The youngest son was a Knight of Malta. This arrangement did not suit M. and Madame de la Rocheguyon; they wanted to make the Count de Durtal their successor; but the Abbé stood in their way. He had always refused to enter into Holy Orders; so long as he had elder brothers that was his own affair, but now that he had become the eldest his parents were interested, and they did all they could to persuade him to become a priest. But he did not see it in the same light; he had become an Abbé merely because such was the usual destination of cadets of his house, and felt no vocation to the priesthood; he was now next in succession to the dignities and wealth of his family, and he intended to enjoy them in due time.

Finding that they could make no impression on him, they took another line; they tried to persuade him to surrender his benefices, since he was not inclined to make the Church his profession. But this did not suit him either; his abbeys brought in an income of 60,000 livres, and made him independent of his parents; extreme parsimony was
their leading characteristic, rather than tenderness or family affection; he had seen them treat his elder brothers as if they were children, and he did not feel at all inclined to put himself at their mercy. For some time they tried cajolery and threats alternately; at last he declared flatly that he was the heir-apparent, and intended to remain so; as for his benefices, he should keep them, holding himself free to act in the future according to circumstances. He said he was twenty-five years of age, old enough to have a settled position, but too old to enter the service as a musketeer, with the prospect of serving as captain till he could obtain a regiment. Nothing could be more sensible; but it was not what his family wanted; finding themselves helpless, they determined to try a desperate remedy.

The old, blind Duke de la Rochefoucauld had himself led from his retreat at the Kennels to the King's private room, where, with his usual vehemence and many tears and outcries, he dilated on the deplorable condition to which his family was reduced by the obstinacy of his eldest grandson, who insisted on feeding at two mangers at once. His grievance was quite imaginary; but it was not only that he disliked the prospect of a cadet marrying, contrary to the practice of his house; there was something more: he could not bear to feel that his younger grandson, if he came to Court, would be in an inferior position to the cadets of the Bouillon family. The Bouillons had been given the rank of foreign Prince; M. de la Rochefoucauld thought his family quite as good as theirs, in which he was perfectly right; but, in spite of all his efforts, he had never been able to obtain the same distinction for himself. He now took advantage of his supposed grievance to extract from the King a favour for which there was no precedent, except one created exclusively for the benefit of the bastards. By his edict of 1711 the King had declared that any of his bastards holding more than one dukedom might, if he pleased, settle the others on his younger sons, thus creating them Dukes and Peers. M. de la Rochefoucauld asked the same privilege for himself; and, partly out of compassion for an old man whom he had always liked, partly to get rid of his importunities, the King granted his request. The Duke de la Rocheguyon was allowed to resign his dukedom in favour of M. de Durtal, and thus settle a peerage on a younger branch of his family, at the expense of
his elder son. M. de Durtal at once assumed the title of Duke de la Rocheguyon, and took possession of the fine château and property of that name near Paris; but his father kept the income derived from it for his life.

All this having been satisfactorily arranged, M. de la Rochefoucauld returned to the King, and by dint of importance prevailed upon him to speak to his elder grandson, whom he had never seen. The Abbé went to the King accordingly, expecting to be sharply rebufked; but he was mistaken. The King spoke to him in a kind and fatherly manner, and the Abbé answered him so sensibly and respectfully that he was quite disarmed; he saw that it was important for the Abbé to be independent of his parents, whose character he quite understood. This resource having failed, M. and Madame de la Rocheguyon proposed that the Abbé should obtain a papal brief empowering him to serve in the army, and yet retain his benefices; and this the Abbé could not very well refuse. There were many precedents for such a brief; among others, Forbin had one, who commanded the Grey Musketeers before Maupertuis; he was a Lieutenant-General when he died, but still an Abbé. The Court of Rome made no difficulties in this case, and the poor Abbé de la Rochefoucauld had to resume the sword. When the war broke out in Hungary he went there, as did M. du Maine’s sons, and many others; but he had hardly arrived at Buda when he was seized with small-pox, and died, at the age of thirty. So his father, and his younger brother, who had become a Duke at his expense, were delivered from him; but, from what has happened subsequently in that family, it would seem as if God’s blessing had not rested on their arrangements.

Ragotzi, after various wanderings, arrived in France about this time. We have seen how boldly and skilfully he led the malcontents in Hungary, and how he carried fire and sword up to the very walls of Vienna. The disastrous battle of Blenheim put an end to his exploits; the rebels dispersed, and their leaders made terms for themselves as best they could. As Ragotzi could expect no mercy, he fled to Poland; and now came to France, which had furnished him with subsidies and sent an accredited Minister to his camp. He had married Charlotte Amelia, daughter of Charles, Landgrave of Hesse-Rheinfeltz, whose brother had married a sister of Madame de Dangeau. The
latter was a thorough German, and much attached to her family; it is true that Ragotzi was no relation to her, but the connection was near enough, and she received him as one. Dangeau himself was a man who had passed all his life in the best society of the Court; he was intoxicated by his success in pushing himself on, and when he reflected on the greatness of his wife's near relations his feet hardly touched the ground. He joined with her cordially, therefore, in welcoming Ragotzi, who knew nobody here, and had the good sense to put himself in their hands. He found them very good advisers.

He was quite unaffected in his manners, and put forward no claims to exceptional distinctions; thus he conciliated everybody, and was received with far more respect and consideration than if he had given himself airs. Before long he became a familiar figure in the very best society; Madame de Maintenon took him up, to please Madame de Dangeau; and through her he made the acquaintance of M. du Maine. A common love of hunting, which was the fashionable amusement at that time, overcame the reserve of the Count de Toulouse to such a degree that Ragotzi became his most intimate friend. He was asked to all the royal entertainments, and went to Marly on every occasion, though he had to put his name down for it like any other courtier. The King seldom saw him without speaking to him, and he was granted a private audience whenever he wished; but he used this privilege with great discretion.

He was a very tall man; stout, but not corpulent; very well proportioned; his countenance was agreeable, though his features were quite of the Tartar type; his air was bold and imposing. He was a discreet, modest, and cautious man, not clever, but very sensible; polite and easy in society, yet very dignified; at the same time there was nothing in his manners which savoured of pride. He was not a great talker, though he could join agreeably in conversation, and was a very good narrator of the scenes which he had witnessed, without ever mentioning his own doings. He was a thorough gentleman, upright, truthful, and extremely brave; a God-fearing man in his simple fashion, without ostentation, yet making no attempt to conceal his belief; he gave much time to prayer, and in secret was very bountiful to the poor. Altogether he was a worthy man, easy to get on with, whom it was impossible not to
like; and yet, when one came to know him, one was lost in astonishment that he should ever have been capable of heading a formidable insurrection and making so much noise in the world. The King of Spain gave him a pension of 30,000 livres; our King gave him another which made up his annual income to about 100,000 livres. He wore the insignia of the Golden Fleece, given by the King of Spain at the time when he was leading the insurgents.

The Duchess de Chevreuse had lately been granted the unique distinction of a pension amounting to 30,000 livres; this aroused the jealousy of the Grand Equerry, who had himself carried into the King's room, for he had long been crippled by gout, and there gave him a second edition of the scene with M. de la Rochefoucauld. He talked in a most touching manner of his ailments, his approaching end, and the bad state of his affairs; and wound up by asking for a favour which he did not explain. The King, long accustomed to give him anything he wanted, asked what it was. Then the Grand Equerry dilated on the great merits of Mademoiselle d'Armagnac, his love for her, and his bitter grief at feeling that he must soon leave her penniless. In this fashion he succeeded in obtaining a pension of 30,000 livres in her name.

Marshal de Villars obtained a pension of 1,000 crowns for his sister, Madame de Vaugué, whom he had constituted duenna to his wife. He lodged and boarded her in return for her services as spy; but never would give a penny to her sons, who had not enough to eat. They were petty gentlemen in Dauphiné, if indeed their family was of gentle blood at all; nobody ever heard of them.

The Maréchale de Noailles had still one very ugly daughter unmarried, not so young as she had been, whom, for that reason, they called the "dowager." She arranged a marriage for her with the only son of Marshal de Château- renaud, considerably younger than the bride; on condition that the Marshal should resign the office of Lieutenant-General of Brittany in favour of his son. The Maréchale gave her daughter but a small dowry; but Château renaud was very rich, and thought only of the splendid alliance, of which his family stood in great need.

About the same time M. d'Isenghien married Mademoiselle de Rodes, in spite of her mother's opposition; the young lady was of age, and her relations backed her up. She was,
I think, the last representative of the illustrious and very ancient family of Pot.

In the last promotion of Cardinals, made on the nomination of the Crowns, the Pope had reserved four in petto; he announced them at the beginning of the year 1713; they were: Don Manuel Arias, Archbishop of Seville; the Abbé de Polignac; Benedict Sala, Bishop of Barcelona, and Benedict Erba, Archbishop of Milan. Arias was one of the wisest and most virtuous men in Spain: he was a member of the State Council, and played a leading part in the affair of Charles II's will. Madame des Ursins' policy was quietly to set aside all those who had contributed most to the assumption of the Crown by Philip V; she got rid of Arias by making him Archbishop of Seville, and procuring for him the King's nomination to the Cardinalate. When the Court of Rome was forced to recognise the Archduke as King of Spain he would not admit the right of Philip V to a nomination, and himself nominated Sala. Philip V protested against this nomination, as a personal insult to himself. Sala was originally a coachman, sprung from the dregs of the people, who afterwards became a Benedictine monk; he was a clever, enterprising rascal, and stirred up the populace and magistrates of Barcelona against Philip V; so that he came to be looked upon as the leading spirit of the Archduke's party; and, as a reward, the Archduke made him Bishop of Barcelona, and gave him his nomination.

These conflicting claims caused both Cardinals nominated by Spain to be reserved in petto. There was no opposition to the claim of the Abbé de Polignac, who was nominated by the King of England; but, as his functions at Utrecht were incompatible with the Cardinalate, the King asked the Pope to keep him also in petto. I do not know why Erba was also reserved in this purgatory. Peace being now practically concluded, except with the Emperor, the Pope informed the King that he could no longer delay the declaration of Arias and Sala, and that he should "expectorate" Polignac with the others; as only some trifling matters remained to be settled at Utrecht, the King made no objection, and sent word to Polignac to come back at once. On his way he met the Pope's courier bearing his Cardinal's cap: he put it in his pocket, and continued his journey. He arrived at Paris on the 23rd of February,
and went next day to Marly; there he presented his cap to the King, who placed it on his head. It was rather a strange thing that a Cardinal in petto nominated by King James of England should negotiate and sign the treaty of Utrecht, which prescribed the banishment of that Prince from France, and put the finishing touch to his misfortunes. One would have thought that Polignac would feel somewhat embarrassed when he went to St. Germain to return thanks for his new dignity; but when once a man becomes a Cardinal he is not easily embarrassed. In any case, he had to face the Queen of England only; the King had already departed for Bar, according to the stipulations of the English Government, with a few attendants. He was known as the Chevalier de St. George; the Duke of Lorraine furnished the castle of Bar for him, and went to visit him there.

It will be remembered that it was only by a clever trick, backed up by the wiles and the gold of Madame de Soubise, as well as by the whole weight of the King's authority, that Cardinal de Rohan contrived to obtain admission to the Chapter of Strasbourg. The whole of the French nobility, from the Princes of the Blood downwards, was debarred from entering that Chapter by the mésalliances which the necessities of its members had forced them to contract; the only Frenchmen who could prove the required number of quarterings were M. de Duras; the Duke d'Usèz, who, by his subsequent marriage, debarred his descendants; and the Count de Roucy, whose son also contracted a mésalliance. It was, nevertheless, considered essential to the King's interests that Frenchmen should be eligible, because the Bishop is elected by and from the Chapter, and it is desirable that he should be a French subject. The King therefore endeavoured to obtain some modification of the qualifications. The Chapter deputed the Count de Lowenstein, Grand-Dean of Strasbourg, Madame de Dangeau's brother, who afterwards became Bishop of Tournay, though not in Holy Orders, to act on their behalf; and he had a long private audience of the King.

The Chapter consented to relax its requirements so far as maternal descent was concerned, even in the case of Germans, and it was eventually settled that any Frenchman could be admitted without proofs, provided that he
could show that his three immediate paternal ancestors held the rank of Duke. This was a bad arrangement; it would have been fairer to insist on the dukedom going back to a certain date. To show how it worked, I will mention only one case, that of M. d'Aumont and myself; my peerage is thirty years older than his, yet I am only the second Duke, while he is the fifth. Consequently his grandfather might, under this rule, have put his sons into the Chapter of Strasbourg, while mine are not eligible. I could quote many similar instances.

Old Brissac died at the age of eighty-five, or thereabouts. He was a Lieutenant-General, and Governor of Guise; and had long served as Major of the Body-guards. By birth he was a gentleman, of a very insignificant family; he rose through all the ranks of the Body-guards by dint of steady attention to his duty and paying no regard to any one but the King. He had gained the King's confidence in all matters relating to the Guards to such a degree that the Captains of the Guard themselves, great noblemen as they were, and though they had commanded armies in the field, had to be careful how they dealt with him; and of course all the other officers of the Body-guard were still more so. He was rough and disagreeable in his manners, and the King had completely spoilt him; nevertheless, he was a brave, upright, and honourable man, respected as such by everybody, though many people hated and feared him, even some of the most distinguished personages about the Court. He was the only man who dared attack Fagon on medical topics. His sarcastic sayings used to put Fagon in a perfect fury; the more so, because the King laughed heartily at them. Fagon was witty too, and his replies were no less amusing, but he never could keep his temper when he saw Brissac, or even heard his name mentioned. I have already related an amusing trick which Brissac played on the ladies assembled for the King's evening service. The King laughed heartily at it, and his courtiers still more so. The names of those who blew out their candles and went away when they thought the King was not coming became known; some of them would have liked to scratch Brissac's face; and indeed he deserved it for the things he said about them.

The Duke of Shrewsbury arrived as Ambassador from England, and had the usual audience; his Duchess was
also received by the King, as there was no Queen or Dauphiness, and in the evening the Duchess d'Aumont led her to assume her tabouret at the King's supper. She was an Italian; daughter of the Marquis Paleotti, by his marriage with Lady Catherine Dudley. She was a great, stout, masculine-looking creature; who had formerly been handsome, and still thought herself so, though decidedly on the wane; she was covered with rouge and patches, wore low-cut gowns, and was full of little affectations. Directly she arrived she made herself at home, talked much and loudly in bad French, and fed at everybody's table. Her manners were those of a mad woman; but her excellent cook, the play that went on at her house, her magnificence, and even her general familiarity, made her the fashion.

She disapproved of the way in which our ladies dressed their hair, and it was indeed ridiculous in the extreme. The hair was drawn over an edifice composed of wire, and adorned with ribbons and all sorts of appendages, the whole being more than two feet high, so that a woman's face seemed to be in the middle of her body; even old ladies wore it in just the same way, only with black gauze instead of ribbons. Directly they moved the whole edifice trembled, and it was extraordinarily inconvenient. This fashion had lasted more than ten years; the King could not bear it, but, absolute as he usually was in the merest trifles, he had never been able to abolish it.¹ The example of an old mad foreigner succeeded where he had failed. The change was instantaneous; the ladies suddenly went from one extreme to the other; and the low style of dressing their hair, more simple, more becoming, and more convenient, which they adopted has lasted to the present day. Sensible people await with impatience the advent of another mad foreigner to disencumber our ladies of the enormous hoops which are as intolerable to themselves as they are to everybody else.

¹ The King used to say: "I must confess I am annoyed when I reflect that, with all my royal authority, I grumbled in vain about the height of ladies' headdresses: not one of them would lower it in the slightest degree to please me. A stranger arrived one day, an Englishwoman of no great position, with her hair dressed low; and all our Princesses immediately went from one extreme to the other" (Corr. of Madame, Duchess of Orleans).
Powis House in London, which had been taken by our Ambassador, the Duke d’Aumont, was burnt to the ground; his plate was saved, but, according to his own account, he lost everything else. He also declared that he had been warned anonymously that it was intended to burn his house, and even to assassinate him; and that the Queen, to whom he had mentioned this, had offered him guards for his protection. But people in general, both in Paris and London, were of a different opinion; they were convinced that he had set fire to his own house; partly for the sake of the compensation he hoped to receive from the King, partly to conceal a monstrous contraband traffic, of which the English had complained loudly ever since his arrival, and which brought him considerable profit. That, at least, is what was said openly at both Courts, and it was generally believed. This Duke d’Aumont had been a spendthrift and lived by his wits all his life. He had made a love-match, in opposition to his father’s wishes, with Mademoiselle de Pienne, whose mother was a Godet, related to the Bishop of Chartres. Seeing that the engagement had lasted several years, and that both parties were determined not to make any other marriage, the Bishop enlisted Madame de Maintenon’s sympathies on their behalf; the King intervened, and compelled the father to give his consent.

The Duke d’Aumont was a man of remarkable strength, and extremely debauched; he had excellent taste in everything, jewels, furniture, equipages, and ornaments of all kinds, which led him into extravagant expenditure, for he could deny himself nothing. He extracted enormous sums from the Controller-General, and from his cousin Barbésieux, with whom he quarrelled eventually, because he could not get as much out of him as he wanted; for he laid his hands on all the money he could find, and spent it accordingly. Before his father’s death, when living in a hired house, he decorated and gilded it from top to bottom, and panelled the stables with most beautiful woodwork; he also surrounded them with a cornice, covered with pieces of fine porcelain. From this sample one may judge what his expenditure amounted to. He was a clever man, but ignorant; he could talk delightfully, but he was not to be trusted; he was faithless and unprincipled, and his reputation for bravery was, to put it mildly, not very distinguished.
He was not a success as an Ambassador either in England or France. The King gave Lord Powis 250,000 livres; and to the Duke d'Aumont 100,000, with an additional payment of 50,000 a year for four years, as compensation for his loss through the fire, and in consideration of the heavy expenses of his Embassy.
CHAPTER XXI

1713

A Jesuit's book condemned—Montrevel encroaches on my rights as Governor of Blaye—Government of Guyenne given to the Count d'Eu—I refer my disputes with Montrevel to M. du Maine—He receives me politely—Montrevel complains that I insult him—My reply—He resumes ordinary civility—M. du Maine decides the dispute in my favour—Pontchartrain's treachery—I announce my intention of receiving him if possible—Remonstrances of the Chancellor and his wife—Preparations for the Treaty of Utrecht—The renunciations to be registered by the Parliament of Paris—Reluctance of the King—He tries to avoid summoning the Peers—The Duke of Berry breaks down in his speech—On his return he receives an ill-timed compliment—Madame de Saint-Simon does her best to console him—The Treaty of Utrecht signed.

About this time a book written by the Jesuit Jouvency caused a great sensation. I do not undertake to quote extracts; it is sufficient to say that it was written to please the Court of Rome and his own Society; he used his best Latin and all the subtility of a Jesuit to uphold and establish the most outrageous pretensions of the Ultramontane party. He eulogised the Jesuits usually held in abhorrence for their share in the fury of the League, the Gunpowder Plot in England, and the plot against the life of Henry IV; making them out to be saints of the first rank, and Martyrs worthy of public veneration. This proposition he supported by asserting the Pope's authority over the temporal dominions of Sovereigns, his right to absolve their subjects from their allegiance, to depose Kings and dispose of their crowns according to his own pleasure; and, finally, by quoting the principle held by the Jesuits as a dogma, that it is lawful to kill tyrants; that is, to assassinate any King who happens to stand in their way. The book was received with indignation by the
public; and the Parliament of Paris, as in duty bound, was prepared to take the matter up.

Father Tellier stood up manfully in defence of a book so agreeable to the spirit, doctrine, and constant practice of his Society. He came several times to see me about it; I made no attempt to conceal my opinion of the horrible maxims contained in it, or of the author's audacity in publishing them. He replied with subtle quibbles which extorted my admiration; I was astonished at the patience with which he listened to me, and his perseverance in trying to bring me over to his opinion. Although, since the Dauphin's death, he had no longer the same reasons for cultivating my society, he continued to visit me as usual, for a Jesuit always has an eye to the future; the King was growing old and infirm; the successor to the throne was a child; and he was aware of my position with regard to the Duke of Berry, and, still more, to the Duke of Orleans.

He had less trouble with the King, although the book was a direct attack on the authority, and even on the personal safety, of Sovereigns. The King apparently remembered the remarkable advice given him by Father de la Chaise on his death-bed, and thought it better to let the Jesuits say what they pleased rather than run the risk of their daggers by irritating them. Accordingly he sent several times for the First-President and the leading members of the Parliament, in order to moderate their zeal; for they talked of having the book burnt by the common hangman, of declaring Jouvency infamous, as well as all persons who approved of his doctrines, and of summoning the Superiors of the Jesuits to the bar, and making them publicly abjure these detestable maxims.

The First-President, however, was trying to keep in with both sides; he wished to please the King and conciliate the Jesuits. On the other hand, he was afraid of alienating the Parliament, for his consideration at Court and in society depended on his retaining his influence over that body. This made the affair drag on for a considerable time. In the end the book was suppressed by a decree of Parliament, but not burnt; the Superiors of the three Jesuit houses in Paris were summoned to appear at the bar, and the First-President gave them a mild and polite admonition. They also had to make a declaration in terms
prescribed to them; but these terms were so vague, and so far from committing them to anything definite with regard to their Father Jouvency and his maxims, that the whole thing was a mockery. The public murmured, and the Parliament trembled with suppressed indignation; but the King stopped their mouths. Father Tellier professed great displeasure at this mild censure; in reality he was delighted with his success in talking the King over, and glad that his Society had got off so easily.

I must now mention a decision which I obtained regarding my Government of Blaye; for, though of little interest in itself, it had ulterior consequences of some importance. We have seen how Marshal de Montrevel was continually encroaching on my rights; and how, relying on the King’s favour, he had refused all my offers to submit the matter to arbitration. He was even silly enough to give out at Bordeaux that he would not grant me the “right hand” if I came there, for which he was well laughed at by the Archbishop, the First-President, the Intendant, and every one else. I was weary of the perpetual impertinences of a madman; and when the Duke de Chevreuse died I conceived the idea of making my Government independent of that of Guyenne; La Vrilliére undertook to submit this alteration to the King, who received it so favourably that I had every reason to hope it would be carried out. But when I heard, soon afterwards, that the vacant Government of Guyenne had been given to M. du Maine’s second son, I understood that I had better say no more about it; nevertheless I was determined, if possible, to have my dispute with Montrevel settled one way or the other.

I went accordingly to M. du Maine, and gave him a brief account of the affair; I explained my proposal for the separation of the two Governments, telling him that I had laid it aside as soon as I heard of M. d’Eu’s appointment; I added that, at the same time, I should take it as a great favour if he would himself inquire into and decide the matters in dispute between his son and myself, for Montrevel was only interested as the Governor’s representative. I said I would draw up a statement of my case, and suggested that he should invite Marshal de Montrevel to do the same, as I knew he would be in Paris very soon. I asked him, further, when he had given his decision, to get the King to embody it in a perpetual decree; so that in
future I might know how I stood, giving up such claims as he might consider unfounded, and remaining in undisturbed possession of such rights as might remain to me.

M. du Maine, who had never ceased to make advances to me, in spite of the coldness with which I had received them, was extremely polite on this occasion; he expressed himself much gratified by my proposal, and undertook to do what I asked. Montrevel arrived shortly afterwards; he dared not refuse the arbitration of M. du Maine; but he was excessively annoyed at finding himself brought to bay. I perceived that he made a point of saluting me with marked negligence whenever we met, and at Marly we were continually meeting; so that I took, on my part, to looking him straight in the face and passing without bowing at all. After a few days of this treatment he was beside himself with rage; he went to M. du Maine, and complained that I had insulted him.

Shortly afterwards I had occasion to see M. du Maine about my affairs; when we had finished our business he told me what the Marshal had said, and asked what it all meant. I replied that I had never in my life been accused of behaving rudely to any one, but I was not disposed to allow people to give themselves airs; Montrevel had done so in such a way that I was compelled to show him how little I cared for fops and braggarts, and what I had done was for that express purpose. M. du Maine reminded me of the respect due to the place where we were, and of the possible consequences of being on such a footing with a man whom I might meet at any moment; adding that it was best to laugh at such silly conduct, or take no notice of it. I replied that I did laugh at the Marshal's absurdity, but I would not submit to impertinence from him or any one else. I knew he was quite mad, and likely to offer me an open affront; but I felt quite capable of dealing with him; and I relied on the King's justice, in case of a quarrel, to punish the aggressor and not the man who had received and repelled an insult. I added that, to cut the matter short, Montrevel might make up his mind that I should not alter my behaviour to him unless he first altered his to me, and that completely; if he did not like it, I said, he must put up with it as well as he could. Thereupon I took my leave of M. du Maine, who
was not displeased with my answer, though I could see he would rather it had been of another sort.

I do not know what he said to Montrevel, but two days later I was surprised to see the Marshal waiting in the saloon till I came near him, instead of getting out of my way as he usually did, and as he might very well have done on this occasion. When I came up to him he made me a very low bow, with marked politeness, before a number of people. I returned it in the same manner; and from that moment we behaved to each other with proper civility. He did all he could, however, to delay a decision about our dispute, while I was continually urging M. du Maine to give one as soon as possible. No compromise was possible; he claimed more authority over me than was usually exercised by a Governor of a Province over the Governors of places situated within their jurisdiction; I, on the contrary, asserted that he had less; I claimed complete independence, both civil and military, within the limits of my little Government. The Prince of Conti, M. d'Epernon, and other Governors of Guyenne, had always recognised this independence in my father's time, as I could prove by letters written by them; and also by decisions and orders signed by the King. As a rule only Princes of the Blood can give orders within their Governments when not present in person; but my father had been placed and upheld in this exceptional position by the King himself, out of gratitude for the great service he had rendered during the troubles of the Fronde, which I mentioned in the beginning of these Memoirs. After his death, I had several times asserted the same authority; and my claims had been admitted by orders signed by Secretaries of State. Montrevel, on the other hand, could not produce a scrap of evidence in support of his claims; all right and justice were on my side, and I could not submit tamely to the encroachments of this old rascal.

After many delays, M. du Maine ordered La Vrillière to draw up a report; it contained twenty-five clauses, for I had particularly asked that it should be full and complete, so as to leave no loophole for future disputes. M. du Maine was very willing to oblige me in a question of importance to myself, for he knew it mattered little to his son, who was not likely to exercise the functions of Governor of Guyenne in person; moreover, he was not sorry to have
this opportunity of showing his impartiality, and so diminish the ill-feeling caused by this new favour bestowed on him. Of the twenty-five clauses of his decision only one was against me, and that merely laid down that, when the Governor of Guyenne visited the town or citadel of Blaye, he might be accompanied by his guards in great-coats and bandoleers; the other twenty-four were entirely in my favour. They were approved by the King on the 19th of March.

I had not thought it advisable to draw attention to Montrevel's impertinent assertion that he would refuse me precedence in his own house; but the case was provided for by a clause which laid down that the Governors of Guyenne and Blaye should take precedence of each other according to the dates of their appointments. By this decision Montrevel was forced to yield precedence to me everywhere; except, of course, in my own house. He was furious; and, though he gave out that he was quite satisfied, he could not face me much longer; at the end of a week he suddenly took his departure for Guyenne. It had been ordered that the King's decision was to be registered at the town hall of Blaye; I had it done without losing a moment, so that the Marshal, on his arrival at Bordeaux, found copies of it printed and distributed everywhere. His rage was unbounded, but he dared not say anything. I sent several citizens of Blaye to prison for a considerable time, and let it be known that it was because they had gone to the Marshal with complaints; he swallowed the leek without a murmur, and never again attempted the smallest interference with my Government.

My satisfaction would have been complete but for an incredible piece of treachery on the part of Pontchartrain. Though he professed the most boundless gratitude to me for having saved him from dismissal he had not said a word to me about the Blaye Militia; I would not be first to speak of it, and went on expecting to hear from him. It was at Marly that I had most of my interviews with M. du Maine. Now, the buildings at Marly are arranged in such a way that it is impossible to go anywhere without being seen. Pontchartrain was extremely inquisitive; he was well acquainted with my sentiments regarding the bastards, and knew that I never went to M. du Maine's rooms except on ceremonial occasions; my repeated visits
aroused his curiosity. In reply to his inquiries I told him simply that I had occasion to see M. du Maine from time to time. This made him still more inquisitive; he found out, somehow or other, what was going on, and availed himself of his opportunities to speak to the King beforehand about his Coast-guard officers. There was a clause in the judgement which decided that the Blaye Militia should be under the sole administration of the Governor of Blaye; when it came up for final signature the King, with his own hand, added these words to the clause: "Without prejudice to any changes made by the edict creating Captains of the Coast-guard." The result of this was that, although I had completely gained my case against the Governor or Commandant of Guyenne with regard to my Militia, I lost it as against Pontchartrain and his Captains of the Coast-guard.

My indignation at this trick of Pontchartrain's may be easily imagined. I went at once to see La Chapelle, a confidential clerk of his, who was equally in the confidence of the Chancellor, and knew how I had saved Pontchartrain and brought about the reconciliation between his father and the Duke de Beauvilliers. I told him what had occurred, adding that, although I was well aware of the difference between my own power and influence and those of a Secretary of State, a weak man might, nevertheless, succeed in overthrowing a strong one if he made it his sole object in life; and for the future I would postpone all consideration of my own fortune and advancement to the task of effecting the complete ruin of Pontchartrain. La Chapelle tried in vain to appease me and induce me to listen to some compromise. I said I would never hear another word on the subject; Pontchartrain might enjoy his authority over my Militia without disturbance; I, for my part, should henceforth find my chief pleasure in doing all I could to overthrow and ruin him; and by dint of patience and perseverance I thought it possible that I might some day succeed. Thereupon I left the room; and La Chapelle, terrified by my anger and the deliberate manner in which I had made this uncompromising declaration, rushed off to find the Chancellor. I had not been in my own rooms half an hour when a message came from the Chancellor, begging me to go to him at once.

I found him walking up and down his room with a very
disturbed expression. As soon as he saw me: "What is this that La Chapelle tells me?" said he; "can it be true?" "And what has he thought proper to tell you, sir?" I replied. Thereupon he repeated what I had said to La Chapelle, almost word for word; I said that, though I was sorry La Chapelle had been so indiscreet, I was too honest to deny the accuracy of his report. The Chancellor did all he could to mollify me, appealing to the memory of his daughter-in-law, and to my affection for himself and his wife. I said that was all very well, but his son was a monster of ingratitude, detested by everybody; I reminded him of the pains I had taken to save Pontchartrain at a time when we had quarrelled openly about this very question; and I declared once more my unchangeable intention to work without ceasing, to sacrifice my own repose, fortune, and prospects, for the sole object of effecting his overthrow. I said I well knew the disproportion between us; but, nevertheless, the overthrow of a colossus was sometimes brought about by an imperceptible insect, and possibly it might turn out to be so in this case.

The Chancellor seemed completely crushed; he knew how badly his son had behaved to me, and what I had done for him in spite of all; and he had not a word to say in his defence. He knew my character thoroughly; he knew I should be as good as my word, and realised that an implacable and unrelenting enemy is not to be despised by a man so generally hated as his son. He remembered that the King was old; he knew that I had much influence with the Duke of Berry, and still more with the Duke of Orleans, whose friend I had been from childhood, to whom I had rendered many important services, and by whose side I had stood alone without flinching when the King, Madame de Maintenon, and a horrible cabal were all against him. The Chancellor, I say, thought of these things, and he trembled for his son. A long silence ensued; we walked up and down the room together; from time to time he turned his eyes on me with a reproachful and affectionate look.

At last I said that I thought he had too much sense of justice to withdraw his friendship from me because his treacherous son had chosen to stab me in the back in such an ungrateful way. I pitied him for having begotten such a son; but my conduct towards himself would be un-
changed, except that I should endeavour, by an increase of attachment and respect, to make him forget the irrevocable determination which he had compelled me to avow. He embraced me, and said he could not withdraw his affection from me even if he wished to do so; he would say no more at present, for I was too angry to listen to reason; but he hoped that time and the recollection of our old friendship would bring about a change. I made no reply to this; we embraced again, and so parted.

Next day I had to go through a similar scene with the Chancelière. Neither she nor her husband was under any delusion respecting Pontchartrain's character; but, though he treated his mother with even less affection than his father, she had a weakness for him which his father had not. She was forced to admit that he had behaved extremely badly to me, but begged me to forgive him and see if we could not come to some compromise. I refused absolutely to listen to these suggestions, with many assurances of my respect and regard for her personally. After this Madame de Saint-Simon had her turn; her piety and mild wisdom made her express herself less forcibly than I had done, but she was equally firm. They sent the First Equerry to intercede with me, but with no greater success. I left off calling on Pontchartrain; I never spoke to him when we met in public, merely acknowledging his presence by a slight bow; he, for his part, was in a fidget directly he saw me, and made me many deep bows. We shall see in due course of time what his treachery cost him.

A marriage was arranged between the only surviving son of Marshal Tallard and one of the three handsome daughters of Prince de Rohan. The match suited both parties. Tallard's family, though of sufficiently good nobility, was undistinguished, and he desired an alliance with a great house; the Rohans, on the other hand, wished to establish their daughters without giving them a dowry, so as to leave their property undivided to their only son. Marshal Tallard was wealthy; terms were soon arranged between the two families, and the Marshal resigned his dukedom in his son's favour. The King had given out long ago that he would have no more ceremonies of betrothal in his private room, except in the case of Princes of the Blood; but he could not refrain from making an exception in favour of a granddaughter of Madame de Soubise, who
had formerly been so dear to him. Accordingly, on the 14th of March, the ceremony of betrothal was performed in his private room by the Bishop of Metz, First Almoner, with great pomp. When the time came for signing, the King, who always had a weakness for pretty faces, told the Duke de Tallard that he was sure he was too gallant to sign before his bride, and he made her sign first; but he pointed with his finger to the place, and then made the bridegroom write his name above hers. The Rohans tried to make out that this little act of gallantry on the King’s part was a concession to their princely rank; ignorant people and provincials believed them, but they were laughed at by everybody who knew about such things, and the Tallards took no notice. The marriage was celebrated in the chapel at midnight, by Cardinal de Rohan; neither the King nor any Prince or Princess was present. The next day the bride received the visits of the Court, on the bed of the Duchess de Ventadour; also the visits which royal personages usually pay to Duchesses.

It was now high time that the renunciations should be registered; till that was done the treaty of peace could not be signed, and if our King was compelled by his necessities to long for peace, the English Government was no less anxious to consummate their glorious work of imposing it on the other Powers, and to enjoy the domestic repose which the Opposition party never ceased to disturb, so long as a chance remained of prolonging the war. The King of Spain had already ratified the renunciations with every solemnity which could be devised in accordance with Spanish laws, customs, and usages; it only remained for France to follow his example. I have already explained the difficulty of finding a formula which would satisfy the English Government without appearing to the King to cast a doubt on his own absolute authority. To establish that authority had been the main object of his long life; he was jealous of it in the extreme; no consideration would induce him to do anything which seemed derogatory to it; he was moved neither by the pressing interests of his country and his own family, nor by the thought that, at his age, the moment was approaching when this idol to which he was ready to sacrifice everything would fail him, and leave him to appear before God on the same level as the humblest of his subjects.
It was with difficulty that he could be brought to agree that, to make the ceremony of renunciation more solemn and binding, the Peers should be in attendance; and even then he tried to avoid summoning them formally for the purpose, contenting himself with giving out in a general sort of way that he wished them to be present. I found this out only four days before the ceremony; I spoke to several Peers about it at once, and then went to the Duke of Orleans. I told him that not a single Peer would attend in Parliament unless the King sent a formal summons to each through the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, in the proper way; so he had better see what could be done without loss of time. This warning proved successful; the Dukes of Orleans and Berry went to the King, and remonstrated with such effect that Dreux was sent at once to every Peer who had rooms in the château; and those who were not in when he called received a summons in proper form, namely: "His Majesty desires the attendance of the Duke of —— in Parliament on such a day, when very important business will be transacted." Signed, Dreux; with the date. A similar notification was sent to all Peers who were at Paris; and the English, anxious to have the business settled, were willing to consider that the King had done all that was in his power.

The sitting was to begin with a complimentary address by the First-President to the Duke of Berry, who was to reply to it at once. He was very much disturbed in his mind about this, and confided his trouble to Madame de Saint-Simon, who contrived to procure a copy of the First-President's address, so that he might compose his reply accordingly. But as he confessed that he found even this task too difficult, Madame de Saint-Simon suggested that I should do it, and he accepted the offer thankfully. Accordingly, I wrote a reply for him covering about a sheet and a half of my ordinary handwriting; he approved of it, but said it was too long for him to learn by heart. I cut it down, but still it was too long; so that in the end it did not cover more than three-quarters of a sheet. Then he set to work to learn it by heart, and the evening before the ceremony he repeated it to Madame de Saint-Simon, who did what she could to give him courage.

At six in the morning of the 15th of March I went to the Duke of Berry's rooms, dressed in my parliamentary
attire; and soon afterwards the Duke of Orleans joined us. At half-past six the two Princes got into the Duke of Berry's coach, accompanied by the Duke de St. Aignan and myself; several other coaches followed with the members of their households, and the Duke of Berry's guards rode alongside. He was very silent all the way; I was sitting opposite to him, and it seemed to me that he was brooding over the speech he had to make. The Duke of Orleans, on the contrary, was very lively, and told us many stories of his younger days and of his nocturnal wanderings in Paris, by which he had learnt his way about the streets; but the Duke of Berry said not a word. When we arrived at the Porte de la Conférence, which stood at the end of the Tuileries gardens, we were joined by the trumpets and kettledrums of the Duke of Berry's guards; and they made a great noise all the rest of the way, but we had not much farther to go.

On arriving at the Palace, the two Princes were conducted to the Sainte-Chapelle, where they heard a Low Mass; after which they were escorted by two Présidents-à-mortier and two Counsellors to the Grand Chamber. The crowd of spectators was so dense that if a pin had been dropped it could not have reached the ground, and there were people perched aloft wherever they could climb; it was with difficulty that the Duke of Berry's guards could keep a passage clear for the two Princes. The assembly was complete when we entered the Grand Chamber; all rose to their feet and stood uncovered, while the two Princes, followed by the Présidents-à-mortier, crossed the floor and took their places. M. de St. Aignan and I also took our seats; including ourselves, there were five ecclesiastical and eighteen lay Peers present, besides two Princes of the Blood and two bastards. The Duke of Shrewsbury, accompanied by his staff, and by the Introducer of Ambassadors, was also present in a seat reserved for him, as a necessary witness of the ceremony.

Silence having been restored with some difficulty, the First-President rose and pronounced his complimentary address to the Duke of Berry, who then had to reply. He raised his hat, put it on again, and said: "Sir!" After a moment's pause he again said "Sir!" He cast his eyes round the assembly; "Sir!" he said again, and turned towards the Duke of Orleans, who was fiery red, like him-
self; then he looked again at the First-President, but not a single word escaped him but "Sir!" I could see his confusion from where I sat; I was in a cold perspiration, but there was no help for it. At last the First-President, seeing that nothing more was to be expected, put an end to this painful scene by raising his cap and bowing low to the Duke of Berry, as if he had finished his speech. The embarrassment of the courtiers present, and the astonishment of the magistrates, may be imagined.

The King's commissioners then proceeded, in long and flowery speeches, to explain the business before the Assembly; namely, first, to withdraw from the registers of parliament the letters-patent reserving the rights of the King of Spain and his branch to the Crown of France, which had been registered at the time of his departure for Spain; secondly, to read his renunciation, for himself and his posterity, of all claims to the French Crown; thirdly, to read those of the Dukes of Berry and Orleans to the Crown of Spain; and, finally, to register these three renunciations. The First-President explained the King's intentions; the advocate Joli-de-Fleury moved the necessary resolutions, and the Procureur-Général summed up; after which the votes were taken, each member raising his cap as his name was called. All this took a very long time.

The resolutions having been carried, the Presidents and Magistrates rose; and, with a bow low to the Duke of Berry, left the chamber. The Duke of Berry raised his hat, but remained seated; as did the Duke of Orleans, the other Princes, and all the Peers. We kept our seats while the men of the gown filed out of their benches; then we drew together, the courtiers and persons of quality who had been looking on came into the middle of the room, and the conversation became general. After about a quarter of an hour, the Duke of Orleans sent for me and asked whether we ought not to resume our seats before the Presidents and other magistrates returned; I said a few minutes' notice would be sufficient, or we might even take our seats at the same time. However, he said they would be back directly, because they only had to put on their scarlet robes and hoods, and they would not like to keep the Duke of Berry waiting; so he asked me to tell the Peers to sit down; and the floor was immediately cleared. Shortly afterwards he passed word down to me to come and speak
to him again; I did so, and he asked me whether he and the Duke of Berry ought to stand up when the lawyers came back; I said no, they ought to remain seated, but uncovered, and merely return their bows by a slight inclination of the head. M. le Duc put the same question to me; I smiled, and said I did not know how much honour he intended to confer on these gentlemen, but the Dukes of Berry and Orleans would remain seated, and so would all the Peers. I then went back to my place.

This was a good opportunity for the men of the gown to assert their pride at the expense of the Sons of France; they took nearly an hour over their change of dress, so that there was a general murmur of impatience. At last they returned, and I noticed an angry flush on the faces of the First-President and his companions when they saw that the Princes and Peers remained seated. It was some time before they were all in their places and the ushers had restored silence. The first sitting was supposed to be held with closed doors; but there were a number of benches not technically within the precincts of the Chamber, and these were crowded with spectators. The second sitting, known as that of the "upper seats," was held merely for the purpose of promulgating the resolutions already passed; and it was supposed to be open to the public. The First-President went through the farce of ordering the doors to be thrown open, though as a matter of fact they had been wide open the whole morning, and it was not possible for a single person to enter in addition to those who had been there all along. When the clamour of the ushers had subsided, and silence once more prevailed, the renunciations were again read over and discussed; the King's Commissioners displayed their eloquence, and the whole business of the first sitting was gone through a second time, only with slight variations of language. It was extremely wearisome.

By this time it was very late. The Dukes of Berry and Orleans drove in state to the Palais-Royal, accompanied as before by M. de St. Aignan and myself; there was little conversation on the way, the Duke of Berry seeming much dejected and in bad humour. On arriving at the Palais-Royal we changed our dress, and the Duke of Orleans then entertained a great number of Peers and persons of quality at dinner. He did the honours with much grace and dignity;
the feast was plentiful and splendid, and it lasted a long time, for everybody was extremely hungry. Its cheerfulness was somewhat marred by the dejected looks of the Duke of Berry, who hardly said a word; however, every one chatted with his neighbour, and, as the dinner and appetite were alike good, nobody was bored. The Duke of Orleans was full of polite attentions for everybody.

Soon after dinner was over the two Princes returned to Versailles. They both seemed offended at certain things they had noticed in the behaviour of the Parliament, some of which affected them, some the Peers only. I do not go into particulars now, as I shall have occasion to mention them hereafter. With this exception, the Duke of Berry’s gloomy looks kept us silent till we arrived at Versailles. Here the two Princes were met by a messenger. As I have already mentioned, the Duchess de Tallard had been married on the previous evening, and was this day receiving visits on the Duchess de Ventadour’s bed; the latter had posted the messenger to await the arrival of the two Princes, to say that, if they intended to do her granddaughter the honour of visiting her, she begged that they would do so before going to their own rooms, because the visits were over, and she was only awaiting theirs to get up.

Accordingly they went there at once, and were received, among others, by the Princess de Montauban; who, with her usual flattery, although she had not heard a word of what had happened, began telling the Duke of Berry how delighted she was to hear of the eloquent and gracious manner in which he had spoken in Parliament; and continued to discourse on this theme with every flattering phrase she could think of. The Duke of Berry, reddening with anger, pushed on to the bedside, while she was loud in her praises of his blushes and modest silence. He remained only a few moments with the bride; as he came away, he was again pursued by the old woman, telling him that the whole Parliament, and all who heard him, were paying him compliments. At last he got rid of her, and went to the Duchess of Berry’s room; there were visitors there, he hardly said a word even to his wife, but, drawing Madame de Saint-Simon aside, went off with her to his own room.

There he threw himself into a chair, burst into tears, and said he had disgraced himself. He managed, though
interrupted by his sobs, to explain to Madame de Saint-Simon how he had failed to get out a single word in Parliament; he said his disgrace before such an assembly would be talked of everywhere, and people would think him a fool and an idiot; then he told her about Madame de Montauban and her compliments, declaring that she had purposely insulted him, and called her all manner of names in his fury. Madame de Saint-Simon did all she could to comfort him, telling him that Madame de Montauban could not possibly know what had happened, and was only paying him compliments about the speech she thought he had made. It was of no use; he went on weeping and lamenting; then suddenly turning on the Duke de Beavilliers and blaming him for his bad education: "They thought only of keeping me back, and making me as stupid as they could," he said. "I was the youngest son; they were afraid of rivalry between me and my eldest brother; I was taught nothing but how to ride and play cards; and they have succeeded in making me grow up a fool; I shall never be good for anything, I shall be the laughing-stock of the world." Madame de Saint-Simon, overcome with compassion, said all she could to console him. This strange tête-à-tête lasted nearly two hours, till it was time to go to the King's supper. By degrees Madame de Saint-Simon managed to comfort him a little, but very imperfectly; no one ever ventured to allude to this meeting of Parliament in his presence.

The Duke of Shrewsbury sent off couriers to England and to Utrecht the same day; and the treaty of peace was immediately signed by all the Powers, except the Emperor.
CHAPTER XXII

1713

Fénelon's hopes revive—His relation appointed Bishop of Ypres—A posthumous trick of Jansenius's—Death of Sévigné—Of Cardinal Janson—His history and character—The Abbé de Beauvilliers appointed to the see of Beauvais—His deplorable conduct—The Duchess of Berry gives birth to a son—Flattery of courtiers—A quarrel between a Duke and a Prince—Question as to the privileges of the Marshal's tribunal—The Marshals give way—A new history of France—Bastardy no disqualification for the throne—Cardinal Gualterio—A marriage proposed between the Prince of Conti and the Duke of Orleans' daughter—Mademoiselle de Conti betrays the secret to her grandmother, who reveals it to the King—The King's anger—He forbids the proposed arrangement and insists on a double marriage in the Condé family—Anger of the Duchess of Berry with Mademoiselle de Conti—Pontchartrain marries again—The Chancellor compels me to attend the ceremony.

The friends of the Archbishop of Cambrai still clung to their hopes, and about this time a faint gleam of light came to cheer them up a little. Ratabon, Bishop of Ypres, hardly ever stirred away from Paris; he declared that there was a vapour in his Cathedral which made him faint directly he entered it. As he was on the best of terms with the Jesuits, it was perhaps the ashes of his celebrated predecessor Jansenius which produced this effect upon him. He was now translated to Viviers; and Father Tellier, who, in secret, was always on the side of the Archbishop of Cambrai, induced the King to give the see of Ypres to the Abbé de Laval, the Archbishop's grand vicar. This Abbé was a very virtuous and learned man, much beloved; he was distantly related to the Archbishop, who had taken him into his house and brought him up from childhood; and he loved and respected him as a father. This attachment seemed to preclude him from all chance of promotion, and it occasioned great surprise when Father Tellier succeeded in obtaining this appointment for him; M. de Beauvilliers was delighted, and the hopes of the Archbishop himself
revived; but, as we shall see, they came to nothing. The poor Abbé de Laval died at Ypres very soon after his consecration. He had been brought up in a school strongly opposed to Jansenism; was his sudden death another of Jansenius' tricks? He was the last Bishop of Ypres nominated by the King, who lost that place on the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht.

Sévigné died about this time, leaving no children; he had retired with his wife some years before to the Faubourg St. Jacques, where they lived in great piety. He was the son of Madame de Sévigné, still so famous for her letters, who had introduced him to the very best society. He was a worthy and honourable man, who had some queer adventures in his time; he had not seen much service, but distinguished himself whenever he had a chance. He was not exactly witty, but a very good imitation of a wit; he had much of his mother's easy and spontaneous charm, but combined with it something of his sister's stiff and acrid affectation; the result was a rather odd mixture.¹

Both Church and State sustained a heavy loss by the death of Cardinal Janson, Count-Bishop of Beauvais, Grand Almoner of France; who died at Paris on the 24th of March, at the age of eighty-three. His death was generally lamented, by the King as much as by the poor in his diocese. He was a man of rare distinction; I cannot pass him over without dwelling at some length on his character, and I do it the more willingly because he was one of my father's most intimate friends. He was for some years Bishop of Marseilles, and entrusted with the administration of Provence, to the great disgust of M. de Grignan, Lieutenant-General of the province, as we may see from Madame de Sévigné's letters. He showed so much capacity in this position that he was chosen to go as Ambassador to Poland in 1674, on the occasion of the election of a King. The celebrated John Sobieski was elected; and, out of gratitude for the Bishop's cleverness in inducing all parties to combine in his favour, he gave him his nomination to the Cardinalate. On the death of Pope Alexander VIII Cardinal de Janson took a leading part in the election of

¹ From the notices of him scattered about in Madame de Sévigné's letters he seems to have been a very amusing person, and a devoted son. It is odd that Madame de Sévigné should have given so much more of her affection to her daughter.
Innocent XII, Pignatelli, one of the wisest and best prelates who ever occupied the Holy See. He remained at Rome for many years as the King's representative, and was the best Minister he ever had there; for he was generally respected, and his natural sagacity was such that no one ever succeeded in taking him in, even at Rome. In 1706, having been appointed Grand Almoner in place of Cardinal de Coislin, he received the King's permission to return to France, and never saw Rome again.

In person he was very tall and well made; his face, though there was nothing repulsive about it, was not exactly pleasing; his expression was thoughtful, but gave little indication of his real ability. His speech was slow and unpleasant, because, owing to some defect in the organs, his voice seemed dead and strangled. Though modest and gentle, he had all the sentiments and the manners of a great nobleman; his ability would have made him a great statesman, for nature seemed to have destined him to take a leading part in public affairs. He was a thorough Frenchman, bold and indefatigable in standing up for our liberties against the encroachments of Rome; he often told the Roman Ministers, and even the Pope himself, that, though he felt highly honoured by his elevation to the purple, he considered the office of a Bishop far superior to the dignity of a Cardinal, and would not allow that his acceptance of a Hat bound him in any way. Courtier though he was, he showed as much boldness and independence at home as in dealing with foreign Powers; he saw the influence which the Jesuits had acquired over the King, but it never affected his conduct towards them in the smallest degree; he took no notice of their artifices, but made them respect him in his diocese, and quietly kept them in order.

As a young man he was poor. His first benefice was the chaplaincy of the chapel at Laigle, about six leagues from La Ferté, which is worth 800 livres a year; and out of gratitude to M. de Laigle, who had given it to him, he kept it all his life. When his fortunes improved, he paid a deputy-chaplain, and gave the surplus income of the benefice to the local poor. After he had become a Cardinal and a great nobleman, he delighted in telling M. and Madame de Laigle publicly that he was their Grand Almoner as well as the King's; and that he prided himself on re-
mainning in their service, because he had considered himself fortunate when their father gave him this little benefice to keep him from starving. In spite of all the favour and distinction which he found at Court, he was never so happy as in his diocese, where he was universally beloved, especially by the poor. He spent at least seven or eight months at Beauvais every year.

The King gave the vacant see of Beauvais to the Abbé de St. Aignan, brother to the Duke de Beauvilliers, who was still at the seminary at Orleans. M. de Beauvilliers did all he could to dissuade the King; telling him that, although he believed his brother to be pious and suited to his vocation, he was so young that it was impossible to be sure that he had the qualifications necessary for a Bishop. The King, however, while praising the delicacy of M. de Beauvilliers, was inflexible; he said he had heard good reports of the Abbé; Beauvais was not vacant every day, and if the old custom of making the younger Sons of France churchmen still subsisted, he could have offered nothing better than that see to his own son. The new Bishop turned out to be the perfect type of a seminarist; it is impossible to conceive anything duller, more awkward, or more hypocritical. I told M. de Beauvilliers that he ought to get him a dancing-master, to teach him, at any rate, how to make a bow and enter a room properly. At first he affected great piety and devotion to duty; but after a time his conduct became scandalous, and so notorious that he had to be shut up in a monastery for the rest of his days; only his resignation, which he was compelled to sign, saved him from being degraded and juridically deposed from his see. However, neither the King nor M. de Beauvilliers lived long enough to see how right the latter had been in his remonstrances.

On the 26th of March the Duchess of Berry gave birth to a son, who received the title of Duke of Alençon. He came at seven months; and so strong is the spirit of flattery that there seemed to be hardly a person about the Court who was not either a seven-months child himself or had, at any rate, reared children born at that term. The rejoicings over this event did not last long; the infant was delicate from the first, and died on the 25th of April, to the great grief of the Duke and Duchess of Berry.

It was at this time that the Princess of Conti bought the
Hôtel de Lorge from the Duke de Lorge, who was selling all he could lay his hands on, while at the same time he was spending the money so obtained on building. This purchase, coming so soon after those made by d’Antin and the Count de Toulouse, aroused attention; it was suspected that the King’s health must be declining, when people who could not sleep away from the Court without permission were acquiring residences in Paris. No alarming symptoms were perceptible as yet, however, to those not admitted to his most private circle.

The Jesuits are always quick to perceive the weak side of a monarch, and to take advantage of it for their own objects; a striking instance of this was a new History of France by Father Daniel, which appeared at this time in three large folio volumes. It certainly was a “new” history in every sense of the word. It was written in a charming style, admirably fitted to attract readers; but, when closely examined, the book was evidently composed for a special purpose: the author, with the ingenuous simplicity of an honest seeker after the truth, superior to ordinary prejudices, endeavours to make out that nearly all our Kings of the first dynasty, several of the second, and some even of the third, were bastards, frequently the offspring of adultery, double or simple; and that illegitimate birth was never regarded as a reason for excluding them from the throne. Of course what I have put in this blunt fashion was disguised with admirable delicacy in the book itself; these historical surprises are brought out carelessly, as facts hitherto overlaid by the darkness of centuries, and now brought to light by the patient toil of a learned man, for the benefit of posterity.

This work was a great success at first; everybody rushed to buy it, even women. It transpired that it had been favourably mentioned in Madame de Maintenon’s private circle; the King asked several courtiers whether they had read it; and that was enough to show wideawake persons that the book was under distinguished patronage, for certainly no one had ever heard the King or Madame de Maintenon allude to an historical work before. Consequently, a copy of it was soon lying on every table at Versailles. But it was soon perceived that, although the author went so deeply into the annals of the dark ages, the remainder of his enormous history was devoted entirely
to military events, every petty skirmish between parties of forty or fifty men being recorded; while other matters of great interest and importance are either passed over altogether or mentioned with the dryness and superficiality of a gazette. There was not an attempt to describe the characters of leading personages; diplomatic negotiations, court intrigues, changes in the law, public ceremonies, are omitted or dismissed with laconic brevity; and when we come to the League, and matters connected with Rome, it is delightful to watch the Jesuit skating gingerly over the thin ice. The book was therefore soon treated with contempt by all persons qualified to judge; but Father Daniel extracted a pension of 2,000 livres from the King, with the title of Historiographer of France. Some learned men wrote adverse criticisms of his book, but the thesis which it was written to uphold was too delicate and dangerous a point for them to touch. Foreign critics were not so reticent; they spoke their minds pretty freely about these newly discovered bastard Kings of ours, and the capacity of bastards to inherit the Crown; but good care was taken to prevent the infection of their unwelcome candour from spreading to France.

I had the pleasure at this time of seeing my friend, Cardinal Gualterio, again. He had formerly been Nuncio at Paris, in which capacity he had made many friends; he was liked by the King and trusted by the Ministers. When he took his leave on his recall to Rome, he had the condescension to visit M. du Maine and the Count de Toulouse with the same ceremonial as the Princes of the Blood; this gratified the King, but gave great offence at Rome; for no previous Nuncio had visited the bastards. Gualterio was coldly received by the Pope and Sacred College; he found that he was no longer looked upon as "papable"; he was, indeed, excluded from all but the most ordinary employments. Under these circumstances he considered himself a French Cardinal, and placed the Royal Arms of France over his door; he also took charge of the King of England's affairs. Finding that he had little to do at Rome, he thought he would like once more to see the King and his old friends in France; and about the middle of June he arrived in Paris. The King was very much touched at his coming, and received him with great kindness and distinction; he was asked to Marly every time
the Court went there. The Ministers were rather alarmed; they could not understand that a man of his age and dignity should undertake such a journey for private reasons; they thought the King might have changed his mind about admitting churchmen to his Councils, and feared lest Gualterio might become a second Mazarin. They kept him at arms’ length for a time; but, in the end, seeing that nothing happened, they resumed their old cordiality. He returned to Rome in October. We had always kept up a weekly correspondence; frequently in cipher, so as to enable us to express ourselves more freely; and we continued to do so till his death.

Marshal d’Huxelles, accompanied by Ménager, arrived from Utrecht, and had his audience of the King on the 21st of June. He had quarrelled a good deal with Polignac during the negotiations, and treated him in a manner which was very unbecoming, considering the equality of their positions as plenipotentiaries and the inequality of their birth. Polignac kept his temper, without giving way on any important points, and an open rupture between them was avoided; but they saw as little as possible of each other afterwards. Ménager was very useful in keeping the peace between them; he was not spoilt by the very unseemly equality of powers which had been granted to him, but remembered the difference of his social position. He had been appointed specially to look after all matters relating to commerce, of which the other two were very ignorant; and rendered good service. Consequently, he was well received by the King, and granted a pension of 10,000 livres.

A great stir was created by a quarrel which took place between the Duke d’Estrées and the Count d’Harcourt, at a supper-party given by the Duchess d’Albret. As we have already had occasion to see, this little Duke d’Estrées was not worth much; and the Count d’Harcourt was not much better, being a sort of bandit and swindler; he was the son of the Prince and Princess d’Harcourt, whom I have mentioned elsewhere. Marshal d’Huxelles, who happened to be the senior Marshal of France then in Paris, sent an officer of the constabulary to each of them; but neither would receive him, because Dukes and foreign Princes do not acknowledge the tribunal of the Marshals of France, and have never submitted to it, in spite of the efforts of
the Marshals to assert their authority. It is odd, but those Marshals who happen to be Dukes seem to attach more value to the privileges of their temporary office than to those which are hereditary in their families. Marshal de Villeroy was one of those most infatuated with the authority of his office; he went to the King and obtained a lettre-de-cachet enjoining the two disputants either to receive the officers of the constabulary, or go to the Bastille. They received the officers accordingly, declaring that they did so in obedience to the King, but not to the Marshals.

Some days later the Marshals assembled and ordered them to appear before their tribunal; the Count d'Harcourt was not at home when the messenger arrived; the Duke d'Estrees flatly refused. Marshal de Villeroy then made the King believe that there was some risk of a duel, and a fresh lettre-de-cachet was issued consigning them both to the Bastille; but it contained not a word about their disobedience to the Marshals. After about a month, the King nominated Marshals Villeroy, Huxelles, and Tessé as his Commissioners to settle the quarrel; and as there was no question of the tribunal of the Marshals of France, but merely of obeying the King's authority conveyed through his Commissioners appointed ad hoc, the two disputants made no further difficulty.

The Commissioners received them with all possible civility, without a word about their disobedience or the authority claimed by the Marshals. Marshal Villeroy told them that the Commissioners, having made inquiries, had come to the conclusion that the reports about the quarrel were exaggerated, and therefore asked them ("asked" not "ordered"), to embrace and keep the peace for the future. They embraced accordingly in perfect silence; Marshal Villeroy then added that their quarrel had caused a great disturbance; any future misunderstanding would be considered as arising from it, and the King expressly ordered them to refrain from violence. He therefore begged them to embrace once more (still "begged," not "ordered"); they did so, and retired in silence, merely acknowledging the civility of the Commissioners by bowing to them. Nothing more was heard of the dispute, and they went where they pleased in perfect liberty. I could quote many precedents to show that the claim of the Marshals of France to authority over the Dukes is quite
modern, absolutely without foundation, and never acknowledged.

Another quarrel took place about this time; to explain what led to it I must go back a little. Although Mademoiselle de Conti was six years older than the Duchess of Berry, they had been great friends from childhood; and, as both were brought up at Paris, they saw a good deal of each other. The daughters of Madame la Duchesse, on the other hand, were nearly always at Versailles. She had never been on good terms with her sister-in-law, the Princess of Conti; so that there was no intimacy between their children, nor between her daughters and those of the Duchess of Orleans. Mademoiselle de Conti led a very dull life; her mother was ill-tempered, having inherited a good deal of the disposition of her father, M. le Prince. Madame la Princesse, on the other hand, had been extremely fond of the late Prince of Conti, and carried on her affection to Mademoiselle de Conti, the daughter whom he had dearly loved; so that it was to Madame la Princesse that Mademoiselle de Conti went for consolation in all her troubles. But her grandmother was old and lived in retirement, spending most of her time in devotion; so her house was not very lively; such amusement as fell in the way of Mademoiselle de Conti was derived entirely from her acquaintance with Mademoiselle, who asked her to little parties at the Palais-Royal and St. Cloud. A warm friendship sprang up between them, which lasted after Mademoiselle's marriage, for she was grateful to Mademoiselle de Conti for the pleasure she openly expressed at that event, in spite of the disapproval of Madame la Princesse; it is true that in this she had the support of her mother, the only Princess of the Blood who was really pleased at the marriage.

This disposition on the part of mother and daughter inspired the Duchess of Orleans with the idea that the Duchess of Berry might sound Mademoiselle de Conti on the subject of arranging a marriage between one of her sisters and the Prince of Conti; and, if she seemed favourable to the project, to get her to use her influence with her mother. The Duchess of Berry had two sisters of marriageable age. Mademoiselle de Chartres, the elder, was fifteen; she was pretty, and well-shaped, but stammered very much, and she already showed some inclination to become
a nun; the younger, Mademoiselle de Valois, was thirteen; she was also extremely pretty, but fatter than her sister. It was proposed that the Prince of Conti should choose between the two. For my part, I looked upon the proposal as very risky. I thought it would be almost impossible to keep the negotiations from coming to the King's ears; he was extremely touchy on the subject of marriages in his family, and, if he heard of this one indirectly, he would not only break it off at once, but visit his displeasure most severely on the Duke of Orleans and the Duchess of Berry.

These considerations, however, produced no effect on the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, who were beginning to feel anxious about the establishment of their two elder daughters, especially as there were three others coming on. The Duchess of Berry spoke to Mademoiselle de Conti; who seemed much pleased, not only with the scheme for her brother's marriage, but at its having been confided to her; she carried the Duchess of Berry's proposals to her mother, who highly approved of them. She promised the strictest secrecy with regard to every one else; but, in spite of this promise, she confided the whole affair to her grandmother, Madame la Princesse. The consequence was that Madame la Princesse, who had hitherto striven in vain to induce her children to agree to a compromise about M. le Prince's property, suddenly became alive to the possibility of restoring peace to her family by a very natural arrangement, which had not before occurred to her, namely, a double marriage between her grandchildren. She knew she could not hope to induce them to agree to it of their own accord; but she thought the King would be so angry at hearing of the marriage proposed for the Prince of Conti that he would readily consent to an arrangement which would not only break it off, but do something to restore harmony in his family.

The interview between Mademoiselle de Conti and her grandmother was private, and I do not undertake to say what passed between them; but certainly appearances were very much against Mademoiselle de Conti, who betrayed the secret confided to her. Madame la Princesse had never been credited with much sense or much resolution. Her position and her virtue procured her the external respect of her family, but they despised her dullness and weakness; so that, in spite of all the millions she had at
her disposal, her wishes never carried the slightest weight. She was extremely timid with everybody, for M. le Prince had bullied her till her spirit was absolutely crushed; and she was especially afraid of the King. It is, therefore, hard to believe that she would have thought spontaneously of a double marriage, to be carried out in direct opposition to the wishes of the two widowed mothers of the persons concerned, by the sole authority of the King; invoked by herself alone, without assistance from any other person. It is clear, on the other hand, that Mademoiselle de Conti had everything to gain by the double marriage. M. le Duc was a better match than any she could possibly hope for; it was an arrangement which gave her the only chance of escaping, before her youth was completely gone, from the boredom and constraint in which her life was passed. She was twenty-five years old, very intelligent, with pleasant and agreeable manners; her face was handsome, but, though she was not short, her figure was not so good.

Madame la Princesse having made up her mind to speak to the King, Mademoiselle de Conti found herself in an awkward position with regard to her mother and the Duchess of Berry. It was necessary for Madame la Princesse to act at once, otherwise the Duchess of Orleans might be beforehand with her; and, if the King once gave his consent to the marriage between the Prince of Conti and one of her daughters, he would not retract it. Mademoiselle de Conti therefore sent a messenger to the Duchess of Berry, asking her to come to St. Cloud next day; and at the very moment of her departure for this rendezvous Madame la Princesse started for Versailles. I do not know how Mademoiselle de Conti broke the news to the Duchess of Berry; but she had to confess that her promise of secrecy had not been kept, and that she was at any rate the indirect cause of the sudden resolution taken by Madame la Princesse. That was quite enough to convince the Duchess of Berry that Mademoiselle de Conti had herself suggested the double marriage by which she would gain so much; she told her so plainly, and treated her with the contemptuous indignation which she thought she deserved. She never forgave her, but till the day of her death made a point, whenever they met in public (for they never again saw each other in private), of making
her feel the weight of her contempt and her superior rank. She went to tell the Duke and Duchess of Orleans what she had heard; they understood at once that the projected marriage was at an end, and were much troubled for the consequences of having concealed their design from the King.

Directly she arrived at Versailles, Madame la Princesse sent to the King, begging him to grant her an audience for a matter of great importance to her family, which admitted of no delay. He sent for her at once, and they had a long conversation in his private room. The details, of course, were not known; but it soon transpired that the King was highly offended at hearing of a marriage being arranged in his family without his being consulted, and thought Madame la Princesse quite justified in her annoyance at having been kept in the dark by her daughter. When he saw the Duke and Duchess of Orleans and the Duchess of Berry in the evening he spoke very sharply to them, and forbade them to think any more of their project. He also sent for Madame la Duchesse, and, speaking like a father, but at the same time like a Sovereign who means to be obeyed, told her that marriages had been arranged between her son and Mademoiselle de Conti, and between the Prince of Conti and her eldest daughter. Madame la Duchesse was very much taken aback; for she had heard nothing of the other scheme, and did not know what had brought Madame la Princesse to Versailles. The King sent to Paris for the Princess of Conti; but in her he met with stubborn resistance. She would not hear of the double marriage, telling the King that the lawsuits must be settled before anything else; and, moreover, that she had other views for her daughter. The King argued the point with her, and tried persuasion; at last, seeing that he made no impression, he adopted the tone of a Sovereign, and told her that he insisted on the double marriage being concluded without delay, and that, if she would not listen to reason, the arrangements would be carried out in spite of her. She returned to Paris in a fury, and Mademoiselle de Conti had a bad time of it till after her marriage.

The Prince of Conti was not to blame in this affair; he had been brought up to hate the Condé family. He was annoyed at the breaking off of his marriage with a daughter
of the Duke of Orleans, and still more annoyed at having to marry a daughter of Madame la Duchesse. This marriage, on the other hand, did not at all make up to Madame la Duchesse for having missed the Duke of Berry; but both she and her daughter derived some satisfaction from the annoyance of the Duchess of Orleans and the Duchess of Berry. The Princess of Conti continued to raise all the difficulties in her power; the King sent Pontchartrain several times to discuss matters with her, and at last ordered him to use threats. These had the desired effect; the marriage contracts were put in hand, and a courier despatched to Rome for the necessary dispensations. The King wished the marriages to take place before M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti left to join the army in Germany. They cost the King 500,000 livres; for he always used to give each Prince of the Blood 150,000 on his marriage, and to each Princess 100,000 livres.

The betrothals took place on Saturday the 8th of July, in the King's room, the ceremony being performed by Cardinal de Rohan, who returned from Strasbourg on purpose. The trains of the two brides were borne by Mademoiselle de Charolais and Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Yon. Next day the two Princes and Princesses were married in the chapel. The King gave a supper in the evening to the whole of the Royal Family, including M. and Madame du Maine with their two sons, and the Count de Toulouse. Both bridal pairs slept in the apartments of the late M. le Prince; the King handed the shirts to the two bridegrooms, and the Duchess of Berry the chemise to the brides, not without letting one of them feel her thorough contempt and disdain. Next day the King returned to the same apartments to visit the brides on their beds; and for the rest of the day their rooms were thronged with courtiers. After this affair the Princess of Conti was more bitter than ever against Madame la Duchesse, and less disposed to listen to any proposals for a compromise in the lawsuits between them; she was also very angry with her daughter and Madame la Princesse, and lost no opportunity of showing her friendship for the Duke and Duchess of Orleans.

Five years or more had elapsed since Pontchartrain lost a wife adorable in every way; perhaps no other woman in the world would have had sufficient virtue, patience,
and self-restraint to be a good wife to him, and, as we have seen, it was only consideration for her that had saved him from losing his office. He had soon grown tired of acting the part of a broken-hearted widower; and, although he had two sons, was bent on marrying again. The attractions of his position proved sufficient to counterbalance the repulsiveness of his face; which, hideous as it was, was charming compared with his character; Mademoiselle de Verderonne was willing to take him. She was an Aubépine, like my mother, but distantly related; and rich. The Chancellor, who was deeply grieved at my quarrel with his son, took it into his head to beg me to go to the wedding; perhaps with the object of keeping up appearances. I protested strongly, and got the Chancelière to intercede for me, for she took a more reasonable view than he did. It was of no avail; he used all the authority which he knew he possessed over me, and I had to give in. I did so under protest, telling him that I could not understand why he insisted on dragging me to a ceremony which must be painful to me on account of the memory of his first daughter-in-law, to say nothing of the present relations between his son and myself. Probably he wished to spare his son an affront which must have been noticed by the public; perhaps also he thought that, if I could bring myself to perform an act of outward civility, time might blunt the edge of my hatred, and I might forget my revenge. However that may be, I could refuse nothing to the Chancellor. He did not venture to ask the same complaisance from Madame de Saint-Simon; her cousin’s memory was too dear to her. She could not even bring herself to respond to the advances of the new wife; she could not bear to see her in that position, and told her so frankly. For my part I went to the wedding, feeling as though I was on my way to the gallows. It took place at Pontchartrain, and was a melancholy function; the Chancellor and his wife could not conceal their grief for the loss of their first daughter-in-law. All his relations, and even the servants, were in tears; the bride’s relations also seemed gloomy, and the sulky ways of the handsome bridegroom were not calculated to cheer them.

Such melancholy weddings make one think of death, and inspire serious reflections. Accordingly I have several deaths to record about this time. One was that of the
widow of one of Charles IX's bastards; it is curious that she should have lived till this year. Her name was Françoise de Nargonne; she was the daughter of the Baron de Mareuil. Her brother had been page to the Duke of Angoulême, a bastard son of Charles IX; who had married, in 1591, the eldest daughter of the last Constable de Montmorency. She died in 1636, leaving an only son, afterwards the last Duke of Angoulême; her husband fell in love with his page's sister, and married her in 1644. She was a tall person, still handsome when I saw her, with a look of gentle dignity; and her conduct throughout her long life was irreproachable. She was left a widow in 1650, without children, and very badly provided for. Her stepson did not trouble himself about her, nor did his widow after him; so that she was very poor, and lived in great retirement in the convent of St. Elizabeth at Paris, on a pension of 20,000 livres which the King gave her. Once or twice a year she came to Court, where she was well received; but, unlike the Duchess de Verneuil, she was not allowed any share in the new distinctions bestowed on bastardy, on the pretext that her husband did not spring from the Bourbon Kings.

The misfortunes of the war caused many pensions to be stopped, Madame d'Angoulême's among the rest. She pleaded in vain that it was all she had to live on; the King would not have cared if she had died of hunger; and she certainly would have died, but for the devotion of an old friend of hers, who had a small property some twelve leagues from Paris and took her to live with her there; for she could no longer pay for her board at the convent. She lived for some years at the expense of this old lady, and died at her house; neither the King nor the rich heirs of the two Dukes of Angoulême took the slightest notice of her, though they must have known all about her circumstances, nor did they ever seem in the least ashamed of themselves.

Another singular personage died in the seminary of foreign Missions at Paris; the third son of the celebrated Lyonne, Minister and Secretary of State. He was only sixteen years of age when his father died in 1671; his family fell into reduced circumstances; and partly on that account, partly from a real spirit of devotion, he determined to become a missionary. He spent many years
in China and Siam, having been consecrated Bishop of Rosalia in partibus, and acquired a considerable knowledge of Chinese literature and science. Like all the other missionaries, he fell out with the Jesuits about the Chinese ceremonies; and was recalled to Rome in 1703 in order to give evidence on that question. From Rome he went to Paris, still occupied with the same business; and there died. He had always intended to return to his Eastern mission, for which reason he would not part with his great beard.

Entertainments became more and more frequent in Madame de Maintenon's room in the evening, where nothing could fill the void left by the death of the poor Dauphiness. The Duke de Noailles, in hopes of regaining his lost favour, provided one in the shape of an idyll on the peace, the words composed by Longepierre, the music by La Lande, master of the chapel musicians; and it was performed several times before the King. This was at Marly, where he made a very long stay. On the 30th of August he went to Fontainebleau, spending a night on the way at d'Antin's house at Petit-Bourg.

Soon after our arrival there, I discovered that M. de la Rochefoucauld was circulating a pamphlet on the subject of the dispute about precedence between him and myself; a copy fell into my hands, and I found that the writer, for want of better arguments, had indulged in some impertinent references to me. I immediately wrote a reply, in which I spoke plainly about some matters which I had hitherto left unnoticed, and did not spare those who attacked me. The Duke de Noailles, with whom I was on very familiar terms at that time, found me with a copy of my reply in my hands; he was startled when he saw its contents, and begged me not to circulate it till he had seen M. de la Rocheguyon. He came back assuring me that M. de la Rocheguyon disavowed the pamphlet against me; and would undertake to suppress it completely, provided that I did the same with my answer. I told the Duke de Noailles that I was far from seeking a quarrel about this business, as my conduct had shown all through; but he must not think it was because I was deficient in courage, or had nothing to say in my own behalf. I should let some copies of my reply appear, to correspond with the number of copies of the pamphlet in circulation; if the latter was
suppressed in accordance with his promise, I would accept
the assurances and compliments which he had brought
me; but, if not, I would do my best, by word and deed,
to make my assailants repent of having attacked me so
gratuitously. I was as good as my word; I spoke about
the affair, and distributed a few copies of my reply. The
pamphlet immediately disappeared from circulation, both
at Paris and at Court, where very few people had seen it.
The Dukes of Villeroy and de la Roche Guyon overwhelmed
me with civilities and assurances; to which I replied
rather coldly; and so the matter dropped. It had caused
a certain amount of talk, which the King was good enough
to ignore. He had already decided the question of pre-
cedence in his edict of 1711; and though M. de la Roche-
foucauld, by dint of cries and entreaties, had induced him
to reopen it, he did not wish to have it brought before him
again at this time.

I will here mention a trifle, to show how tenacious the
King was of the maxims of Government which he had
learnt during the troubles of his minority. The little
government of Alais, in Languedoc, fell vacant; and he
gave it to Baudoin, formerly Lieutenant-Colonel of the
regiment of Vendôme, whom he esteemed highly. Shortly
afterwards he found out, somehow or other, that Baudoin
was a native of Languedoc; whereupon he ordered him to
resign his government at once, promising him another in
its place; and gave Alais to d'Iverny, a Brigadier of
infantry, who did not come from those parts.
CHAPTER XXIII

1713

Father Tellier and his designs—Bissy—Madame de Maintenon and the Jesuits—Father Quesnel’s book referred to Rome—Composition of the Constitution “Unigenitus”—Cardinal Fabroni and Father d’Aubenton—The Sacred College alarmed—Father Tellier by threats enlists Cardinal de Rohan on his side—Character of the latter—His ingratitude to Cardinal de Noailles—Completion of the Constitution “Unigenitus”—The Pope protests, but signs the Constitution—It is received with general indignation in France—Father Tellier’s determination—He consults me on the subject—My horror at his sentiments—He asks for a second interview—Description of my rooms at Versailles—My “shop”—Father Tellier visits me in it—Our discussion—Reflections on a Jesuit—An impertinent interruption—He bears no malice.

The death of Cardinal de Janson occurred at an unfortunate moment for France. With his outspoken and resolute disposition, and possessing the King’s confidence as he did, he might possibly have been able to avert the evils which now descended like a flood on the Church, and did not leave the State unimpaired. Father Tellier was working indefatigably for the object which he had set himself to accomplish; and all the conjunctures were favourable to him. The King had not only been brought up to look upon the Jansenists, as they were popularly called, as a party holding republican theories in Church and State, and opposed to the absolute authority which was his idol; he had also imbibed from Cardinal Mazarin, and the Queen his mother, the extreme ultramontane doctrines, according to which everything must give way to the Court of Rome; he had long been accustomed to use his authority to stifle the remonstrances of the Parliaments, and to exile or imprison private persons who had incurred the displeasure of Rome by protesting against her encroachments on the independence of our Church and the rights of our Sovereigns. Madame de Maintenon did all she could to encourage him in this way of thinking, being herself entirely under the
guidance of Father la Chétardie and Bissy, Bishop of Meaux.

Bissy, a man devoured by ambition, which he concealed under the pharisaical exterior of a dull seminarist of St. Sulpice, was devoted heart and soul to the Jesuits; to whom he looked for the advancement of his fortune. They had already procured his translation from the distant see of Toul to Meaux, and he hoped, with their support, to be raised to the dignity of Cardinal. He was quite aware of Madame de Maintenon’s dislike for the Jesuits; but he was too clever to quarrel with friends, whose power was independent of mortality, for the sake of an old woman who might fail him at any moment; or even for the sake of a pack of dirty-bearded fellows like the Sulpicians, whom, sooner or later, the Jesuits would kick out of their path. He was, therefore, careful to conceal his alliance with the Jesuits from Madame de Maintenon; and he explained his intimacy with Father Tellier by the necessity of working in concert with him for the holy cause of the Church and purity of doctrine; that is, for the persecution of Cardinal de Noailles.

Madame de Maintenon in her zeal against the Cardinal, was glad to have a channel by which she could find out what advice Father Tellier was giving to the King; she did not wish to be brought into personal contact with him, but she fancied that by means of Bissy she could co-operate with him, and even guide the King indirectly; never suspecting that Bissy was simply the tool of the Jesuits, and that he and Father Tellier were hand-in-glove with each other. In reality, Father Tellier contrived through Bissy to ensure that Madame de Maintenon’s influence should be used according to his wishes; and so, by these secret manoeuvres, the pair made the King do exactly what they pleased. Torcy was no longer the Minister consulted with reference to this affair; they had made the King think he was not to be trusted, on account of his connection with the Arnaulds; and they had substituted Voisin, Madame de Maintenon’s creature and tool, just the ignorant and corrupt sort of person they wanted. One result of these obscure intrigues was the nomination of Bissy to the Cardinalate; promoted with equal zeal, though quite independently of each other, by Father Tellier and Madame de Maintenon.
When Father Tellier first incited and fomented the clamour against Father Quesnel's "Moral Reflections," his object was merely to fix a twitch on the Pope's ear, so to speak, to keep him quiet; to provide him with business in France which would make him cautious in his dealings with the Jesuits and prevent him from going on with the inquiry into their proceedings in China in the matter of idolatrous ceremonies. Another motive supervened afterwards; desire for vengeance on Cardinal de Noailles; who had always been obnoxious to the Jesuits, and had lately driven them to fury by inhibiting them from pulpit and confessional throughout his diocese, with the single exception of the King's Confessor. Encouraged by his success in damaging the influence of the Cardinal, whose weakness, especially in the matter of Port-Royal-des-Champs, had alienated many of his former adherents, Father Tellier was fired with more ambitious views. His object now was to stir up such strife and dissension about Father Quesnel's book that it should become necessary to refer the matter to Rome for decision. This would be contrary to all the established usages of the Church, which require that allegations of false doctrine shall be decided in the first instance on the spot, in proper juridical form, subject to an appeal to the Pope, who can confirm or reverse the judgement by legates specially sent for the purpose; but this must also be done in proper form.

Now the regular juridical form of proceeding can only be through a Council, before which the author of the contested book can appear in person if he is alive, to justify his doctrine; or, if he is dead, any one can be heard who chooses to undertake his defence. Father Quesnel was still alive at this time, and had repeatedly demanded that his book should be examined by a Council. But this did not at all suit Father Tellier, who well knew what would be the result of such a proceeding; his design was to get the Pope to issue a Constitution which should condemn, on his own authority, a number of propositions said to be contained in the book; and thereby implicitly establish the doctrine of Molina and his school as a dogma. Many of the propositions which he wished to condemn were drawn directly from the writings of St. Paul, or from those of St. Augustine and other Fathers; he could not, of course, expect such a condemnation to be declared in so
many words; what he wanted was a condemnation of the book in globo, vaguely expressed, so as to leave a wide margin for interpretation; yet so that it should be possible to deduce from it arguments in favour of the doctrines of Molina.

The composition of this Bull or Constitution was no easy task. In the first place, it was essential to keep it from coming prematurely to the knowledge of the Cardinals and theologians at Rome, most of whom were disciples of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. It must uphold the most extreme ultramontane pretensions of the Pope and the Court of Rome, so as to make them feel that their own credit was involved in its maintenance; yet these must not be expressed so crudely as to alarm the King, or furnish the Parliaments with a pretext for remonstrating. It had to be drawn in such a way as to commit the Pope to doctrinal condemnations which he would find it impossible to justify if he went into details; so that, if the French Bishops demanded an explanation, he might be forced to fall back on his pretended infallibility, and neither explain them himself nor suffer them to be interpreted by others. The object of the Jesuits was to put him in such a position that he must insist on the Constitution being received without question and without reserve. Their school of doctrine being thus upheld by authority, every theologian would be forced to take one side or the other; by encouraging the ambition of their adherents, and open persecution of any one who ventured to oppose them, they hoped to reduce their adversaries to an insignificant party. In this way, they thought every one would become accustomed to submit to the Roman yoke, so that by degrees they might establish the supreme authority of Rome as a dogma and article of faith; and, unfortunately, this is what we have come to at the time when I write.

The disputes among the Bishops about Father Quesnel's book, so artfully fomented by Father Tellier, had now reached such a pitch that an appeal to Rome seemed the only way out of the difficulty. The King wrote an urgent letter to the Pope asking for a decision, letting him see that he was strongly biased against Father Quesnel. The Pope said he thought he had already done enough to show his disapproval of some parts of the book, and that Cardinal de Noailles had deferred to his wishes by withdrawing his
recommendation of it. But that would not do for Father Tellier; he got the King to write again, begging for an authoritative condemnation, and pledging his authority that the Pope's Constitution should be accepted by all parties in his kingdom. He requested, however, that it should be drawn up in concert with Cardinal de la Trémouille, so as to avoid anything likely to give offence in France.

The drafting of the document was entrusted to Cardinal Fabroni and Father d'Aubenton; and Father Tellier could not have found two instruments better adapted for his purpose. Father d'Aubenton had been Confessor to the King of Spain, but his influence had given umbrage to Madame des Ursins, who never rested till she had procured his dismissal. He was as thoroughgoing a Jesuit as Father Tellier himself; but more learned, and with more of the ways of a man of the world. When he left Spain he went to Rome, where he acted as French assistant to the General of the Jesuits, and was initiated into all the most secret mysteries of the Society. Fabroni was also a most zealous Jesuit; he was a native of Pistoja, a very clever man, with much scholastic learning and indefatigable industry; he came to Rome as a young man; and, being constantly pushed on by the Jesuits, became, at the age of forty-four, Secretary to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. Cardinal Albani, who was young and knew little about canon law, used to consult him; and by degrees became altogether subjugated by his masterful and fiery spirit. When Albani became Pope under the title of Clement XI he created Fabroni a Cardinal; and so made himself more his slave than ever.

By this time the affair had begun to make a stir. The rumour of an approaching dogmatic decision aroused the attention of the Sacred College; the Cardinals thought the question of sufficient importance for them to be consulted; and, indeed, that it was precisely one of those which cannot properly be settled without their advice; some of the older and more distinguished members of their body spoke to the Pope about it. He thought it only right that the Sacred College should be consulted, and promised, in the most positive manner, that the draft of the Constitution should be submitted to it; that the Cardinals should have every opportunity of examining and discussing the document, and that it should only be issued in the form approved
by the majority of the College. He made the same promise to Cardinal de la Trémoïlle with regard to such matters as concerned him in his capacity of the King's Minister at Rome. This was the position at the time of Cardinal de Janszon's death, and of Bissy's nomination to the Cardinalate.

Though the elevation of Bissy to the purple would bring Father Tellier a useful reinforcement, he was not disposed to rest content with that; in the furtherance of such far-reaching designs he could afford to neglect no opportunity of obtaining assistance from any quarter. Cardinal de Rohan's high position and connections, and the King's personal affection for him as the son of Madame de Soubise, pointed him out as a powerful ally; and the Jesuit determined to work upon his hopes and fears in order to secure him. He went to him accordingly, and boldly explained his intentions. He could not doubt, he said, that a man of the Cardinal's learning and ability held correct opinions regarding the question of Church doctrine which had been referred to Rome; but in a case like this it was not sufficient to think rightly, it was necessary to act, and to act with promptitude and decision, in order to protect sound doctrine and crush, once for all, the seditious party which had so long disturbed the peace of the Church. The King, he went on to say, was determined to play his part, and success was assured; it was for the Cardinal to decide what line he would take. There were three courses open to him: he might oppose the movement, in which case, he would ruin himself irretrievably with the King; he might shelter himself under a discreditable neutrality which he would not be able to maintain for long, and which would in the meantime destroy all his influence; or, he might show his gratitude to the King, and his sense of the duties of his position, by openly declaring in favour of the good cause. Father Tellier said he would be quite frank with him; if he adopted the last course, and threw in his lot unreservedly with those who were promoting this business, he could promise in their name that he might reckon on the appointment of Grand Almoner; with all its advantages and the opportunities it afforded for confidential intercourse with the King.

Cardinal de Rohan was strangely taken aback by this outspoken declaration, offering him the alternative of
peace or war; he had no reply ready, but covered his hesitation under a cloud of compliments and polite assurances. That was not enough for Father Tellier; he rose, and told the Cardinal coldly to think the matter over; he wished to serve him, and trusted that the result of his reflections would enable him to do so; at the same time, he must warn him not to take too much time for consideration, because the office of Grand Almoner could not remain vacant for long; he hoped, therefore, to hear from him without undue delay. With that he withdrew, leaving the Cardinal stupefied by this audacious declaration.

Cardinal de Rohan was a man of much natural ability, which was set off and enhanced by the charm of his person and manners. His temper was gentle and obliging; he was polite and considerate towards everybody; his conversation was easy and agreeable; and, but for ambition and its necessary consequences, he would have been a worthy and honourable man. His figure, though tall, was a little too stout; but his face was singularly beautiful, with an expression at once dignified and interesting. His manners were entirely devoid of pride or affectation, yet no one was ever tempted to forget the respect due to his princely birth and his Cardinal's purple. He was always particularly anxious to stand well with the Bishops and the whole tribe of theologians; while still a student he had set himself to acquire their good-will, and had completely succeeded in doing so. He was born in 1674.

At the time when the question arose of sending him to a seminary to study theology, Cardinal de Noailles was at the height of his favour; Madame de Soubise, who had always been on friendly terms with the Noailles family, thought she could not do better than entrust the ecclesiastical education of her son to his hands. The prelate treated him as if he had been his own nephew; sent him to St. Magloire, the seminary which he esteemed most highly, and chose people to watch over his studies and his morals. The young man was intelligent and industrious; he made rapid progress in his studies at St. Magloire and afterwards at the Sorbonne, and the tribe of learned men, rough, vulgar, and pedantic though they are, were loud in his praises. Cardinal de Noailles was charmed with his pupil, he took a delight in carrying the good reports of him to the King and Madame de Maintenon; and
the King was equally delighted to be supplied with such excellent pretexts for obeying the dictates and inclinations of his own heart. Madame de Soubise to her dying day felt the strongest attachment and veneration for Cardinal de Noailles; she was careful to encourage the same sentiments in her son; and at that time it seemed highly improbable that he could ever be found in opposition to the benefactor to whom he owed so much.

These were strong reasons why Cardinal de Rohan should not listen to the overtures of Father Tellier; and there was another which perhaps appealed to him still more forcibly. His early youth had been passed in hard work and great constraint, in order that he might hereafter reach a high position. This position he had attained with a rapidity which his morals, as soon as he was delivered from the Argus eyes of his instructors, might not have justified. Before he was forty he found himself Bishop of Strasbourg, and a Cardinal, with an income of over 400,000 livres; free to indulge in repose after all the hard work of his early years, which had been very irksome to his natural indolence; and to enjoy a position in which he might live as he pleased, without being responsible to any one. A Cardinal is at liberty to spend his life in feasting and playing cards with the youngest and prettiest ladies he can find; he can give balls and entertainments, fill his house with the choicest society, and indulge in every kind of luxury and splendour; above all, he need never trouble himself again about books, study, or any ecclesiastical matters; if he goes to his diocese he reigns there, but makes no attempt to govern; he need pay no attention to his Grand Vicar, nor let himself be worried by the mitred flunkey who had been consecrated to perform his episcopal duties. I do not say that all our Cardinals led this kind of life, but they could if they chose; Cardinal de Bouillon had done so, and Cardinal de Rohan availed himself of his privileges to the fullest extent; he was intended by nature to be a great nobleman, and to live like one; he had everything necessary to sustain that position; and the King, though usually an austere critic of the conduct of others, had got into a way of thinking that a Cardinal could do no wrong. This mode of life was sweet to Cardinal de Rohan; he had everything he wanted; why should he listen to Father Tellier's suggestions? Especi-
ally when he had the most natural and honourable excuse for not doing so—affection and gratitude towards a man who had done everything for him, and who was respected by all except the slaves of the Jesuits; that is, by all decent persons in every rank of life.

But his family had recently become connected with a man who was determined to turn the connection to his own profit. Marshal Tallard, to whom Cardinal de Rohan confided Father Tellier's overtures, urged him strongly to accept them. He said the insolent manner of the confessor showed how warmly the King had espoused the cause of the Jesuits, and how dangerous it was to oppose them; it was for the Cardinal to consider how far he was capable of bearing the mortifications which the King would most certainly inflict upon him whenever he had an opportunity; and he reminded him of the case of Cardinal de Bouillon, who had ruined himself completely by supporting the Archbishop of Cambrai. He appealed to his pride, not to allow the office of Grand Almoner to fall into other hands; nor to suffer Bissy to become the leader of the favoured party, with all the power, patronage, and confidential intercourse with the King which such a position would carry with it. If he himself would accept that position there was nothing to which he might not aspire, considering the King's liking for him and his family; in all probability he had only to ask, and he would be admitted to the Council of State. Tallard apparently did not know, or conveniently forgot, what the King had said on this subject with regard to Cardinal de Janson. Tallard warned him that neutrality was out of the question; he must take one side or the other, otherwise he would simply be disliked and despised by both parties; and, finally, that to allow consideration for Cardinal de Noailles to stand in the way of his advancement would be misplaced delicacy; for, whatever course he took, Cardinal de Noailles' prospects were none the less ruined irremediably.

It was with a view to his own interests that Tallard expended so much eloquence; it was only with the intention of securing the influence of the House of Rohan for the furtherance of his own schemes that he had consented to his son's marriage. He knew well enough that neither Cardinal de Rohan nor his brother would be admitted to the Council; but, seeing how nearly Harcourt had suc-
ceeded in his attempts before his health broke down, he thought there was a chance of being admitted himself. He wanted a peerage, he wanted the reversion of his government, he wanted a distinguished appointment; he wanted all sorts of things; and by placing Cardinal de Rohan at the head of an all-powerful party he hoped to obtain them. The Cardinal resisted for some days; his natural indolence was the point which Tallard found most difficulty in overcoming; but at last he gave way; he struck his bargain with Father Tellier, whose slave he became from the day on which he took the oaths as Grand Almoner of France. He had reason afterwards to repent bitterly that he had so tarnished his honour, especially as his vanity was wounded by seeing Cardinal de Bissy preferred to himself as the trusted leader of the Jesuit party. As I have already said, I do not undertake to write the history of the Constitution, which would fill many volumes; but for that very reason I think it right to expose the underground plots which led to its consummation.

In the meanwhile Aubenton and Fabroni had completed their secret labours without any one knowing what they were about, except that it had transpired in a general way that there was a question of a Constitution for the settlement of the French dispute. The document they produced was a masterpiece of art; it possessed every literary merit except truth. Its audacity was astonishing; it had this in common with the heretics, that it treated with contempt the writings of St. Augustine and other Fathers, whose doctrines have always been adopted by the Pope and General Councils of the Church; but it went beyond them in one respect, for it expressly condemned certain texts drawn from the Epistles of St. Paul, which in all ages since the time of Jesus Christ have been respected as the oracles of the Holy Spirit. I say, it went beyond the heretics; for they, although they pervert the Holy Scriptures and wrest them to forced and unnatural meanings, have never ventured to reject or condemn them. This was decidedly inconvenient, though indispensable for the object in view.

The two authors saw the difficulty; they could not expect for a moment that the Cardinals would sanction so startling an innovation. The matter must be pushed through with a high hand; and, as Aubenton had done his
part in providing literary skill, it was now Fabroni's turn to supply the necessary impudence. They had a certain number of copies secretly printed, and went to the Pope, to whom they read their document. Rapidly as Aubenton read it, Clement could not help noticing the formal condemnation of texts from the writings of St. Paul, St. Augustine, and other Fathers; he interrupted Aubenton, but Fabroni insisted on finishing the reading. The Pope wished to keep a copy to read at his leisure, so that he might make corrections; but Fabroni, who had long since established his ascendancy over him, would not hear of it. Clement pleaded that he had promised the Cardinals, and Cardinal de la Trémouille in particular, that the Constitution should not appear till it had been examined by the Sacred College; and he thought they would never consent to anything which seemed to censure the doctrines of St. Paul or St. Augustine. Fabroni reproached him with his weakness, telling him that he was lowering himself to the level of a school-boy; the Constitution was excellent in itself, and it was drawn up in the name of the Pope, who was to decide the questions in dispute on his own authority. If he had been foolish enough to make such a promise, he must not commit the additional folly of keeping it. Thereupon he left the Pope in a very perturbed frame of mind; and instantly had the Constitution posted up in all the public places of Rome where Bulls are usually published.

This stroke produced a great commotion among the Cardinals; many of the most distinguished reproached the Pope with his breach of faith. He had nothing to say, except that the publication had taken place without his knowledge; and he shed tears, of which he always had an abundant supply in readiness. That was not enough to appease the Cardinals; some of the most learned among their number, such as Casoni and Davia, found the substance of the Constitution even more intolerable than the manner of its publication. They told the Pope that even heretics had never gone so far, and that he was the first since the time of Jesus Christ to shake the very foundations of religion by censuring doctrines laid down in so many words by St. Paul.

What would have been the fate of the Constitution in France, if it had fallen still-born in Rome almost before it
saw the light! To avert such a catastrophe was no easy task for the Jesuits, but by dint of subtlety and money they did avert it. Some of their friends in the Sacred College softened the Pope's first indignation by suggesting alterations in the Constitution, which in reality they had no intention of accepting; by degrees they gained the support of the politicians among the Cardinals, suggesting the importance of preserving an appearance of agreement with the Pope, and of establishing the ultramontane maxims which had been artfully interwoven in the Constitution; together with the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, which Cardinals are naturally led to uphold through self-interest. In this manner the majority of the Sacred College was gradually secured for the Constitution; there still remained some Cardinals who conscientiously opposed it, but in the end they were compelled to accept it without open protest, though with secret abhorrence.

A courier left Rome on the very day that the Constitution was posted up, bearing a copy to Father Tellier; and he thus had time to prepare the King's mind before the visit of the Nuncio, who did not receive his copy for some days. The audience took place at Fontainebleau on the 2nd of October, and the King gave the Nuncio a most favourable reception. Father Tellier had already allowed a few copies of the Constitution to be circulated, in order to sound public opinion. It was received in France, as at Rome, with general indignation. The Parliament of Paris took alarm at the ultramontane maxims laid down in it, and the First-President lost no time in presenting a remonstrance to the King. Even Cardinal de Rohan and Bissy declared that it could not be accepted. Cardinal de la Trémouille, to whom the Pope had so grossly broken his word, sent a special courier to exculpate himself from having knowingly allowed the publication of a Constitution so opposed to all French maxims; and his explanation aroused the indignation of all the Ministers, with the exception of the Duke de Beauvilliers.

Father Tellier remained unshaken; he frowned at Bissy, as at a man still dependent on him, reminding him significantly that he had not yet received his Cardinal's Hat; to Cardinal de Rohan he spoke in the plainest terms of the danger he would incur if he failed to keep the promises which had secured for him the position of Grand Almoner.
He lost no time in securing the support of as many Bishops as possible, not forgetting to intimidate those who were already his slaves, so that none should slip away from him. He was determined that the Constitution should be accepted; but the universal disapproval which it had aroused put him in a difficulty. He had often spoken to me on the subject, before the question had been referred to Rome and since; for he still persisted in cultivating my acquaintance. I avoided these conversations as much as possible; but I could not close my door to him, especially at Fontainebleau, where he was always on the spot. So, as there was no help for it, I spoke my mind to him with a good deal of freedom; so much, indeed, that Madame de Saint-Simon scolded me for it, and told me that before I had done I should find myself in banishment, or perhaps in the Bastille.

As soon as the Constitution was received from Rome, Father Tellier asked me to give him an interview; I thought it was for the purpose of showing it to me, for the Nuncio had not yet brought it to the King, and hardly any one had seen it. Accordingly, as soon as we were alone together, I asked to see it; he said he had only one copy, which was in the printer's hands, but he would show it me at the first opportunity. He could assure me that I should find it satisfactory in every way, but he had come now to consult me as to the best means of procuring its acceptance. I laughed, and said it was very kind of him to ask me about a matter which he understood far better than I did, and about which he had probably already made up his mind. He replied with a good many compliments, saying something about the murmur of disapproval which was beginning to make itself heard; and, finally, pressed me so hard for my opinion that I told him I thought he could not do better than follow the procedure adopted at the time of the condemnation of the Archbishop of Cambrai; in which case the King had employed the proper forms, in accordance with ecclesiastical law and custom, and the condemnation had been accepted without difficulty.

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth when, with an air of ingenuous confidence, the recollection of which still fills me with amazement, he said such a course was far too dangerous, and he would not risk it; he could not think of leaving the Constitution to the tender mercies of the provincial assembly in each Archbishopric, of individual
Bishops; of people, in short, who would not be at Paris, under his own eye. I at once perceived the sort of violence he was meditating; and plucked up courage to remonstrate against the irregularity of an acceptance sanctioned only by such Bishops as might chance to be at Paris. "Chance!" said the confessor, "I do not mean to trust to chance. I shall summon from the provinces such Bishops as I think suitable; I shall do all in my power to prevent any others from coming; but, as I cannot exclude from the Assembly any Bishops who may be in Paris at the time, and there may be dissentients among them, I shall also stuff it with Bishops in partibus, and even with such as have been nominated, but have not yet received their Bulls. In this way a majority in favour of the Constitution will be secured, and those who oppose it will find men ready to answer their arguments."

I shuddered at this language, and said this might be called picking and choosing. "Certainly," he replied warmly, "I mean to pick and choose; I have no intention of leaving the question to deputations." "But," I said, "what right will these Bishops have to answer for their brethren in the provinces, seeing that they will have no documents empowering them to act on their behalf?" "That," said the confessor, "is an inconvenience, I admit; but one has sometimes to choose the lesser of two evils, and nothing can be worse than to leave the matter to chance, and not make sure of a majority. Provided that the Assembly accepts the Constitution, I do not trouble myself about what follows; we shall see who dares resist the combined authority of the Pope and the King. That authority will override any defects in form; in one way or another the Constitution will be accepted, and that is all that is wanted." I continued to argue with him for some time, not with any idea of convincing him, but merely to make him talk. I was lost in astonishment at the mingled trickery and violence of his proposals, at his contempt for all rules; but, above all, at his extraordinary frankness in revealing them. I have never been able to understand this openness on the part of a man so thoroughly artful and false; still less, what he thought he had to gain by it.

When we parted we agreed to have another interview after I had seen a copy of the Constitution; and it took
place a few days before the Court left Fontainebleau. He was radiant; he had brought Bissy and Cardinal de Rohan to their bearings, and had apparently received good news from his emissaries at Paris. I told him that I had heard a good deal of talk about the Constitution; that, like everybody else, I was startled by the number of propositions vaguely condemned; and still more so by language which seemed to imply a direct censure of doctrines laid down by St. Paul; but I was too ignorant of theology to argue such points with him. On the subject of Roman pretensions, however, and particularly with reference to the censured proposition respecting excommunication, I thought I was capable of forming an opinion; and I would take the liberty of telling him that these portions of the Constitution were indefensible, and could never be accepted. He said we would leave that matter to another opportunity, and thereupon began a long discourse about doctrinal points. I did not contradict him, for I knew it was useless; after a time he came back to the excommunication clause, and asked me to give him an interview in my own rooms at Versailles on the second Friday after the King's return thither, when he would convince me that the censure I complained of did not in any way prejudice the prerogative of the King or his successors. We agreed to this meeting, and we parted; after he had told me, with an air of ingenuous satisfaction, of the number of Bishops he had sent for from the Provinces, and other general precautions which he had taken.

On Wednesday, the 11th of October, the King left Fontainebleau, and arrived at Versailles next day. To make what follows intelligible, a brief description of my apartments in the château is required. They opened into the gallery of the new wing, on the same level as the tribune of the chapel, close to the great staircase. First of all, there was a large lobby or entrance-hall, rather dark, because it was lighted only from the gallery; and low, because there was an entresol over it; beyond that was an antechamber with two windows, on each side of which there was a large room, with a smaller one beyond it; and beyond these again, on each side, a small room without windows, only half the height of the main rooms, because, like the antechamber, it was under the entresol. These small rooms received light from the larger ones, which
were panelled in wood; so that when the door and windows of the little room were closed no one would have suspected its existence. I had made one of these little rooms into a study for myself, with a bureau, chairs, books and everything I required; my friends used to call it my "shop," and it did look rather like one.

Father Tellier punctually kept the appointment he had made with me. I told him he had chosen an unfortunate day, because the Duke and Duchess of Berry had informed Madame de Saint-Simon that they intended to visit her; and they would in all probability walk all over the rooms, so that I could not be sure of privacy anywhere. He seemed a good deal put out at this, and begged me to contrive something, so that he might not have to postpone our interview till he came to Versailles again the following week. I said the only suggestion I could make was, that he should send away Vatblé, the ecclesiastic who had accompanied him, so that he might not be seen hanging about the antechamber; and we would then retire into my "shop," which I showed him; providing ourselves with candles, so as to be independent of the light from the outer room. He thought this a capital idea; so we shut ourselves up in the "shop," and sat down opposite each other at my writing-table, with a lighted candle on each side of us. There he proceeded to discourse on the excellencies of the Constitution Unigenitus, a copy of which he laid on the table. I interrupted him by asking him to come to the question of excommunication. As everybody knows, the proposition censured is this: "An unjust excommunication absolves no one from rendering his lawful service to a man so excommunicated." This censure seems to imply the contrary proposition: "No one ought to render his lawful service to a man unjustly excommunicated." The consequences which would ensue from such a maxim are obvious; we discussed the question for a considerable time, quite politely, but without any agreement; at last I put a case to him:

"Supposing the King and the Dauphin were both to die," I said, "which is, unfortunately, not improbable, the one being very old, the other an infant. In that case the Crown, by right of birth, would pass to the King of Spain; but, by the renunciations lately registered, it would go to the Duke of Berry; and, failing him, to the Duke of Orleans.
Now, suppose that, in spite of his renunciation, the King of Spain were to assert his claim, and a dispute arose between the two brothers; each would have his supporters and allies, and France would be divided into two parties. It seems to me that, if this Constitution is accepted as it stands, the Pope might give the Crown to whichever claimant he favoured, by simply excommunicating the other; for the excommunication, though unjust, would, according to this, at once force the supporters of the excommunicated claimant to abandon him and go over to the other side. In this way the Pope would become the sole arbiter of all kingdoms within his own communion; he could deprive the lawful monarch of his Crown, and give it to any one he pleased; and this is the very power which many Popes since Gregory VII have ventured to claim, and asserted whenever they thought themselves strong enough to do it successfully."

This obvious illustration took the confessor aback. He became red in the face; at last, on my pressing him for a reply, "You miss the point," he said, with a self-satisfied smile; "listen, and you will see that your argument comes to nothing. If, in the case which you suppose, the Pope sided with one claimant and excommunicated the other, his excommunication would not be one of those referred to in the Bull; such an excommunication would not merely be unjust, it would be null and void. You cannot fail to see the distinction; in such a case the Pope would have no reasonable grounds for excommunicating either claimant; his excommunication would therefore, as I say, be null and void; it would produce absolutely no effect on the claimants or their respective parties."

"That is admirable, father," I said, "the distinction is skilful and subtle, and I confess it had not occurred to me; but pardon me if I suggest one or two slight objections. Would the ultramontane party admit the nullity of the excommunication? Moreover, is not any excommunication rendered null by the very fact that it is unjust? For who can command a person to commit an unrighteous action, under pain of excommunication? And if it is possible for the Pope to excommunicate a person unjustly, and to enjoin deference to such an excommunication, how are we to set any limit to his power? Will not an excommunication of his, though, as you say, null and void, be respected
as if it were merely unjust? Lastly, when the Constitution has been accepted, and all classes of persons have been duly instructed from the pulpit and confessional in the doctrine that an unjust excommunication releases them from their duty, do you think it will be an easy matter to get this subtle distinction of yours into the heads of unlearned people, seigneurs, officers, citizens, soldiers, and women? and that at a time when it is a question of taking up arms? These, father, are rather serious objections to the acceptance of the Constitution as it stands; there are none that I can see to refusing the censure of the proposition in question; except, indeed, that so we shall decline to recognise the power which the Pope seeks to arrogate, of deposing Kings, absolving their subjects from their allegiance, and disposing of their crowns as he thinks fit: a claim directly contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture, and to the express words of Jesus Christ Himself!"

This reply put the Jesuit in a fury, because it brushed aside all his quibbles and subtle distinctions and went straight to the point. He refrained carefully from saying anything personally offensive, but he was beside himself with rage, and launched out into an angry tirade, declaring that there were means of forcing the nation into accepting the Bull without modification. In the course of this harangue he said many things which I am convinced he would afterwards have given a good deal to recall; he was so inflamed with passion, so atrociously violent, that as I listened I fell into a sort of swoon. I have elsewhere described his horrible countenance; I was sitting face to face with him, a lighted candle on each side, and only the breadth of the table between us; as I looked and listened, I reflected on the character of this Jesuit, and I was terror-stricken. Here was a man who had nothing to expect for himself or for his family; bound by his vows to absolute equality with his brethren, so that he could claim no preference over the humblest of them, not even an apple or a glass of wine; a man, moreover, who had already arrived at an age when he must shortly give an account to God; and yet who purposed, by means artfully and deliberately prepared beforehand, to set Church and State in a blaze, and institute a cruel persecution; and all for a question which did not affect him personally in the smallest degree, and merely concerned the credit of Molina and his doctrines!
I was hardly conscious of what I was doing; all of a sudden I broke in upon his harangue by ejaculating: "How old are you, father?" The extreme astonishment depicted on his face recalled me to my senses. "Why do you ask that?" he said, smiling. With a sudden effort to smooth over my irrelevant and impertinent question, I replied: "Why, father, it is because I have never seen you so clearly as I do now between these two candles; and your face looks so sound and healthy that I am astonished at it, considering all the work you have to do." He was taken in by the compliment, or at any rate pretended to be so; and never made any change in his conduct towards me afterwards. He replied that he was seventy-four years of age, and enjoyed very good health; he had been accustomed all his life, he said, to endure labour and hardship. Then he went on with his discourse, but soon afterwards we were reduced to silence, as we heard our visitors enter my private room. Fortunately they did not stay long; for Madame de Saint-Simon knew how I was situated, and took them away.

We spent more than two hours in this way; at last we parted, with many compliments to my ability on his part, and requests that I would think the matter over, for I had failed to grasp the main question and attached too much importance to trifles; to which I replied bluntly that I had given the question all the consideration of which I was capable, and my ability would carry me no further. Notwithstanding my frankness, he appeared well satisfied with me; and in his subsequent visits to Versailles he never ceased to seek my company as cordially as ever, though there was nothing I less desired. I took care, however, not to let him perceive my real sentiments. I let him out by a back door, and no one knew he had been there. When he was gone I threw myself into a chair like a man completely out of breath, and sat there for some time meditating on the startling sentiments to which I had been forced to listen.

The assembly of Bishops took place at Paris shortly afterwards; but this belongs to the general history of the Constitution. I shall not again refer to it, except to such matters as passed through my hands, and some particulars which were brought under my personal notice in a rather curious way.
CHAPTER XXIV

1713

The Duke of Savoy becomes King of Sicily—Death of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld—His character—His "bores" and his servants—I find him playing chess with his footman—His bold reply to the King—he relates an instance of a miraculous interposition of Providence—His sons—Painful experience of the Chancellor—The Queen of England in extremity—Death of the Queen of Spain—Callous behaviour of the King of Spain—Death of the Duke de Foix—Of Le Charmel—The King's harsh treatment of him—Decision of the dispute between M. de la Rochefoucauld and myself in my favour—The Chancellor's joke—Madame des Ursins disappointed in her schemes for a sovereignty in the Netherlands—She takes possession of the King of Spain—Rumours that she means to marry him—His remark on the subject—She proposes a marriage between him and the Princess of Parma—The French Ambassador at Madrid makes a sudden journey to Versailles—He outstrips Cardinal del Giudice—Death of the Chancellor's wife—Her character—Instances of her charity—Death of the Bishop of Senlis—His folly and absurdity—Death of Madame Voysin—A sudden marriage.

I must go back a little, to mention the closing events of the war. In August Besons took Landau, after a siege of three months; and Villars immediately invested Fribourg. The garrison made a stout defence, but on the 1st of November were compelled to abandon the town and retire into the citadel, which capitulated on the 15th. This exploit was the last of the war; negotiations had been in progress for some time at Rastadt between Prince Eugène and Marshal Villars, and terms of peace were arranged, which were afterwards ratified by treaty. During the conference the King disbanded sixty battalions and one hundred and six squadrons, together with eighteen men from each company of the Guards. Having made peace with the other Powers, he no longer required so large an army, even if the Emperor should decide to continue the war.

In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht the Duke of Savoy took the title of King of Sicily, and immediately assumed one of the most modern prerogatives.
of a great King by making his Court give the title of "Highness" to his natural son and daughter by Madame de Verue, whom he had legitimated. In further imitation of our King, he married this daughter to the Prince de Carignan, heir-presumptive to his dominions, failing his two legitimate sons. The natural son was killed in action, unmarried. The new King of Sicily visited this island as soon as he could, to see what he could get out of it; he took his Queen with him, leaving a Council at Turin to govern during his absence, and offered his mother the position of Regent. As he had never allowed her to take any part in public affairs since he took the administration into his own hands, she felt that it was merely an empty compliment, and declined; whereupon the King entrusted the Regency to his eldest son, the Prince of Piedmont, a young man of great promise. He sailed for Sicily in the British squadron commanded by Admiral Jennings, and was crowned amid great rejoicings. He gave Jennings 50,000 livres for his passage, and his portrait set in diamonds; the Queen also gave him a valuable ring. Jennings landed in France on his return, and went to Paris on his way to England. The Earl of Peterborough, who had served the Archduke in Spain with so much zeal, also happened to be there; he was presented to the King by Torcy, and immediately presented Jennings. These English Rear-Admirals, in spite of their high-sounding title, really correspond in rank with our chefs d'escadre. This one admitted that he had amassed 500,000 crowns during his service; our officers do not earn so much by a very long way.

On the 1st of January, 1714, there was neither Grand Almoner nor First Almoner in attendance at the High Mass of the Order, and a dispute arose between the Almoner of the day on duty and Cardinal de Polignac as to who should present the Gospel for the King to kiss; which the King decided in favour of the latter. He gave no New Year's gifts this year, but the only persons affected were the Duchess of Berry, with whom he was displeased, and Madame, to whom he had recently given a considerable augmentation of her pension.

The old, blind Duke de la Rochefoucauld died on the 11th of January, at his fine house near the Kennels, to which he had retired some years before. I have elsewhere
related his history and described his character. He was an honourable, brave, and upright man, of a kindly and sympathetic disposition. No one was bolder or more skilful in taking up the cause of those who had incurred the King's displeasure. Very often he forced him to do justice against his will; but, by dint of using his influence in season and out of season, without much tact, he wearied the King at last, though not till quite the end of his life. For the rest, he was a dull man, without any sort of ability; excessively vainglorious, rough, and almost brutal in his manners, and very disagreeable. He was never at his ease except with his toadies; he hardly knew how to receive a visitor, or even how to enter or leave a room properly, and was overwhelmed with shyness if a lady met him and spoke to him. He never visited any one but M. de Bouillon and Marshals de Duras and de Lorge, except on such indispensable occasions as a death or marriage, and then he got away as quickly as he could. In like manner nobody visited him except on similar occasions; the only society he saw in his own house was that of a number of idle people who were hardly received anywhere else, and who were known as "M. de la Rochefoucauld's bores"; and that of his servants, who were really his masters, who joined in the conversation, and whom it was necessary to conciliate most carefully if one wished to be favourably received at his house.

I shall never forget an adventure which occurred to M. de Chevreuse and myself. By the death of Vaudemont's only son the whole property of the Duke d'Elbœuf's first wife passed to M. de la Rochefoucauld's children. We were at Marly, and the King had been out stag-hunting; I was in attendance when the King pulled off his boots; and M. de Chevreuse, who was also there, proposed that we should call on M. de la Rochefoucauld and congratulate him. We lingered for a while in the saloon, to give him time to get home, and then went to pay our visit. What was our astonishment, and, I may say, our feeling of shame, to find M. de la Rochefoucauld playing chess with one of his footmen in livery, who was sitting opposite him! M. de Chevreuse was so much taken aback that he could not get out a word; no more could I, who followed him. M. de la Rochefoucauld perceived our surprise, and became embarrassed himself; indeed, he would in any case have been
embarrassed by a visit from M. de Chevreuse, whom he never saw except on ceremonial occasions. He began stammering out explanations and excuses, saying that this footman was a remarkably good chess-player, and it was a game one might play with anybody. We were not disposed to argue the point; so we changed the conversation, sat down, and got away as quickly as we could, on the pretext of not interrupting the game. We did not fail to talk over this strange adventure between ourselves, but we refrained from making it publicly known.

M. de la Rochefoucauld was accordingly regretted by no one except by his servants, who had acquired a discreditable ascendancy over him, and by his "bores"; and even they did not regret his loss as they would have done before his retirement to the Kennels. The Court had never liked him, because he held himself aloof from it. The King, during a great part of his life, had been unable to do without his society; but towards the end he had become troublesome, owing to his incessant requests for favours on behalf of his servants or his family; and his death came rather as a relief than otherwise. Such was the King's feeling on the occasion of the deaths of nearly all those whom he had liked and loaded with favours.

Before leaving the subject of this singular favourite, I must do him the justice to recall the answer he gave to Portland, at a time when all the most distinguished persons about the Court, including M. le Prince, were vying with each other to do him honour. I must also relate another speech of his, very surprising for so thorough-going a courtier, which I myself overheard. The King was walking in the gardens of Marly, amusing himself by looking at a new fountain which he was having made. I forget what started the subject; but the King, though usually so cautious in his remarks about people, began to speak with considerable warmth against Montgaillard, Bishop of St. Pons, who had incurred his displeasure in connection with the affairs of Port-Royal and the régale.¹ M. de la Roche-

¹ The régale was the King's right to receive the revenues of vacant sees, and to appoint to benefices until the newly appointed Bishop had taken the oath of allegiance. Some dioceses were exempt from this right, but by the edict of February 1673 the King abolished the exemption and placed all sees on an equal footing. The Bishops of Alet and Poitiers, with others, protested, and appealed to the Pope, Innocent XI, who took their part; and an acrimonious dispute followed between the King and the Court of Rome.
foucauld waited till the King had finished, and then began
to speak strongly in praise of the Bishop. The King's
disapproving silence only served to kindle his zeal; he
went on to relate an anecdote of the saintly Bishop; for
so he called him, as I specially remarked. It seems that
once, while making a round of his diocese and riding a mule,
he lost his road, and got on to a track which became
narrower and narrower, till it ended in a precipice. The
only retreat was by the way he had come. There was no
room to turn round, nor even to dismount; the Bishop
threw the rein on the mule's neck, raised his eyes to
Heaven, and committed himself to the care of Providence.
No sooner had he done so than the mule reared up on its
hind-legs, and in that position turned quietly round, not
putting its fore-feet to the ground till it was facing in the
opposite direction. It then retraced its steps till it had
brought the Bishop back into the right road. The King
received this anecdote in stony silence, which was imitated
by the rest of the party; but this only made M. de la
Rochefoucauld launch out into comments and conclusions
of his own. I was charmed with the generous feeling which
prompted this speech; it caused a good deal of surprise
among those who heard it.

Something of the old leaven of Liancourt always clung
to him; he never forgot the intercourse he had enjoyed
with the persecuted saints who took refuge there in the
time of his parents; he even allowed those who survived
M. and Madame de Liancourt to remain there undisturbed
till they died; which, in some cases, was not till after
many years had elapsed. He had so strong a regard for
the memory of his parents that he would permit no altera-
tion of anything they had done at Liancourt; though some
of the things they had planned had suffered from lapse of
time, and would have been better changed. He always
spoke of them with the utmost affection and veneration,
so that it was a pleasure to listen to him.

His sons, who were not in the King's good graces, were
as different in character as it is possible for two brothers
to be; but notwithstanding this they lived in an affect-
ionate union as rare as it is praiseworthy. The elder was
of a surly disposition, and very miserly; with no sort of
wit, except that he had a way of sneering malignantly with-
out saying a word, which had earned him the nickname of
Monseigneur the Devil. He was at once excessively proud and excessively mean, and carried out the duties of his office as Grand Master of the Wardrobe in a servile and unpleasant manner, like an assiduous flunkey, who, nevertheless, sulks at finding himself a flunkey. He assumed his father's sonorous trisyllabic name, which had formerly resounded in the strife of factions and been feared in Councils; and this procured him a sort of consideration, which, however, never went beyond a certain point; for it was not sustained by his personal character. Though very rich, he kept no establishment and no table; his wife's drawing-room in the evenings was the resort of a herd of gossips from Paris, who were provided with card-tables and supper. Both he and his wife were servile in their attentions to the gown; by which means they were very successful in their lawsuits. The younger brother, on the other hand, was good-humoured, polite, and simple in his manners; intelligent and well-read; full of honour, courage, and pride of the right sort; but the feeling that he was out of favour had made him shy and solitary; so that, although he was liked and respected, nobody treated him with much consideration.

To finish up this matter; the new Duke de la Rochefoucauld, who was suffering from gout, had himself carried into the King's private room a few days after his father's death. The King spoke to him of his father in a very kind and flattering manner, but said not a word about the 50,000 livres which he had been in the habit of giving him every year, to enable him to carry out his functions as Master of the Hounds more magnificently. After waiting about two months, M. de la Rochefoucauld came to the conclusion that he had nothing to expect from the King; and decided on giving up a toilsome office, which he thought too expensive without this subsidy. The Count de Toulouse purchased it for 500,000 livres, of which, however, 230,000 had to go to the late Duke's creditors under a billet de retenue. He amalgamated his own pack with the King's, and carried on the combined establishment on an increased scale.

On the day following M. de la Rochefoucauld's death a very painful thing happened to the Chancellor. A vice-bailiff of Alençon had just lost a lawsuit, in which his honour and fortune were apparently at stake. He went to
Pontchartrain, where the Chancellor was staying; and waited in the courtyard till he had an opportunity of speaking to him, as he was about to get into his carriage. He asked that his case might be tried over again, and that an advocate might be assigned to him. The Chancellor replied, mildly and kindly, that a case could not be heard a second time; but the Courts of Appeal were open to any one who could show sufficient grounds for an appeal; and thereupon he got into the carriage. The poor wretch exclaimed that there was a shorter way out of his troubles, and immediately stabbed himself twice with a dagger. The Chancellor had him carried into the house, and sent for a doctor and a confessor: he confessed with apparent tranquility, and died an hour later.

The Queen of England fell ill at St. Germain, and received the last Sacraments. The doctors thought her case hopeless; and she was glad of it; for many years life had had little attraction for her, and she had made the most pious use of her misfortunes. The King and Madame de Maintenon were very attentive to her during this illness.

The Queen of Spain had for a long time suffered from scrofulous swellings of the glands of the throat, and was now in extremity. As the Spanish doctors could do nothing she wished to consult Helvetius, and despatched a courier to the King begging him to send him. Helvetius was ill himself, and, knowing how matters stood with the Queen, he was unwilling to go; but the King insisted; and he started immediately in a post-chaise, with another following in case of a breakdown. He arrived at Madrid on the 11th of February; as soon as he saw the Queen, he said only a miracle could save her. Her confessor was a Jesuit; when it came to receiving the last Sacraments, and preparing for death, she followed her sister's example in the like case; she sent him away, and chose a Dominican.

It was only on the 9th that the King of Spain ceased to share her bed; on the 14th she died with much courage and pious resignation. She was adored in Spain, and her death caused universal grief, which has not yet passed away; I shall have occasion to allude to it when I come to relate my embassy to Spain. The King of Spain was also much grieved, but after a rather royal fashion. His attendants induced him to go out shooting for the sake of his health; he was thus employed on the day when the
Queen's body was transported to the Escurial, and the procession passed in sight of him. He looked at it, followed it with his eyes, and then went on with his sport. Can these Princes be made of the same flesh and blood as ordinary human beings?

Our King was much grieved for the death of the Queen of Spain, and went into mourning, in violet, for six weeks. The Duke of Berry put his carriages into mourning, and the Duchess made a point of Madame de Saint-Simon doing the same; so that we again had the absurdity of a divided household; her servants and carriages being draped, while mine were not.

The Duke de Foix died in Paris at the age of seventy-three; he was the last of his House, and his peerage became extinct. He was a very small man, with an insignificant appearance, who never made his mark or rose to any sort of distinction; he was, however, a man of honour, with dignified manners; he had shown courage in the little service that he saw, and was so agreeable in society that he was generally popular. He never cared for anything but amusing himself, and had found a wife of similar tastes; people used to say of them, with a good deal of truth, that they had stopped short at the age of seventeen. He hardly ever came to Court, where he was not much thought of; but elsewhere moved in the very best society.

His family, which came to an end with him, had been extremely fortunate; but its good fortune had deserted it. The family name was Greil, and they came originally from Bresse. A double connection with the family of the Counts de Foix brought all the extensive dominions of that House into the Greil family; an unforeseen chance made them heirs to the kingdom of Navarre; and another, equally unlikely, deprived them of this prospect, and conveyed it to the House of Albret, and thence to the House of Bourbon through the mother of Henry IV. The mother of Anne, Duchess of Brittany, who married two Kings of France in succession, was a Greil-Foix; and so was the famous Gaston de Foix, Duke de Nemours, who won the battle of Ravenna, at which he was killed. I could quote other illustrations of the greatness of this family. Yet there had never been any question of princely rank for it, although the Queen-mother would have done anything for the Marquise de Sencey and her daughter, the Countess
plied briefly and modestly that I was satisfied. When one is so completely satisfied as I was, it is easy enough to behave with modesty. When the King came out I made my bow, and thanked him for his decision. "Sir," he said, "I am glad if, in doing an act of justice, I have been able at the same time to give you pleasure!" As I had given no details in reply to the questions put to me, every ear was open to catch what he said; and his reply instantly flew from mouth to mouth. I was again overwhelmed with congratulations, and no longer scrupled to admit that I had won my case completely. I was careful still to behave with modesty, and stole away from the crowd who were rejoicing with me—some perhaps with secret annoyance, but certainly none, except a very few, with any interest in the matter whatever, except to see how I bore my good fortune.

M. de la Rochefoucauld was furious; for, though he was of course aware of his personal situation with the King, he had become accustomed during his father's lifetime to count on having his own way in everything. He had spared no efforts in this affair; he had used all the artifices most likely to arouse the King's sensitive jealousy about his own authority; and he had fully reckoned on being granted precedence at Court, if not elsewhere. The Chancellor told me next day that he had been obliged to listen to most lamentable complaints on his part. Two days later I received an official copy of the decision. The more satisfied I was, the more anxious I became to act with the most punctilious politeness. I went to call at the Hôtel de la Rochefoucauld, choosing a time when I knew I should find no one at home; and left word that I had called to ask them not to be displeased if I had the decision published. Madame de la Rochefoucauld was more angry than any of the family, and she would have been delighted to be able to denounce me as wanting in courtesy. The decision was published, and subsequently registered by the Parliament; and so ended this dispute.

The intimacy which had formerly existed between M. de la Rochefoucauld, his brother-in-law, and myself had greatly diminished since the death of the Duchess de Villeroy; this affair put an end to it altogether, and we remained on a footing of ordinary civility. I was easily consoled, for I had carried my point. We shall see here-
after that their secret bitterness against me did them some harm in the long run.

The Duke of Berwick was appointed to carry the King's message of condolence to the King of Spain, but that was not the only object of his mission; he was to lay siege to Barcelona, for in spite of the conclusion of peace the Catalans were still holding out, and it was suspected that assistance was sent to them secretly. Madame des Ursins would have preferred the supple, courtier-like Tessé, and got the King of Spain to ask for him; but Tessé, who had nothing more to gain in that country, did not care to go, and, for reasons which I must now explain, the King and Madame de Maintenon preferred to send the Duke of Berwick. Fifteen French battalions were placed under his command, and a squadron was fitted out to assist in the siege of Barcelona; but it was much delayed by the illness of du Casse, who commanded it, and by contrary winds.

The Princess des Ursins had set her heart on obtaining a sovereignty in the Netherlands; and the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht had been scandalously delayed because the King of Spain insisted on the insertion of a clause to that effect. She sent Aubigny to watch over her interests at Utrecht, but he was treated with contempt, and never got beyond the antechambers. Madame de Maintenon was very angry at this claim; her pride was offended, because it marked the difference in rank and birth between Madame des Ursins and herself; she felt that it was her protection alone which had enabled Madame des Ursins to obtain her unbounded influence and authority; and it was intolerable that she should take advantage of it to aspire to heights which she herself could never hope to attain. Our King was also very angry at the conclusion of peace being delayed by such a stumbling-block; he was obliged at last to speak to the King of Spain in the tone of a master, and tell him plainly that if he would not abandon this absurd stipulation he would make peace without him, and leave Spain to face her enemies alone.

Madame des Ursins' design was to exchange her sovereignty in the Low Countries for that of Touraine and the district of Amboise, and to settle down there to the enjoyment of her new grandeur. She made so sure of obtaining the King's consent to these arrangements that she sent her faithful Aubigny to purchase a piece of land near Amboise;
and there to build a vast palace, with all conveniences for entertaining a Court, to furnish it magnificently, and lay out beautiful gardens; but he was not to trouble himself about buying up any fiefs or surrounding property, because as sovereign of the district she would not require them. He carried out his orders with such celerity that this splendid building was almost finished at the time when the project for the sovereignty ended in smoke. Aubigny saw that the place would now be useless to his mistress; he cut down the expenditure on it as much as possible, and bought such scraps of land adjoining as he could lay hands on, so that the fine house might not be absolutely without property belonging to it. Madame des Ursins, ashamed at this sudden awakening from her Alnaschar visions, allowed Aubigny to keep the house for himself; and he spent the rest of his days there, liked and respected by the neighbourhood; for he had the good sense to leave his haughty airs and soaring ambition behind him when he quitted Spain. The place, which is called Chanteloup, afterwards passed to his daughter, Madame d'Armentières; it is one of the finest and most singular houses in France, and the most magnificently furnished.

The rage of Madame des Ursins may be imagined at this failure of her schemes, after she had made herself the laughing-stock of Europe by her obstinacy in pursuing them. It was this ambitious flight which caused the first rift between the two powerful women who really governed France and Spain respectively; after this business of the sovereignty there was never again the same agreement between Madame de Maintenon and Madame des Ursins. But the latter had now attained such a position in Spain that she thought herself able to dispense with assistance from outside. We have seen how cleverly she had contrived to isolate the King, so that he saw hardly any one but the Queen and herself; he was inaccessible, not only to his courtiers, but to his Ministers and Grand Officials; and the only servants who came near him were three or four Frenchmen, entirely devoted to her. When the Queen died, Madame des Ursins induced the King to choose a house belonging to the Duke of Medina-Celi as his place of retreat, rather than the palace of Buen-Retiro, where there was accommodation for a numerous Court, and it would have been more difficult to keep him secluded.
As a pretext for remaining with him in his solitude, she caused the post of governess to his children to be given to her; and, in order that no one might know when they were together, she had a wooden gallery constructed from his private room to his children's apartments, in which she lived herself. The building of this gallery was pushed forward with such haste that, in spite of the King's piety, it was continued on Sundays and feast-days, as well as on ordinary working days. It gave great offence, not only to the courtiers, who perceived what it was for, but even to the people engaged in its construction. The controller of buildings asked Father Robinet, the only good confessor the King ever had, whether he was to continue the work the next day, which was Sunday, and the day following, which was the Feast of the Virgin. Father Robinet evaded the question for some time by saying that he could not answer till the King had spoken to him on the subject. At last he lost patience, and said that if it was a question of pulling down the gallery he thought the work might be done on Easter Sunday itself; but he did not think that of building it ought to be continued on Sundays or saints' days. The whole Court applauded, but Madame des Ursins was by no means pleased when she heard of it.

It was suspected that she aimed at more than being merely the only person with whom the King could talk. Alarming rumours were circulated; it was said that the King, having several sons, had no need of further posterity, but required a wife, and one competent to rule his children. In short, no one doubted that she meant to marry him. The King his grandfather was much alarmed about it; and Madame de Maintenon, who had never been able to obtain the acknowledgement of her own marriage, was beside herself with jealousy. However, if Madame des Ursins did flatter herself with such hopes, they were not of long duration. The King of Spain was always interested in news from France, and often asked his confessor, the only man he could speak to who was not in Madame des Ursins' pay, whether he had heard any. Father Robinet was as uneasy as everybody else about the progress of the design which was universally attributed to her; he let the King press him with questions in the recess of a window to which he had drawn him aside, assuming an air of embarrassment and mystery which whetted the King's
curiosity. At last he said that, since His Majesty insisted on an answer, he must tell him that the news from Paris was in complete conformity with the rumours of Madrid, where no one doubted that he was about to do the Princess des Ursins the honour of marrying her. The King flushed up, and said abruptly: "Oh! as to that, certainly not!" and walked away.

Whether Madame des Ursins heard of this reply, or whether she had already found out that success was hopeless, she suddenly altered her plans; and, feeling that the present condition of affairs could not last much longer, she determined to find a wife for the King who would be bound to her by ties of gratitude for effecting so great a marriage for her, and would consequently allow herself to be guided by her. With these views she took Alberoni into her confidence, who, since Vendôme's death, had stayed on at Madrid in the capacity of Minister to the Duke of Parma. She proposed a marriage between the King and the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of the Duchess of Parma and the late Duke; for the reigning Duke had married his brother's widow. Alberoni could hardly believe his ears; so unequal a match seemed incredible, moreover he felt sure the French King would never consent to it, and still more certain that they would never venture to push it on without that consent. Indeed, a Princess with two strains of illegitimate blood, descended on her father's side from a Pope, and on her mother's from a natural daughter of Charles V, daughter of a petty Duke of Parma by a thoroughly Austrian mother (sister, not only to the Dowager-Empress, but to the Queen-Dowager of Spain, whose conduct had been so thoroughly unsatisfactory), did not seem a likely person to be picked out as a suitable match for the King of Spain.

These considerations did not, however, deter Madame des Ursins, who thought only of her own interests. She was conscious that our King and Madame de Maintenon had changed for her, and she had no hope of a return of their favour; she felt that she required some assistance to enable her to maintain her influence over the King of Spain in the face of their hostility. He was pious, and a wife was a necessity to him; since she had herself arrived at an age when her charms owed more to art than to nature, she determined to provide him with one, and hoped to
make as good use of her as she had done of the late Queen. She set Alberoni to work without delay; and it may be supposed that he did not find his task difficult when he had once managed to persuade the people at Parma that the King of Spain was really in earnest, and not making fun of them.

The Marquis de Brancas was at that time French Ambassador at Madrid. He was entirely devoted to Madame de Maintenon, and for that reason was regarded with suspicion by Madame des Ursins; moreover, he had a private grudge against her, for he had been on the point of being created a Grandee of Spain, and had been given the Golden Fleece instead,—a disappointment which he always attributed to Madame des Ursins. He had his eyes open to all that was going on at the Court of Spain; Father Robinet confided his uneasiness to him as a well-known protégé of the Jesuits; and all the malcontents of the Court resorted to his house, feeling that only the interference of our King could set matters right. Brancas was alive to the importance and urgency of the affair; but, bearing in mind what had happened to the Abbé d'Effiat, he dared not trust a written despatch even to his own courier; he therefore wrote to the King that he must speak to him about a very pressing and important business which he could not commit to paper; and asked permission to go to Versailles at once for a fortnight. It was immediately granted; but he was ordered, if possible, to see the Duke of Berwick, who was then about to start for the siege of Barcelona, and confer with him.

Madame des Ursins always contrived to be informed of everything; she heard, not only of Brancas' intended journey, but of the order he had received, and it alarmed her. She got the King to hasten Berwick's departure, so that Brancas might not see him on his way; she also had sixteen relays of mules prepared on the high road to Bayonne, and induced Cardinal del Giudice, Minister of State and Grand Inquisitor, to start hastily for France on Thursday in Holy Week. By this stroke she secured a double advantage; the Cardinal was devoted to her, but she found a Minister who was also a Cardinal and Grand Inquisitor rather an embarrassment; she not only got rid of him for a time, but by the choice of so eminent a personage as the bearer of her message she gave it additional
importance; moreover, she hoped that he would be beforehand with Brancas—no slight advantage at our Court. Brancas was quite conscious of this, and started in pursuit on Good Friday; he made such good use of his time that, on his arrival at Bayonne, he found the Cardinal had only beaten him by a few hours, and was sleeping there. He went on without stopping, telling Dudoncourt, the commandant, to delay the Cardinal next day as much as he could; and pushed on to Bordeaux, arriving there with twenty-eight post-horses, which he had swept up along the road to prevent the Cardinal from getting them. He reached Paris two days in advance, and went at once to Marly, where the King was, to explain the reasons for his journey.

Cardinal del Giudice also had an audience of the King shortly after his arrival. Torcy, who was present, told me long afterwards that he seemed rather embarrassed, for he had no particular business to account for his mission; all he had to do was to speak in high praise of Madame des Ursins and to make complaints against Brancas. Madame des Ursins had not trusted him sufficiently to inform him of her real position with regard to our Court; so what he said about her was very vague; and Brancas' only crime was that he was too sharp-sighted, and not sufficiently devoted to the Princess. The Cardinal remained some time at our Court; he was very agreeable, and was much sought after in the best society. It seemed as if he suspected that Madame des Ursins was no longer in favour, and was trying to make himself popular in order, with the support of our King, to become Prime Minister of Spain. The only result of his mission was that he succeeded in preventing Brancas' return; but in this Brancas helped him, though without any collusion, for he had nothing to hope for at the Court of Spain in his present position with Madame des Ursins; and he was not the man to waste his time knowingly. I have been obliged to relate this affair up to this point; but I must now go back a little.

The Chancelière had for some time been threatened with dropsy of the chest, having suffered all her life from asthma. She was the daughter of Maupéou, president of one of the law-courts; she had very little money, but was nevertheless a good match for Pontchartrain, who, at the time of his marriage, was poorer still. It is hardly pos-
sible for a woman to be uglier; she was, however, a fine, stout person, with an imposing air and a clever face. No Minister's wife ever equalled her in the art of entertaining; her house was a model of order, combined with comfort and magnificence; she saw to everything herself, and made all arrangements without the slightest fuss. Her manner was at once dignified and polite, and her politeness was of that attentive and well-discriminated kind which sets every one at his ease. She had a great deal of wit, though she never cared to display it, and was extremely agreeable; there was something insinuating about her manners, though with nothing approaching to humbug; and she had a delicate tact which was quite astonishing. But her strong point was her sound common sense, and a sagacity in judging character which few men have possessed in the same degree. It is astonishing that a lawyer's daughter, whose knowledge of society was limited to Brittany, should have acquired the manners, tone, and language of the Court with such rapidity; she soon knew it so well that any one wishing for advice as to his conduct there could not possibly apply to a better counsellor. She was of the greatest assistance to her husband, who never made a mistake so long as he abided by her advice. With all this, however, she had lived so long in middle-class circles that she never entirely got rid of a slight smack of the bourgeoisie.

No one so thoroughly understood how to give feasts and entertainments. Everything was done sumptuously, yet in perfect taste; but she never gave them unnecessarily; and she played her part as hostess with quiet simplicity, never going beyond what was becoming to her age and position in life. She was delightful in the country, where she felt herself at liberty; but it was rather dangerous to dine with her, for she liked to prolong the sitting; and as, though she hardly touched anything herself, she thoroughly understood what good cheer was, her guests were tempted to eat and drink too much. She was extremely funny at times, though never going beyond the bounds of good taste; and always cheerful, though not quite free from attacks of ill-temper. She was always ready to help her relations, and it is impossible to have a truer, stauncher, or more useful friend. She was guided throughout her life by a steady and enlightened piety, which only grew
stronger as her fortunes rose. It is incredible how much
good she did by giving pensions, by helping young girls
to marry, and others to become nuns (but never without
first making sure that they had a real vocation); by saving
others from temptations; and providing the deserving poor
with the means of earning their livelihood.

I must quote one example of her charity. She was
walking back from the parish church of Versailles one
Sunday with Madame de Saint-Simon, when she lingered
behind on the road. Madame de Saint-Simon, who was
in a hurry, because she had to go with the Duchess of
Burgundy to dine with Monseigneur at Meudon, turned
round to hasten her, and asked in some surprise who the
little girl of the poorer classes was that she was talking to.
“Is she not pretty?” said the Chanciére, “I was struck
by her appearance, and asked who her parents were. She
is fourteen or fifteen years old, and has hardly enough to
eat. Pretty as she is, she will easily be led astray, for
misery drives people to do anything. I had a few words
with her; to-morrow she will come to see me, and I will
place her somewhere where she will be safe, and learn to
make her own livelihood.” It was in good works of this
kind that her time was chiefly occupied, but no one would
have suspected it; she would never have said what she
did to any one but Madame de Saint-Simon, whom she
regarded as her second self.

Her almsgiving was on a most lavish scale. She main-
tained an establishment at Versailles in which thirty or
forty young girls were educated and provided for; and
when they grew up she found situations for them. In
conjunction with the Chancellor she built a hospital at
Pontchartrain, well supplied with everything necessary for
soul and body, which cost them more than 200,000 livres;
and it cost at least 8,000 or 10,000 a year to keep it up.
This hospital and the Versailles institution were, of course,
known to the public; the rest of her works of charity were
kept a profound secret till 1709, but that year of scarcity
and famine betrayed her. The people in the country
districts were literally starving; she established bakeries
and kitchens at Pontchartrain, where bread and soup were
supplied to all comers from morning till night. The
crowd of applicants was enormous; there were days when
over 3,000 came, and no one went away without receiving
bread sufficient to maintain two or three persons for several days, and broth for one day. Everything was admirably managed; there was no crowding or struggling; every one was served in his turn, and as quietly as if there had not been more than fifty people. The more applicants came the better the Chancelière was pleased; and this went on for six or seven months. The Chancellor, who was glad to take part in her good works, let her do exactly as she pleased. Their union and mutual affection were perfect; they were never parted except when it was absolutely unavoidable, and always shared the same room.

Such was the Chancelière de Pontchartrain, whom God purified by a long series of painful infirmities, ending in dropsy. She bore them with brave and pious resignation; some months before her death she withdrew entirely from the Court and the world, although still at Versailles, and saw nobody except her nearest relatives, Madame de Saint-Simon, and a few religious persons; night and day she thought of nothing but her soul’s welfare. She died at Versailles on the 13th of April, regretted by the whole Court, and deeply lamented by the poor. Madame de Saint-Simon and I never had a truer friend, and her death was a bitter grief to us. The Chancellor went off to hide his sorrow in his rooms at the Oratory. The only member of her family, not excluding the servants, who preserved his tranquillity under this misfortune, was her son.

The Bishop of Senlis also died at this time. He was Chamillart’s brother, the best of men, and the silliest; his countenance and bearing were as silly as his talk. Good-hearted, without a trace of the pride and impertinence so common among those nearly related to Ministers, he had a sort of fatuous trust in everybody’s good-will which rendered his manners easy and rather fawning. It was delightful to hear him discourse about M. le Prince, who was always paying him mean attentions; he was careful to make it understood that they were entirely for his own sake, and had nothing to do with his brother’s position. M. le Prince, he said, was the kindest-hearted man in the world, and the most agreeable neighbour; he could not understand how any one could think otherwise. But, as soon as Chamillart had lost his place, M. le Prince’s delicate attentions ceased all of a sudden; he never went to see the Bishop, never asked him to Chantilly, and when he
went there behaved so coldly that he soon drove him away. There were no more presents of game; no more permission to the Bishop's servants to shoot, even on his own land. The poor man could not digest this change; it grieved him perhaps more acutely than his brother's downfall, because it showed him his own folly.

In the days of his favour his nieces, and all those who saw him familiarly, used to make fun of him in the most barefaced way, and he understood it so little that he was the first to laugh; even his brother used sometimes to amuse himself at his expense. But, with all his absurdity, he was so simple and good that everybody liked him. He was quite unlearned, but of excellent morals; very possibly he had retained his baptismal innocence. If Chamillart had obtained for him a rich bishopric at a distance, such as Mende or Auch, where nobody would have seen him, he would have done well; unfortunately, he was foolish enough to have him translated from Dol to Senlis, and to attach him to the Court as First Almoner to the Dauphiness: in which capacity all the ladies laughed at him. Chamillart even proposed him for the Academy; and that body was so servile as to elect him; this put the finishing touch to the Bishop's absurdities, for he immediately fancied himself a wit and a man of letters. Chamillart applied for his vacant rooms at Versailles, and obtained them at once: an additional proof that the King still liked him, in spite of Madame de Maintenon and the intriguers who had caused his downfall.

Madame Voysin died at Paris after a rather long illness; it seems incredible, but it is a fact, that she really died of grief, although her husband, with whom she was on the most affectionate terms, had attained a splendid position entirely through her means. We have seen who she was, and how useful she had been to Voysin; without her, he could never have aspired to a fortune which he never deserved. Madame de Maintenon was changeable; it was only in order to have his wife near her at Court that she had procured office for Voysin; for the designs on behalf of M. du Maine, which she afterwards carried out by his agency, could not have entered her head at that time; before the Royal Family had been destroyed by small-pox and poison, and while there were still Princes of the Blood alive of full age. In the early days Madame Voysin pos-
sessed all Madame de Maintenon's confidence and favour; but she did not find out soon enough that she must not give her too much of her company. By degrees Madame de Maintenon grew tired of her; and all her favour passed from the wife to the husband. The things which had pleased her at first became wearisome, and began to seem ridiculous. Madame Voysin's assiduity and anxiety to please worried and disgusted her; and her way of copying her dress and the fashion of doing her hair was an absurdity which gave her annoyance. What put the finishing touch to Madame Voysin's decline in favour was her jealousy of Madame Desmarets.

Vauxbourg, Desmarets' elder brother, had married Voysin's sister; but the connection thus established between the two Ministers did not make their wives better friends, though they themselves got on well enough with each other. Madame Desmarets, tall, well-shaped, and always well dressed, was simple and natural, entirely without affectation. There was nothing bourgeois about her; her air and manners were dignified, with an appearance of frankness which, though not entirely natural, was not assumed from motives of duplicity. Her attentions to Madame de Maintenon were quite devoid of servility; and she paid them with discretion; so that, far from becoming burdensome, Madame de Maintenon wished to see more of her. Her appearance and manners were a strong contrast to the prim, artificial preciseness and thoroughly middle-class style of Madame Voysin; and the latter went to the wall.

The Court soon perceived the change in Madame de Maintenon's manner; and so did Voysin, who was very angry, but dared not show his feelings. Madame Voysin could not endure a personal mortification which was the more bitter, because her hated rival had given her no just cause for complaint; her health, which hitherto had been good, broke down; she retired to Paris, and died there on the 29th of April, little regretted by anybody. Her death was a relief to Madame de Maintenon; and her husband, who thought only of pushing his fortunes, was soon consoled. By this time he required no backing with Madame de Maintenon; and perhaps he was not sorry to be delivered from a wife whom she had begun to dislike.

To turn to a more cheerful subject; a singular event
took place at this time which was rather creditable to the Court. Among the Ladies of the Palace there were several who made a profession of religion, but only one who was really religious: the Marquise du Chastelet, daughter of the late Marshal de Bellefonds. Some lingering regard for her father's memory, and the recollection that she had formerly held the position of Maid of Honour to the Bavarian Dauphiness with a reputation for virtue and discretion, had brought about her appointment as Lady of the Palace, very much to her surprise, at a time when she was living with her mother at Vincennes. She greatly preferred a life of retirement, avoided going to Marly whenever she could, and even at Versailles spent as much of her time as possible in the chapel or in her own rooms. She was, however, always cheerful; performed her functions conscientiously, and never meddled in intrigues; every one liked and respected her for her amiability and sincere piety, the Duchess of Burgundy as much as anybody. Even the young people about the Court looked up to her, though her life was so very different from their own. Her husband was a retired Lieutenant-General, of very good family, much respected, but as unfitted as she was to push his way in the world. They were very poor; and did not know what to do for their son, a man of courage and honour, who commanded a regiment, but had not sufficient means to keep up his position.

It happened one day that Cavoye, who took care of the old Duke de Richelieu, found him in great perplexity about his daughter, who had been in a provincial convent, but was coming back to him. Cavoye advised him to find a husband for her as soon as possible, and, after some consideration, suggested Clefmont, Madame du Chastelet's son, as a suitable match; provided that he could obtain the reversion of the Governorship of Vincennes, which had been granted to his father out of consideration for Madame du Chastelet. The worthy Richelieu was so much pleased with this suggestion that, before they parted, they not only settled what he should give his daughter by way of dowry, but sent for Madame de St. Géran, an intimate friend of the Chastelets, to find out how much Clefmont had. She came and told them all she knew; and, in spite of the young man's poverty, M. de Richelieu commissioned her to ask his parents' consent to the marriage. That same
evening M. de Richelieu spoke to Madame de Maintenon, who made it a point of honour to do him a service whenever she had it in her power; she told him to go at once and write a letter to the King, and she would answer for the rest. He entrusted the letter to her; and she presented it to the King, who at once granted the reversion, on condition that the marriage took place; so that the whole affair was settled between dinner and supper without M. and Madame du Chastelet, who were at Vincennes, knowing anything about it.

Next day they came to Versailles, and were very much astonished to hear from Madame de St. Géran that a marriage had been arranged for their son with the daughter of a Duke and Peer, who had been well brought up; who had only just left her convent, and who would eventually have a fortune of 500,000 livres; and also that their son was to have the reversion of Vincennes. Their delight was even greater than their surprise; and the marriage took place immediately. As we have seen, Madame du Chastelet's high character had alone procured the Governorship of Vincennes for her husband after her nephew's death, without any application on their part; so that her virtue met with a double reward by the direct interference of Providence. It is remarkable that, of all the Ladies of the Palace, she was the only one who made any profit out of her position; and that, not only without any exertion on her part, but actually without her knowledge.

*Te Deums* were sung, and bonfires blazed, to celebrate the proclamation of peace with the Emperor. The King was at Marly, where the *Te Deum* cannot be sung at his Mass; so he went at five o'clock to hear it at the parish church. The Duke de Tresmes gave a grand collation at the Hôtel-de-Ville; and, at midnight, a great feast at his house, to which many foreigners were invited, as well as ladies and persons about the Court.
CHAPTER XXV

1713

Illness and death of the Duke of Berry—His character—Anecdotes of the Duchess of Berry—Renewed calumnies against the Duke of Orleans—Death of the Maréchale d'Estrées—Her character—Of the Duchess de Lorge—Cardinal del Giudice invited to Marly—The King makes an enigmatic remark about Madame des Ursins—Death of the Duchess de Bouillon—Her character—Cardinal Mazarin's nieces—Chalais informs the King of the King of Spain's intended marriage—Resignation of the Chancellor—His private reasons—Voysin succeeds him, but retains his office as Secretary for War—M. de Lausun's joke about him—The Queen of Poland returns to France—Her history—She is disappointed at her reception—The Prince de Dombes placed on an equality with Princes of the Blood.

Once more the sojourn at Marly was marked by a very sad event. This was the same visit during which Cardinal del Giudice and the Marquis de Brancas arrived from Spain; and I had better, perhaps, take it from the beginning. Some time previously Madame de Saint-Simon had gone to Paris from Versailles feeling unwell; and she was laid up there with measles. She was just recovering when the King went to Marly on the 11th of April; a few days later, Madame de Lausun and I each received a note from Bloin, informing us that the King had reserved rooms for us at Marly; that measles was not like small-pox, and we might go there next day if we liked. A permission so conveyed was equivalent to a command, and such a command was a favour and distinction; it aroused some jealousy, which people disguised under a pretended fear of infection. Madame de Saint-Simon, in the meanwhile, went to Madame de Lausun's house at Passy, as soon as she could be moved, for change of air; intending to return to Versailles on the same day as the King. It had been given out, however, that the Court would make a long stay at Marly. The Duchess of Berry was expecting her confinement, and had remained at Versailles; although the King, as a rule, did not like such separations, he was not
sorrt to give her permission to do so; for she was far from being an amusing companion to him and Madame de Maintenon, as the Dauphiness had been.

On Monday, the 30th of April, the King took medicine; he transacted business in the afternoon with Pontchartrain, and towards six o'clock went to see the Duke of Berry, who had been feverish in the night. He had, nevertheless, got up as usual, and been in attendance when the King took his medicine; he had intended to go out with the stag-hounds, but on leaving the King's room he was seized with a violent shivering fit, and had to return to bed. The fever became very strong: he was bled, and the blood was unsatisfactory; the doctors told the King at his couche that they only hoped the illness would turn out to be of an eruptive nature. He vomited a great deal of black matter; Fagon declared very positively that it was blood; the other doctors put it down to some chocolate he had eaten on the previous day. From the first I knew what to think of it; Boulduc, the King's apothecary, whispered to me that the patient would not recover; that the symptoms were almost identical with those of the Dauphin and Dauphiness. He confirmed this opinion next day; on the third day he told me that none of the doctors had any doubt as to what caused the illness; and afterwards they made no secret of their conviction.

On Tuesday the 1st of May the patient was bled in the foot, after a very bad night; and emetics were twice administered, with considerable effect. The King went to see him after Mass; then held the Council of Finance, but would not go out shooting as he had intended; he walked in the gardens instead. The Duke of Berry had another very bad night, and was again bled in the foot on the morning of the 2nd. Coettenfao, Chevalier of Honour to the Duchess of Berry, came with a message from her asking that Chirac, the Duke of Orleans' celebrated physician, might see the patient; but the King refused, on the ground that the doctors were unanimous as to the treatment, and difficulties would arise if Chirac disapproved of it. Madame de Pompadour and Madame de la Vieuville came in the afternoon with another message, asking leave for her to come and see the Duke; she was so uneasy, she said, that she would sooner come on foot than not at all. If she really wanted it so much, she would have done better to
get into her carriage, and ask the King's leave in person on her arrival; but the truth is, she no more wished to come than the Duke of Berry wished to see her; he never mentioned her name, nor made any allusion to her, throughout his illness. The King said he would not shut the door in her face if she came, but in her condition it would be very imprudent; and he sent Madame and the Duke of Orleans to Versailles to dissuade her. The King reviewed his Body-guard in the afternoon; when it was over, he went to see the Duke of Berry, who had again been bled, from the arm this time. He vomited a good deal during the day, and took Rabel water three times to stop it; he brought up much blood. This vomiting made it necessary to postpone the Holy Communion; Father de la Rue had been with him since Tuesday morning, and found him very patient and resigned.

On Thursday, after another bad night, the doctors said there was no doubt that a blood-vessel had been ruptured in the stomach. It was rumoured that this accident had been caused by his horse stumbling, when he was out hunting the previous week; he had been thrown forward on to the pummel of his saddle, and he was said to have spat and vomited blood at intervals ever since. The vomiting ceased about nine in the morning, but the patient seemed no better. The King was to have gone out hunting, but countermanded it. About six in the evening the Duke of Berry found such difficulty in breathing that he could not remain in bed; two hours later, however, he felt so much better that he told Madame he hoped not to die that time. But, soon afterwards, he became so much worse that Father de la Rue told him the time had come to administer the Last Sacraments; and the poor Prince himself seemed to wish it. A consecrated wafer had been kept in the chapel since the first day of his illness; he received it and Extreme Unction, in the King's presence, with much piety and resignation. The King remained in the room nearly an hour, then supped alone, and went to bed without seeing any of the Princesses. At two o'clock in the morning the Duke of Orleans went off to Versailles, hearing that the Duchess of Berry again talked of starting for Marly. Shortly before his death the Duke of Berry told Father de la Rue about his horse's stumble; at least, so Father de la Rue said afterwards; but it was rumoured that the
patient's mind was already beginning to wander. Shortly afterwards he became speechless, but took the Crucifix from Father de la Rue's hand, kissed it, and laid it on his breast. He died at four o'clock on the morning of Friday, the 4th of May, in his twenty-eighth year; having been born at Versailles on the 31st of August, 1686.

The Duke of Berry was of middle height, rather stoutly built, with a fair complexion; his face, which was rather handsome, was of a fresh colour, denoting vigorous health. He was the kindest and most sympathetic of men; very accessible, entirely devoid of conceit or vanity; but not without dignity and a sense of what was due to his position. Nature seemed to have formed him expressly for social pleasures; he was fond of every kind of amusement. He was far from clever, without imagination, and incapable of adopting wide views; but he had a great deal of good sense, which enabled him to pick out the best among several specious alternatives, after listening to all that could be said for each of them. He was a lover of truth, justice, and reason; without any affectation of piety, he disliked extremely to listen to irreligious talk; he was not without firmness, and detested constraint. This last trait in his character had given some alarm to those responsible for his education; they feared lest he might not turn out quite so submissive as they could wish a third son to be; he could not understand why his eldest brother should be treated differently to himself, and their childish quarrels were rather disquieting.

He was the handsomest and most genial of the three brothers; consequently the most popular, and most run after by society. He was of a frank and lively disposition, and his boisterous repartees to Madame and to M. de la Rochefoucauld, who was always teasing him, were much talked about. He used to snap his fingers at tutors and masters, and often at punishment; he learnt to read and write, but hardly anything else; and never cared to learn anything after he was emancipated from lessons. His tutors thought it necessary to treat him with severity; but the effect of this was to dull his wits and cow his spirit. He became so timid that he could do nothing properly; he had not even the manners proper for a man in his position. He was tongue-tied with people he did not know well; he was afraid to say anything civil, or even to answer when spoken...
to, for fear of making some blunder. In short, he had taken it into his head that he was a fool, too stupid to do anything. He was very sensitive, and this notion hurt him extremely. My readers will remember his breakdown in Parliament, and his adventure with Madame de Montauban. Madame de Saint-Simon, to whom he confided all his troubles, never succeeded in removing this excessive self-distrust; and it did him a great deal of harm. He blamed the manner in which he had been brought up; he understood the reason, but he felt no affection for those who were responsible for it.

Monseigneur preferred him to either of his other sons; partly, because of his cheerful disposition and love of amusements; partly, under the influence of the cabal whose interest it was to keep the eldest son at a distance, and discredit him as much as possible. The Duke of Burgundy, since their childish days were over, had never assumed the airs of an elder brother, but always lived with the Duke of Berry on terms of the greatest affection and familiarity, never missing an opportunity of doing him a kindness; consequently, the Duke of Berry, who had a good and honest heart, never took advantage of his father's preference. The Duchess of Burgundy was also very fond of him, and was as anxious to procure little pleasures for him as if he had been her own brother; in return, he felt the warmest affection for her, and treated her and his brother with heartfelt devotion and respect. He was overwhelmed with grief when they died; and it was sincere, for no man was ever more incapable of feigning. As for the King, he was so afraid of him that he hardly dared go near him; if the King spoke to him about anything more serious than cards or hunting, he was so terror-stricken that he scarcely heard what was said, and all his thoughts evaporated. As may be supposed, there was no great affection between them.

With the Duchess of Berry he had begun like most very young and inexperienced husbands. He fell passionately in love with her; and this, combined with his gentle and unselfish disposition, had the usual effect of spoiling her completely. He soon perceived it; but his love was too strong for him. In the end he found that he had married a proud, selfish, ill-tempered woman, who did not try to disguise her contempt for him; for she was far cleverer
than he was, and, moreover, thoroughly false and self-willed. She prided herself on scoffing at religion, and laughed scornfully at her husband for believing in it; she caused a quarrel between him and the Duchess of Burgundy, and did her best, though unsuccessfully, to make him quarrel with his brother also. All this was intolerable to him; moreover, her intrigues of gallantry were so numerous, and carried on so openly, that he could no longer shut his eyes to them. Violent scenes took place; one in particular at Rambouillet, when the Duchess of Berry received a kick from her husband, coupled with the threat that she should be shut up in a convent for the rest of her life. At the time when he was taken ill matters had come to such a pitch that he was hanging about the King like a child, trying to screw up his courage to tell him of his troubles, and ask him to deliver him from his wife.

I will not go into details on this unpleasant subject; one specimen will suffice as an illustration of her conduct. She did all she could to induce La Haye, her husband's equerry, to run away with her; some of her letters to him were intercepted, full of passionate expressions and imploring him to consent. From such a project, at a time when the King, her father, and her husband were all alive and well, one may form some idea of the sense of the person who conceived it; and we shall see other examples of the same sort later on. She was, therefore, more conscious of her restored freedom, than of the diminution of her personal position, entailed by her husband's death. She was expecting her confinement; she hoped for a son; and, now that the King and Madame de Maintenon would care less about her behaviour, she intended to enjoy her liberty.

The Duke of Berry had been very popular and was much regretted. On the morning of his death Madame de Maintenon, the Princes, and Princesses, were assembled in the small saloon adjoining the King's bedroom, waiting till he awoke; and the same ceremonies were observed as after the death of the Dauphin. After the King's dinner, that is, between three and four o'clock, he went for a drive in the forest of Marly. As soon as he had started the Duke of Berry's body was put into his coach, and taken, with an escort of pages and guards, to the Tuileries. The King notified the same day that the late Prince's household
should remain on the same footing till after the Duchess's confinement; and continue so, if the expected child was a Prince. The King was afflicted with sombre thoughts, but did not affect a grief which he did not really feel.

The Duke and Duchess of Orleans felt acutely the loss which they had sustained. The Duke of Berry had been a link between the King and themselves which could never be replaced. The prospect of becoming Regent was no consolation to the Duke of Orleans; for, in the first place, it seemed very remote; and, moreover, he could not help being conscious that in ability he was far superior to his son-in-law, and, as their interests were identical, he had always expected to be the guiding spirit of the Regency if it had fallen to the Duke of Berry. His grief was deep and sincere; from personal affection as well as for reasons touching his interests.

On Sunday, after dinner, the King went to Versailles, to see the Duchess of Berry. He was very gracious to Madame de Saint-Simon, who had just returned; she also received a good many caresses from the Duchess of Berry. The King spoke very kindly to the Duchess, but only stayed a quarter of an hour; after which he returned to Marly and walked in the gardens.

The real nature of the Duke of Berry's illness soon became a matter of public gossip, and the result was the same as in the preceding cases; the most odious accusations were brought against the Duke of Orleans. Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine, aided by the confidential valets and by the remains of Vendôme's old clique, did their best to poison the King's mind against him; and, though the King showed nothing outwardly, these cunning artists did not labour in vain. He had never got over his prejudice against the Duke of Orleans caused by the former rumours; they were still fresh in the public mind, and those who had so artfully spread them in the first instance took good care that they should not die away. The Duke of Orleans, whose position and influence were thus undermined, was now the only legitimate Prince of full age.

Never was M. du Maine so beaming and cheerful as at this time. He secluded himself even more than usual; but, when he did appear, it was evident, in spite of all his efforts to conceal it, that he was beside himself with joy.
The Guises themselves never put on more winning manners than he did; partly because his feelings were too strong to be repressed, but not altogether so: he meant to make himself popular, for he had a great object in view. All this was perceptible enough to the sharp-sighted; but could only be hinted at in whispers among persons sure of each other's secrecy. Madame du Maine took less trouble to hide her feelings; she was jubilant, immersed in festivities and amusements at Sceaux, where M. du Maine, sitting near the door, had to do the honours more often than he liked, and seemed rather ashamed of himself.

The Duke of Berry's obsequies were rather carelessly performed. The ceremony of lying in state at the Tuileries was wretchedly managed; the Bishops who watched the body took arm-chairs, and Dreux allowed it; though such a piece of presumption had never been heard of before. On Thursday, the 10th of May, the Count de Charolais and the Duke de Fronsac escorted the heart to Val-de-Grâce. The Duke of Orleans was to have accompanied the body to St. Denis, but he asked the King's permission to decline this duty; and his place was taken by M. le Duc, accompanied by the Duke de la Trémouille. Madame de Saint-Simon saw that everything was properly done in the Duchess of Berry's apartments. Her own room was completely darkened, so that visitors should not see her in bed. When the King went there, daylight was admitted as he entered; but no one else was allowed this privilege; and there were some ridiculous scenes in consequence, which caused very unbecoming laughter. The persons who were constantly in the room could see a little; but those who came in suddenly from daylight went stumbling about, and required assistance. Father Trévoux and Father Tellier made their complimentary speeches to the wall; others to the foot of the bed; it became a secret source of amusement to the ladies in attendance. They were really mourning; but such grotesque accidents will happen in solemn moments, and make one laugh, though one is ashamed of it afterwards. Nobody stayed a moment longer than he could help in this artificial darkness.

The Duke of Berry's funeral took place on the 16th of May, and the King left Marly the same day for Versailles. After supper he told Madame that he would act as guardian to the Duchess of Berry and to the unborn child. He had
an inventory made of the jewels; those which had belonged to the Duchess were restored to her, with half of those purchased by the Duke of Berry since his marriage; the other half was set aside for the child, and all those which had belonged to him before marriage. At the same time the King increased the Duchess’s pension by 200,000 livres.

The Dowager Maréchale d’Estreës died soon afterwards from the effects of a newly built house which had been assigned as her quarters at Marly; she was taken ill there and removed to Paris, where she died. She was the daughter of a rich financier called Morin, who was always known as Morin the Jew. She was a tall, stout woman; handsome, with a proud, bold, clever face; there never was a wittier person, nor one who had more information or was better company. Her manner was rather abrupt, though always polite; she knew what was due to each person, and allowed no one to overlook what was due to herself. Her whole life had been spent at Court, in the very best society. Her chief amusement was high play, in which she showed considerable skill, and her fairness was beyond suspicion. People were very much afraid of her, but her society was none the less sought after. She was supposed to be spiteful; but only because she spoke her mind freely, sometimes with much wit; and because she was not of a temper to allow people to take liberties. If any one did so, she was dangerous; for she would make a short but cutting remark which made the offender feel like sinking into the ground. But in reality she disliked quarrelling and backbiting; all she cared about was to make herself respected, in which she succeeded perfectly; and she lived on the best of terms with her own family. She was extremely stingy, a defect which she acknowledged and was the first to laugh at; she was also an excellent hand at a bargain, for she had very good taste, and knew what everything ought to cost; and she never could resist buying anything she fancied. When she did take it into her head to give a dinner or a supper, she spared no expense; and everything was done in perfect taste. She was a warm friend and a sagacious adviser; thoroughly confidential and trustworthy; one could talk freely before her without risk of one’s remarks being repeated.

Her daughter, Mademoiselle de Tourbes, was equally
clever and witty; but of a sharper and more imperious disposition. She fell down one evening in the saloon at Marly as she was dancing, covered with jewels. Her mother, who was sitting in the back row with the elder ladies, broke through to the front, and ran to her; but, without waiting to inquire whether she was hurt, though she was still lying on the floor, she busied herself in picking up the jewellery. This caused a good deal of laughter, in which she herself joined freely. She left Mademoiselle de Tourbes more than 800,000 livres; almost as much to her son, Marshal d’Estrées; to her other children, the Abbé d’Estrées and Madame de Courtenvaux, 600,000 livres apiece; besides which she left an immense collection of furniture, porcelain, plate, and jewels. She was about seventy-seven years old, as sound in mind and body as she had been at forty; and, but for the new house, would have lived many years longer. She was on excellent terms with her daughter-in-law and the Noailles family generally; it was amusing, all the same, to hear her talk of them, and to them. There were few people whom she really liked; nevertheless, her death was generally regretted.

The Duchess de Lorge, Chamillart’s third daughter, died in child-bed on the 31st of May, in her twenty-eighth year. She was tall, with an elegant figure and an agreeable face; she was not without wit; and her disposition was so simple and natural that she was charming. There was not a better-hearted woman in the world, nor one more madly addicted to pleasure of all sorts, high play in particular. She was entirely devoid of the silly pride and self-importance usually found in the children of Ministers; but, as for the rest of their characteristic follies, she possessed every one of them. Spoilt from childhood by a Court which fawned servilely on her father in the days of his favour, and brought up by a mother incapable of giving her a reasonable education, she could not bring herself to believe that the King and the country could ever get on without her father’s assistance; and not even his downfall could teach her that she owed any duties to others, even the ordinary civilities of society. She confessed it herself most ingenuously, adding that she could not bear restraint. There never was a person so careless about her appearance, or so untidy; her headdress was nearly always crooked, her clothes seemed to be slipping down to one side; yet
there was a natural grace about her which made even these things attractive.

She never took the slightest care of her health; and, as for her expenditure, she went on as if her purse was inexhaustible. She was delicate, and her lungs were affected; she was told so, and knew that it was true; but she was incapable of self-restraint. She finally wore herself out by sitting up at the card-table, or at entertainments, during her last pregnancy. Every night she came home lying at full length across her carriage from sheer weakness; when asked what pleasure she could find in reducing herself to such a state, she would answer in an almost inaudible voice that she had enjoyed herself immensely. The natural consequence was her untimely death. She had been a favourite of the Dauphiness, and the confidante of many of her secrets. I was always on the best of terms with her; but I used to tell her that I would not be her husband for anything in the world. She was very gentle and amiable; her father and mother were deeply grieved by her death.

On the 29th of May the King went to Marly, Cardinal del Giudice being given rooms there. I was invited as usual, and went, although Madame de Saint-Simon remained at Versailles with the Duchess of Berry. The King of Spain had as yet sent no notification to the King of his intention to marry again, much less that his intended bride was the Princess of Parma; but the King had heard of it from other sources. This lack of courtesy, coupled with the Princess des Ursins’ pretensions to a sovereignty and her general behaviour towards the King of Spain since the Queen’s death, set the final seal to the King’s determination to put an end to her dominion. Though usually so cautious and reserved, he let fall a remark concerning her, so enigmatic that Torcy, to whom it was made, could not understand it; and it was accompanied by a very peculiar smile. Torcy was so much surprised that he repeated it to his friend Castries, who carried it to the Duchess of Orleans; and she immediately informed her husband and myself. We puzzled our heads over it for a long time without arriving at a solution; but such a remark about a person who had so long enjoyed the complete confidence of the King and Madame de Maintenon seemed of ill-boding for Madame des Ursins. I knew she
had given offence in the matter of the sovereignty, but I was far indeed from guessing what this flash of lightning presaged; it was not revealed till her downfall, of which it is not yet time to speak.

On the 16th of June the Duchess of Berry gave birth prematurely to a daughter, who lived only twelve hours. Madame de Saint-Simon had the unpleasant duty of escorting the little body to St. Denis, and the heart to Val de Grâce.

The Electress Sophia died at the age of eighty. She was niece to Charles I of England, who was beheaded; and it was through her that the Crown of England passed to the House of Hanover; there were other descendants of the royal line of the Stuarts in more direct succession, but they were Catholics. She was a Princess of great merit. Madame, who was her brother’s daughter, was brought up by her; and used to write letters of twenty or twenty-five pages to her twice a week as long as she lived; it was to her that she wrote the letters which put her in such an awkward position at the time of Monsieur’s death. Madame was much grieved by the loss of this aunt.

M. de Bouillon had been seriously ill, and had gone for change of air to Clichy. Madame de Bouillon went to see him there on the 20th of June; on entering his room she had a sudden stroke, and fell dead at his feet. She had had one or two apoplectic attacks before; but so slight that they were put down to indigestion, and she took no precautions. She was sixty-eight years old, and still retained much of her beauty and charm. This shocking event was considered by the world as a sort of reparation made to her husband for her former conduct, which had been so notorious that no woman would visit her, except such as had no reputation to lose. She was, however, surrounded by a brilliant circle of men; her house was a centre of attraction, where high play went on; and there was always a first-rate cook. But latterly she had grown stingy; and her circle had greatly diminished in numbers, owing to her bad temper, the falling off in her table, and her habit of sponging on other people for suppers whenever she had an opportunity.

She had been married in 1662, and was the last survivor of Cardinal Mazarin’s seven nieces. Her father, Michel Mancini, of no very distinguished family, married Cardinal
Mazarin's sister; and by her had three sons and five daughters. Of the sons, the eldest, a young man of great promise, was killed at the combat of Porte St. Antoine in 1652; the second was M. de Nevers, whom I have formerly mentioned; the youngest died at the age of fourteen, from the effects of a fall as he was being tossed in a blanket by his schoolfellows at the Jesuit College, to the great grief of the Cardinal. The daughters were: (1) Laure-Victoire, married to the Duke de Mercœur, son of the first Duke de Vendôme, Henry IV's bastard son; she was the mother of the Duke de Vendôme so often mentioned in these Memoirs, and of the Grand Prior. She died 1657, at the age of nineteen. (2) Olympe, married to the Count de Soissons, by whom she had, among other children, the Count de Soissons and the celebrated Prince Eugène. I have said so much about her that I need add nothing here. (3) Marie, the King's first love, whom he wished to marry. To prevent this she was sent to Rome; and married, in 1661, the Constable Colonna, who died in 1669. I shall have occasion to speak of her again. (4) Hortense, married to the only son of Marshal de la Melleraye, who assumed the name and arms of Mazarin. (5) Marie-Anne, Duchess de Bouillon, now in question.

Cardinal Mazarin had two other nieces, daughters of his elder sister by her marriage with Jerome Martinozzi, a Roman; who, according to his own account, was a gentleman by birth. He arranged pretty good marriages for these nieces also; the elder married Alphonse d'Este, Duke of Modena, and her daughter was Queen of England, second wife of James II; the younger married the Prince of Conti, brother to M. le Prince the hero, and had two sons, one of whom was the King's son-in-law, the other was the Prince of Conti, so celebrated in his day, who, for a brief space was King of Poland. Cardinal Mazarin provided his seven nieces with dowries; and it may be imagined that they were not small ones to enable persons so obscurely born to make such splendid marriages. When we think of this, and of the 28,000,000 he gave, in addition, to the Duchess de Mazarin, besides enormous wealth to M. de Nevers; when we consider the governorships and other offices given to his relations, and his immense collection of jewels, pictures, statues and other works of art, we begin to realise what it costs the King and his subjects to
have a Prime Minister. It must be confessed, moreover, that this shameless plundering is the smallest of the evils caused by this system of government; perhaps it is not even the most disgraceful; but certainly, monstrous as it is, it is the least dangerous.

If the fathers of these nieces were of humble birth, the origin of their mothers was, if possible, still more obscure. No one has ever succeeded in tracing the descent of the too-famous Cardinal beyond his father; nor has it been possible to ascertain his birthplace, or any particulars of his early youth. All that is known of the family is that they came from Sicily; it is supposed that they inhabited the valley of Mazaro, and called themselves Mazarini, as one sees people in Paris calling themselves Champagne or Bourguignon. The Cardinal’s father lived at Rome in such obscurity that, when he died in 1654, the occurrence was absolutely unknown there; the Roman newspapers were malicious enough to insert the following paragraph: “Letters from Paris inform us that the seigneur Pietro Mazarini, father of the Cardinal of that name, died in this city of Rome on such a day,” etc. I must now return to Madame de Bouillon.

At the time of her marriage M. de Turenne was at the height of his favour and renown; and her sister, Madame de Soissons, was the queen of the Court, the centre of that brilliant circle which set the fashion to the rest of the world; the King was always at her house, and many a man’s fate in life depended on her caprices. Madame de Bouillon saw her husband’s brother become a Cardinal at the age of twenty-six, and Grand Almoner two years later; she saw her other brother-in-law succeed to the office of Colonel-General of Cavalry and other positions of dignity left vacant by M. de Turenne’s death in 1675. It is not surprising that she should have been proud, and she was so to an extraordinary degree; at the same time she was clever, witty, and agreeable, with a sound judgement, which kept her pride from carrying her beyond certain limits. With people whom it was dangerous to offend she concealed it under a show of great politeness; with others of less importance she adopted an air of good-natured familiarity, which served to carry off her assumption of superiority. But wherever she found herself she seemed to be mistress, and gave the tone to the conversation. It
was not safe to offend her, for she never put any restraint on her tongue, or, if she did so, it was only out of consideration for her own interests; nevertheless, she was a warm friend, and thoroughly to be trusted. Her manner was frank and bold to the verge of audacity; in spite of the loose conduct I have hinted at, she was a leading personage in Paris, and an arbitress whose opinions were not to be lightly disregarded. I say in Paris, because there she was a sort of queen; but she hardly ever came near the Court; only once or twice a year on ceremonial occasions, and never slept at Versailles.

The King never liked her. Her free manners frightened him; she was often banished, more than once for a long period. In spite of this she used to carry her head high when she went into his presence, her voice could be heard two rooms off, and she never modulated it in the slightest degree; even at the King’s supper-table, seated behind Monseigneur and the other Princes and Princesses, she would very often attack them, or the ladies sitting near her.

She treated her children with the most imperious authority, which she also usurped over her husband’s relations and her own; the Prince of Conti and even M. le Duc, with all his savage temper, had to submit to it; and these two Princes, when at Paris, used to spend most of their time at her house. Her husband she treated with supreme contempt; and, indeed, she considered all the rest of mankind as of no more importance compared with herself than the grass beneath her feet. She never called on any one, except on ceremonial occasions; which, however, she observed very punctiliously; and sometimes she went to see some very intimate friend. But, wherever she went, she always maintained the same air of superiority to the rest of the world; seasoned, when she thought proper, by gracious and dignified politeness.

There never was a woman who cared less about her toilet, and her face was so beautiful and singular that it required nothing to set it off. Whatever she wore suited her; but she liked ornaments and fine jewels. She was very well informed, and talked well; she was fond of arguing, and sometimes became rather quarrelsome over it. Her splendid position during the first twelve or fifteen years of her married life had spoilt her; and the subsequent changé had not the effect of teaching her wisdom and
moderation. However, her beauty and wit sustained her, and people had become accustomed to her domineering ways. She always gave herself airs on the strength of being a Princess; sometimes she had to put up with snubs and rebuffs in consequence, but they never cured her of these pretensions.

On the whole, she was a loss to her friends, a very great one to her family; I may even say that she was a loss to Paris. Her house was open from morning to night; high play, at different kinds of games, went on continually. She kept an excellent cook; and among her numerous circle of guests were to be found the most brilliant and illustrious persons of the day; that is, so far as men were concerned. She was neither tall nor slender, but in other respects her person was admirable, and very striking. Taking her as a whole, she was an audacious and enterprising person, and it was dangerous to have much to do with her. She had to leave the kingdom several times, and travelled in Italy, England, and the Netherlands, under the pretext of going to visit her sisters; but she never held such a position at Rome or in London as she did at Paris.

A courier arrived from Spain on the 26th of June; and next day Chalais had an audience of the King, at which Torcy was present. His commission was rather embarrassing; he had to inform the King of the King of Spain’s intended marriage, this being the first official information of it which he had received. After the audience Chalais took his leave, and returned to Spain; Madame des Ursins had entrusted the commission to him as a man entirely devoted to her, for she was uneasy about the consequences of her bold stroke, and wished to hear how the announcement was received. The King said very little about this strange marriage, and nothing at all about the still stranger manner in which he had been kept in the dark. He could not prevent the marriage; and he had already made sure of his vengeance on the person who had conceived and carried out the project in such a manner. Directly after Chalais left his room, Cardinal del Giudice was called in. It was about the same business; but all this was not known for some time.

The Chancellor at this time took a step for which there was no precedent, and which caused general surprise; I may add, general regret. He had always intended to leave
an interval between his active life and the time of his death, as he often told me. Even before he became Chancellor his wife had with some difficulty dissuaded him from going into retirement; the same thing had since happened more than once; and when she was dying she made him promise, if he still thought of resigning, to take six weeks to think it over. After her death he retired to some small rooms which he had in the institution of the Fathers of the Oratory, and there he made all necessary preparations for carrying out his design. But he could not make them so secretly as to prevent his family from hearing of them; La Vrilliére told me what was meditated, and, in conjunction with the First Equerry, begged me to remonstrate with the Chancellor. I did so, but it was useless; he waited till the end of his promised six weeks, and then spoke to the King, who was very much surprised, for he was under the impression that a Chancellor could not resign his office; and, indeed, there was no precedent for such a resignation.

Although Madame de Maintenon’s dislike of the Chancellor, and his own belief that he was a Jansenist, had greatly altered the King’s feelings towards him, he had grown accustomed to him, and could not entirely forget his old liking; and, when it really became a question of parting from him, his affection for him revived. The Chancellor’s agreeable manners; his acute intellect; the clearness of his arguments, which were always brief, luminous, and to the point; his freedom from anything approaching to pedantry; his outspoken yet respectful frankness, and his habit of enlivening the most serious proceedings by touches of the most delicate and playful wit, were all delightful to the King; who, moreover, was always hurt when any one brought into close contact with him talked of leaving his service. He used all the affectionate arguments he could think of to induce the Chancellor to change his mind; and when he found him resolute, begged him at any rate to think the matter over for a fortnight longer. This term expired at the end of June; the Chancellor returned to the charge, and with great difficulty obtained the long desired freedom; which he afterwards turned to such good and pious account.

No rumour of his approaching resignation had got abroad till four or five days before it took place, and it was hardly
believed. On Sunday, the 1st of July, the Chancellor remained behind when the other Ministers left the Council of State, and had a rather long interview with the King; it was then that he finally extorted permission to resign. The King, who was deeply moved, made him promise to come and see him from time to time by the back entrance. Nothing in the Chancellor’s manner, either during the sitting of the Council or when he left the King’s room, betrayed anything unusual; and the majority of the courtiers were still in uncertainty. Next day, just as the King returned from Mass, the Chancellor was seen arriving at the door of the little saloon in a chair; and, as no Council was sitting, everybody hastened out of the great saloon to see what was going on. He was seen to enter the King’s room, bearing the box which contained the Seals; and no one doubted that he had resigned; there were general expressions of admiration and regret. I had already heard of it from himself; it was with a sore heart that I watched him enter and leave the King’s room, but his own looks betokened relief. The King overwhelmed him with expressions of esteem and regret; he gave him, unasked, a pension of 36,000 livres, and allowed him to retain the title and honours of Chancellor. At the close of the audience he asked the King to take care of his two secretaries, very worthy people; and he immediately promised them pensions of 2,000 livres.

While he was with the King, the news spread; and nearly all the men staying at Marly assembled to see him come out. He appeared quite calm, bowed to right and left without speaking, got into his chair, and went off to his pavilion, where his carriage was ready, and soon afterwards left for Paris. Eventually he retired to the house left vacant by the death of Le Charmel; I shall have other opportunities of mentioning the solitary, but religious and contented, life which he led there.

It was not merely old age, or grief for the loss of his wife, which caused him to take this resolution, nor even his long-felt wish for an interval of quiet before his death; he knew the time was rapidly approaching when he would be forced to acquiesce in measures which were hateful to him, but which it would be useless to oppose. He watched the progress of Father Tellier’s designs, the affair of the Constitution, the gradual overthrow of the liberties of the
Gallican Church, the beginning of persecutions. He foresaw that the Jesuits, having contrived to make the King believe that the maintenance of his authority in this world, and his salvation in the next, were bound up with the support of their cause, would before long have recourse to all sorts of violence; he was unwilling to give their measures the authority of the Seals, or even to acquiesce in silence; yet opposition in the Council, or a refusal to apply the Seals, would not hinder them; while it would certainly bring ruin to himself. He had another motive for his resignation: he saw that the bastards, now that there was no legitimate descendant of the King or Prince of the Blood old enough to keep them within bounds, were daily increasing in audacity, and set no limits to their ambition; he foresaw that, as Chancellor, he would be required to apply the Seals to decrees which he regarded with horror, but which it would be equally useless and dangerous to oppose. We shall see that in a very short time his sagacious anticipations were fully realised. At the time of his resignation he was seventy-one years of age. His bodily health had always been perfect; and his mind was as clear as it had been at forty. He had been Chancellor since 1699, having previously held the office of Controller-General for ten years.

The King, having during his fruitless attempts to dissuade him from resigning, had plenty of time to think who should succeed him, sent at once for Voysin, gave him the Seals, and declared him Chancellor. No one doubted that Voysin would resign his office as Secretary for War, for there had never been an instance of a Chancellor who was also Secretary of State; but this one had a good appetite, and kept both offices. The wideawake de Mesmes, who had received a hint of what was going on, had his mouth open, ready to swallow this rich morsel, the greatest prize of the legal profession; but his usual mainstay failed him on this occasion. M. du Maine was then occupied entirely with the ambitious project which he carried out shortly afterwards; and for that purpose he did not stand so much in need of a Chancellor as of a First-President entirely devoted to his interests. It was impossible to find one more abjectly at his beck and call than de Mesmes, so it was clearly to his advantage to leave him where he was; it was therefore decided between Madame de Main-
tenon and himself that Voysin, who was not likely to give
them any trouble, should be Chancellor; while they kept
de Mesmes to influence the Parliament by the artful and
infamous manoeuvres to which I shall have to allude very
soon.

Voysin, then, was allowed to hold the two offices; and
the King found a childish amusement in showing him off.
At the meetings of the Council, and indeed on mornings
when it did not meet, Voysin wore the Chancellor’s official
costume. After dinner he wore a short damask cloak, in
which he transacted business relating to the War Office
with the King. In the evening, as it was summer time,
he discarded his cloak and appeared in a damask justé-au-
corps when the King went out for his walk. All this was
something new, and it was thought extremely ridiculous.
M. de Lausun often went over to Paris from Marly; on
one occasion he found himself in company with some
people who asked what was the latest news from Marly.
“There is none,” he replied in that meek, ingenious voice
which he was so fond of assuming; “there is no news, ex-
cept that the King is amusing himself by dressing and
undressing his doll!” Everybody burst out laughing,
for they knew what he meant; and, with a malicious smile,
he made his escape.

About this time the Queen of Poland, widow of the
celebrated John Sobieski, came to end her days in France.
It was not the first time she had thought of revisiting her
native country; many years before, under the pretext of
taking the waters at Bourbon, she had wished to come and
show off her crown; and it was a snub she received on
this occasion which rendered her a mortal enemy to
France. She had thought it advisable to ascertain how
she would be received; and discovered that, Poland being
an elective monarchy, our Queen would not give her the
“hand.” It is, indeed, only since quite recent times that
the King of France has given the “hand” to hereditary
Kings; it was Cardinal Mazarin who introduced the theory
of equality between monarchs. As the only object of the
Queen of Poland’s visit was to gratify her pride by being
received as an equal by the Queen of France, she broke it
off at once, and never forgave the supposed slight. It
is said that her intrigues had a good deal to do with the
formation of the celebrated League of Augsbourg against
France; however that may be, it is certain that she used all her influence to detach her husband from his French leanings, and made him take the side of Austria; for which she was rewarded by the marriage arranged between her eldest son and a sister of the Empress.

She was detested in Poland, on account of her pride and extreme avarice, and her son had not been chosen as King after her husband's death. She could not bear the thought of remaining in a country where she had formerly been supreme, and now found herself a hated and despised foreigner; so she went, accompanied by her father, to establish herself at Rome. She expected to be received on the same footing as Queen Christina of Sweden; but the latter had been an hereditary Queen in her own right, and was, moreover, a favourite with the Court of Rome as a convert from Lutheranism. Accordingly, there were differences in her treatment; which so mortified the Queen of Poland that, after her father's death, she determined to leave Rome and ask leave to return to France. After the way in which she had behaved, it is not surprising that her request was coldly received, and that she had to wait some time for an answer. Eventually the King consented, on condition that she should not come near the Court or Paris; he gave her the choice of the châteaux of Blois, Amboise, or Chambord. She arrived at Marseilles on the 4th of July, where she found her nephew, the Marquis de Bethune, who had been sent by the King to represent him. She declined all ceremonial, probably lest the honours accorded to her should be less than she fancied herself entitled to. She was accompanied by her granddaughter, who afterwards married King James of England, whom the English call the Pretender. They went to Blois, where they led a very quiet and solitary life.

M. le Duc, his brother the Count de Charolais, and the Prince of Conti, were appointed to act as mourners at the memorial service for the Duke of Berry at St. Denis; but the Count de Charolais was unwell and could not go. The Duke of Chartres, who was the proper person to take his place, was only eleven years old. Princes quite as young, and even younger, have acted as mourners on such occasions, a notable instance being that of the sons of the Bavarian Dauphiness at her funeral; but there was not much time for consideration, and the King would not let
slip the opportunity of appointing the Prince of Dombes. People thought it strange that he should be placed on an equal footing with the two Princes of the Blood; but this was only a trifling experiment, to prepare the way for greater things. This service took place on the 16th of July.
Maisons, président-à-mortier, and his wife—He makes the acquaintance of the Duke of Orleans—He wishes to obtain my influence with the Duke—I am approached by M. de Beauvilliers and by the Duke himself—After some hesitation I yield to their entreaties—A mysterious appointment with Maisons—Nothing comes of it—A hasty request to meet him at Paris—I find him with the Duke de Noailles—They inform me that the King has made his natural sons capable of succeeding to the throne—Their suspicious outbursts of anger—Reception of the news at Marly—I visit the Duke du Maine—My sentiments—Progressive steps in the elevation of the bastards—What constitutes High Treason?—The King shows some regret—Cunning behaviour of Maisons—Reception of the bastards by the Parliament on the registration of the new edict—Their demeanour.

The time has now arrived when I must say a few words about two quasi-personages: Maisons, président-à-mortier, and his wife, who was the elder sister of the Maréchale de Villars. His grandfather, also a président-à-mortier, was Superintendent of Finances, and built the superb château of Maisons. He was a friend of my father's; and he, ever ready to oblige his friends, sold him the capitainerie of St. Germain-en-Laye for next to nothing; it was very essential to the president to acquire this, for Maisons was close to St. Germain, and in the midst of the capitainerie. It was he who said, on being deprived of his office: "They are making a mistake; I have finished looking after my own profits, and I intended for the future to look after theirs." His son, father of the man now in question, was also an acquaintance of my father's. He, too, was a président-à-mortier; and it was he who presided so unworthily at the hearing of our lawsuit with M. de Luxembourg. His conduct on that occasion did not inspire me with any wish to keep up the old acquaintanceship, and I hardly knew his son; indeed, I never had any communication whatever with him till the beginning of this year. This explanation is necessary for the comprehension of what I am about to relate.
Maisons was a tall man, of rather imposing appearance; he had a good deal of sense and ability, though his professional knowledge was very superficial; with plenty of words at his command. He was very rich, and very ambitious; he had all the air of a man accustomed to good society; there was nothing of the coxcomb about him, nothing of the conceit usually found in men of the gown; nor did he give himself airs like most présidents-à-mortier. I fancy he had taken warning from M. de Mesmes; for he succeeded in steering clear of the absurdities by which the other had made himself so ridiculous. Far from aping the great nobleman or the courtier, he was content to live with the best society of the town and Court, which the polite and unassuming manners of himself and his wife attracted to his house. Here they entertained their guests with tact and discrimination, showing respect to some, marked civility to others; combined with an air of freedom and familiarity which never gave offence, because it never overstepped the limits of good taste; but, on the contrary, procured for them the enviable reputation of knowing how to make people feel at their ease.

His wife was far from clever; but she had the art of entertaining with graceful and liberal hospitality, and she had sense enough to let herself be guided by him. From this it will be seen that she was not like the ordinary run of lawyers' wives; she had perhaps a little more tincture of good society about her than her husband, but she was not inferior to him in politeness and tact. She was a tall woman; and, if she had not been quite so stout, would have had a fine figure; some people preferred her Roman style of beauty to that of her sister. She had the sense to keep on good terms with her sister\(^1\) and to repress carefully any little feeling of jealousy arising from the difference of their positions or their rivalry in beauty; and Maisons, for his part, while showing marked deference to Marshal Villars, was on a very friendly and intimate footing with him.

He had the good sense to realise that the essential thing for him was to acquire the good-will of his colleagues in Parliament, and that his consideration in the world must depend on the position he held in that body. Accordingly, he made a point of attracting judges and lawyers to his

\(^1\) The Maréchal de Villars.
house; he spared no pains to persuade them that he prided himself on being a member of their profession, and induced his wife to do the same; he was also assiduous in his attendance at the law-courts, and by his open and affable manners made himself pleasant to the more distinguished among the advocates, registrars, and other officials. In this way he acquired a popularity in the Parliament which aroused the jealousy of the First-President, and caused a general impression that no man had so much influence with that body as Maisons.

His house was situated very close to Marly, and it became the fashion to visit him there; but for a long time he was content with a distant view of the Court from his terraces. He seldom went to Versailles; but by degrees he made his visits more frequent, till he went once a week; and the King, accustomed, when at Marly, to hear of his dinner-parties, got into a way of talking to him about his place at Maisons whenever he saw him; but he was not in the least spoilt by this condescension. He managed so well that M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti were on friendly terms with him; and their deaths were a real loss to him. He also used to push himself in an underground sort of way, and somehow or other contrived to see a good deal of M. de Beauvilliers, though not openly; how or when this intimacy arose I never knew. After the deaths of the two Princes before mentioned, he made advances to the Duke of Orleans, which was easy for him, because he was an intimate friend of Canillac; who was also very intimate with the Duke, but never saw him except at Paris, for he hardly ever came near the Court. By dilating on Maisons' merit and his influence over the Parliament, Canillac persuaded the Duke of Orleans that it would be useful to his interests to make his acquaintance and secure his attachment.

Maisons, however, who wished to establish complete influence over the Duke, soon found that Canillac alone would not serve his purpose, for they were too often separated; and he turned his attention to me. I think he was rather afraid I should be against him, on account of his father's behaviour. He had an only son, about the same age as my children, and he had long ago made advances which led to an acquaintance between them; but it went no further, and that was not what the father
wanted. At last he got the Duke of Orleans to speak to me; and it was then that I first discovered his recent friendship with Maisons. He told me that Maisons was very anxious to make my acquaintance, repeating what he had said about the old friendship between his grandfather and my father, and so on. I received this overture coldly, made some complimentary speeches, and got out of it by saying that I hardly ever went to Paris, and then only for a flying visit. A few days later the Duke of Orleans again attacked me, with no better success.

Shortly afterwards I was very much surprised at hearing the same things from M. de Beauvilliers, who told me of his own acquaintance with Maisons, and tried to persuade me that I should find an intimacy with him useful in many ways; finally, seeing that I was not convinced, he begged me, as a favour, to make friends with him, if I had no special reason for declining. I saw that Maisons had taken pains to acquaint himself with my peculiarities, and knew that I could refuse nothing to M. de Beauvilliers if he asked it as a personal favour; and as a matter of fact I did not refuse; but I would not give a decided answer, for I did not wish the Duke of Orleans to think that I had yielded to another what I had refused to him. I had not long to wait; the Duke again spoke to me on the subject, saying that an acquaintance between Maisons and myself would be very useful to him, because he could not see him often or openly, and things might happen which he would like me to talk over with him. As I had made up my mind to give in, I consented to do what he wished, though I had already replied to this argument on a former occasion.

Maisons was soon informed of my resolution, and determined not to give me time to change my mind. At the request of the Duke of Orleans I went to spend a night at Paris; when I arrived there I found a note from Maisons, who had already sent me polite messages through the Prince and M. de Beauvilliers. This note asked me, for reasons which he said he would explain later on, to meet him that evening at eleven o'clock, in the plain behind the Hôtel des Invalides. To put my own servants off the scent, I went there with an old coachman and footman of my mother's; Maisons had already arrived; as there was a little moonlight, we soon found each other, and he got into my carriage. I never could make out why he made such
a mystery of this meeting. He began with some complimentary speeches, assuring me of the pleasure it gave him to make my acquaintance, and reminding me of the old friendship between our families; he spoke highly of the Duke of Orleans and M. de Beauvilliers, with some general observations on the present situation of the Court; to all of which I replied as civilly as I could, and waited for something of a nature to account for a meeting at such an hour. To my surprise, nothing came; he merely said it was better that this first interview should be in secret; with my permission, he would come to see me at Versailles sometimes, and make his visits more frequent when people had become accustomed to them; and, in conclusion, he begged me not to come to his house at Paris, for there were always too many people there. Our interview lasted scarcely half an hour; and, for all that we had to talk about, it need not have lasted so long. We parted with mutual politeness; and the first time he came to Versailles he called on me. Before long he got into the way of visiting me every Sunday, and our conversations gradually became more serious; I was always on my guard, but I drew him out on various subjects, and he seemed not unwilling to discuss them.

We were on this footing, when, as I was returning to my rooms at Marly towards the end of the forenoon of Sunday the 29th of July, I found a footman with a note from Maisons; in which he begged me to throw over any other engagement, and come at once to his house at Paris. He would wait for me there, he said; and I should see that it was about a matter of the very greatest importance, which admitted of no delay; but of such a nature that he could not commit it to paper. The footman had been waiting for me a long time, and had got my servants to hunt for me all over the place. Madame de Saint-Simon was with the Duchess of Berry at Versailles; and I was engaged to dine with M. and Madame de Lausun. I dared not miss this engagement, for M. de Lausun's malicious curiosity would have been aroused at once; so I ordered my carriage, and slipped away as soon as dinner was over.

When I arrived at Maisons' house I found him with the Duke de Noailles. They looked like two men distracted about something; after a brief preamble, they told me, in feeble voices, that the King had decided to declare his
bastard sons, and their posterity for ever, not only Princes of the Blood in every respect, but capable of succeeding to the Crown, in the event of the other branches of the Royal Family becoming extinct. At this news, which I had not expected, for not the slightest suspicion of such a design had been allowed to transpire, my arms dropped helplessly to my sides; I bowed my head, and sat in profound silence, plunged in thought.

My reflections were soon interrupted by cries which brought me to my senses. These two men were stamping about the room, striking the furniture with their fists, using the most violent language, and making the whole house ring with their noise. I confess this outburst appeared rather suspicious on the part of two men, one of whom, as a rule, remarkably cautious and reticent, was not personally affected by what had happened; while the other was invariably calm, sly, and self-possessed. I could not understand this access of fury, succeeding all of a sudden to a gloomy silence; it struck me that it was merely put on to stir up my own indignation. If that was their design it failed completely; I sat quietly in my chair, and asked what they were so angry about. This only made them more furious; it was the most extraordinary scene I ever saw in my life. I asked them if they had gone crazy; and whether, instead of making all that disturbance, it would not be better to talk the matter over, and see whether something could not be done. They said it was because nothing could be done that they were so angry; it was not merely that the matter was under discussion, or even that a decision had been come to; the thing was actually done; the declaration had been drawn up, signed, and sent to the Parliament for registration; no opposition was possible; the Princes of the Blood were mere children; the Duke of Orleans on such terms with the King that he dared not say a word; and the Parliament had been reduced to silence and slavery. Thereupon they broke out again, storming and cursing; without the slightest regard for the names they mentioned, or the language they used about them.

I was very angry too; but I confess all this racket made me laugh, and helped me to keep cool. I agreed with them that, for the present, there was no remedy, and nothing to be done; but I said we could not tell what
might happen in the future, and in the meantime I would rather have the bastards Princes of the Blood, and capable of succeeding to the Crown, than in the intermediate rank they held at present. This reflection did really occur to me as soon as I was sufficiently composed to think at all. By degrees the hurricane subsided, and they could talk reasonably. They informed me that the First-President and the *Procureur-Général*, who had, as I knew, been at Marly that day and seen the King, in company with the Chancellor, had brought back the declaration signed and sealed in due form. Maisons, however, must have heard what was going on from other sources; for those gentle-men could not have got back to Paris at the time when he sent off his footman to me with the letter. As it was evidently useless to discuss the matter, I took my leave; and returned to Marly, as fast as I could, lest my absence should give rise to talk.

By the time I arrived there it was nearly the hour of the King's supper. I went straight to the saloon, where I found everybody in gloomy silence; people looked at each other, but hardly ventured to draw together; only here and there one surprised a furtive sign, or a word whispered in passing. I saw the King sit down to supper; it struck me that he seemed haughtier than usual, and he looked about him a good deal. The news had only become known an hour ago, and every one was still stupefied and on his guard. When a matter is irrevocably settled one has to make the best of it; it was easier for me to behave politely in this case, which did not affect me personally, than when the intermediate rank had been granted to the bastards. I had not congratulated them then, nor shown them the slightest civility; on the present occasion I had made up my mind what to do.

As soon as the King sat down (he fixed his eyes very steadily on me as he did so), I went to M. du Maine's apartments, although it was rather an unusual hour for making calls. The doors flew open when my name was mentioned, and I found a man as delighted at my visit as he was astonished; lame as he was, he seemed rather to fly than to walk as he advanced to meet me. I told him that this time I came to congratulate him, and very sincerely; we did not pretend to any rivalry with the Princes of the Blood, all we had ever claimed was merely our just due,
namely, that no one should stand between the Princes and ourselves; and now that he, his brother and his sons, were made really Princes of the Blood, we could only rejoice over the disappearance of that intermediate rank, which, I must honestly confess, I had always found intolerable. M. du Maine's delight on being congratulated in this fashion is indescribable; I cannot repeat all he said to me, with the politeness, and even the deferential airs, which a clever man finds it easy to adopt in the moment of his triumph.

Next day I said the same thing to the Count de Toulouse; and to the Duchess of Orleans, who was much more delighted than her brothers, and, in imagination, saw them already wearing the Crown. Madame la Duchessee, who did not share her sister's opinions, but sided with the Princes of the Blood, seemed very grave and did not receive visitors. The Duke of Orleans was angry; but angry after his own fashion, and had little difficulty in concealing his feelings. Dukes and foreign Princes were mad with rage; but it was a dumb madness. There was more murmuring in the Court than could have been anticipated; Paris and the provinces were very outspoken; and members of the Parliament, as individuals, made no attempt to conceal their displeasure. Madame de Maintenon, delighted at the accomplishment of her work, received the humble congratulations of her familiars. She had not forgotten how the King had been on the point of revoking the rank given to M. du Maine's children, nor had M. du Maine himself. There was no longer any legitimate Prince from whom they had anything to fear, yet they did not feel easy in their minds; they never let the King out of their sight, and strove, by judiciously selected reports, to persuade him that what he had done met with general approbation. M. du Maine took care not to tell him of the gloomy, constrained air with which a servile Court brought him its forced congratulations. Madame du Maine, at Sceaux, triumphed over the public grief; she redoubled her festivities and amusements; accepted as valid the driest and curtest congratulations; and took no notice of the numbers of people who could not bring themselves to worship at her shrine in person. The deified bastards of the second generation made a very brief appearance at Marly. M. du Maine thought this much show of modesty
and reserve necessary to conciliate public opinion. He was not far wrong.

It is interesting to trace the elevation of the King’s bastards through its progressive stages, from the time when the Parliament of Paris was induced to ratify letters of legitimation in favour of the Chevalier de Longueville without the insertion of his mother’s name; and so established a precedent for the legitimation of the King’s children by Madame de Montespan, up to the culminating point when they were declared capable of succeeding to the Crown. Counting each separate honour conferred on these bastards from the time they were infants, we find no less than fifty-seven distinct stages in their elevation, of which perhaps the most important were the privileges granted to the children of M. du Maine and the Count de Toulouse as the King’s grandchildren, the word “natural” being omitted in the patent. When one considers how they emerged from the nonentity in the eye of the law, which is the natural condition of the issue of double adultery, and rose to the level of the Crown itself, one can almost believe the poetical story of how the Titans piled one mountain on another to enable them to scale the heavens; one is also reminded of the fate of Enceladus and Briareus, related by the same poets, as the appropriate punishment for such enterprises.

Kings may have it in their power to confound all ranks; to exalt one and pull down another; to lavish the highest honours till they degrade them; just as, in the end, they have claimed the right to appropriate the property of their subjects of all classes, and deprive men of their liberty by a stroke of the pen, at their own sweet will, or, rather, at that of their Ministers and favourites; but, if they have, it is owing in the first instance to the unbridled licence of their subjects. This it was which opened the career of ambition to Louis XIV, the career which he pursued without an obstacle to the very end of his reign; till at length, in face of his supreme authority, it had become a crime even to hint that there were such things as laws, rights, or privileges. A Sovereign grown old in the exercise of such boundless power forgets that his Crown is held in trust, and is not at his own disposal; that it has been handed down to him by his ancestors in direct succession, not by free bequest, but as to the heir of entail; that he
has no power to alter the succession, in which each male member of his family is interested; and that, if the legitimate line should become extinct, the right of choosing a King reverts to the nation at large; for, although the Crown has twice passed to another dynasty, the change was not effected simply by an edict, or by the arbitrary choice of the last monarch of his race. If it were otherwise, the King would be free to bequeath the Crown to any one he pleased, even to the exclusion of his own children.

Monstrous as this edict was, which conferred on the issue of double adultery the rank and status of Princes of the Blood, and declared them capable of succeeding to the Crown in the event of other branches of the Royal Family becoming extinct, it is impossible to suppose that Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine intended to stop there. Just as each step in the advancement of the bastards had been treated as a precedent, and an excuse for something more; so this edict was looked upon by them as a mere stepping-stone to the establishment of M. du Maine as heir to the Crown, next to the Dauphin and his posterity. The story of his rise from the beginning is merely one of violence, injustice, and abuse of power; but the decisive step was that which raised him from the condition of a nameless bastard, without position in the eye of the law, to the rank of Prince of the Blood Royal. The rest was simple; since the King claimed the right of disposing of the succession to the Crown as he pleased, and could manufacture Princes of the Blood with ink and sealing-wax, there seemed no reason why he should not select one of these Princes as his successor, to the exclusion of the remainder.

It was as "the King’s grandchildren" that honours had been conferred on M. du Maine’s children; they, with their father and uncle, were, in fact, the only descendants of the King, except the Dauphin and the Spanish branch; the Duke of Orleans, who had only one son, was merely his nephew, and had, moreover, been rendered odious to the nation by artfully disseminated calumnies; the Spanish branch had renounced all claim to the succession; the other Princes of the Blood were very distantly related to the King; they were descended from the paternal uncle of Henry IV, and could claim no ancestor nearer than St. Louis who had worn the Crown of France. How could their claim be put on a level with those of the King’s sons
and grandsons, when once it was admitted that the King could regulate the succession at his will? The King, however, did not live quite long enough for them to arrive at this great consummation of their ambition.

But, putting this scheme aside, and confining ourselves to the mere acknowledgement of their capability to succeed to the Crown, what are we to say of such an honour conferred on persons of birth so tainted that, up to the present, men, even in countries where most indulgence is shown to ordinary bastards, have always refused to admit them to the rights of citizenship? Can it be denied that, for such persons to seek it, is at once an offence against the Crown and a contemptuous insult offered to the whole nation, whose rights are thus trampled under foot? Does it not, in short, amount to the crime of High Treason, in the widest and most flagitious sense of the word? Sacred as the person of a King is by divine law; execrable as is the crime of attempting his life; and horrible as are the tortures which have been justly devised to deter villains from committing it, yet the kind of High Treason to which I have just alluded is even more dangerous. One is a crime directed against the life of the Lord's Anointed; but, horrible as it is (and may God's curse rest on him who attempts to extenuate it!) it nevertheless concerns the life of but a single individual; the other combines the overthrow of laws, which have co-existed with our monarchy for so many ages, with the utter destruction of a most sacred and important right, the inalienable prerogative of the entire nation. By this crime, our nation, once so free, which even in its modern state of degradation still retains the name, and some lingering traces, of freedom, is reduced to the condition of a nation of slaves; subject to an arbitrary despotism far beyond anything which Peter the Great ventured to impose upon Russia. Even the infamous designs of the League never went so far; the Leaguers did at least cover them with a veil of hypocrisy; if they tried to exclude Henry IV, it was under the pretext that he was a relapsed heretic, and they still respected the rights of the nation; having failed in their attempt to usurp the Crown, as direct male representatives of our second dynasty, the Guises were willing, at any rate, to go through the form of an election, and to receive the Crown from the hands of the nation itself.
In the present case the people were treated like abject slaves; a possible new line of Kings was appointed for them, without the slightest regard for their wishes, by the mere acts of signing and registering a patent. If it is admitted that the reigning Sovereign has such a prerogative, it becomes possible, from that time forth, to alter the line of succession, not merely in view of distant contingencies which may never arrive; but suddenly, to the prejudice of the rights of the whole Royal Family, including even the King's own sons. To what disorders might not such an arbitrary act lead! and what a menace it would be to the life, not only of any Prince who might be an obstacle to its fulfilment, but even of the Sovereign himself whose consent to it had been extorted, whether by violence or cajolery! What would be the fate of the kingdom during such disorders! and how readily our neighbours would take advantage of them! Do not these obvious considerations prove that a man who plots to make himself a Prince of the Blood, capable of succeeding to the Crown, is guilty of a crime blacker, more terrible, more far-reaching in its consequences, than that of ordinary high treason?

Let us for a moment cast our eyes back to a time not very far remote, and call to mind several things scattered about in these Memoirs. The King's affection for the offspring of his love, fostered as it was by the pernicious woman who had been their governess, and to whom he had given his heart; his haughty and jealous preference for the children of his person, dependent on him for everything, over his lawful descendants, who held a great and independent position, had not always led him to such extremes. We have seen that for a long time he tried to prevent his sons from marrying, telling them plainly that persons in their position ought not to leave issue. It was with the greatest difficulty, and by appealing to his conscientious scruples, that M. du Maine extracted permission to marry; and the Count de Toulouse, who was in all respects so far superior to his elder brother, was refused permission to marry Mademoiselle d'Armagnac, a person in every way a suitable match for him; and never ventured to marry at all during the King's life-time.

The curious scene in the King's private room, after his announcement of the honours conferred on M. du Maine's children, cannot have been forgotten; nor how nearly
those honours were revoked two days later. It would seem, at first sight, as if the King’s notions of what was right and proper had undergone a great change in a very short space of time. But, in reality, though he allowed this important edict to be extorted from him, his opinions were still unchanged. Even before it was registered in Parliament he could not refrain from telling M. du Maine, with a sigh, that he had done all in his power for them (that is, for himself, his brother, and his sons); but the more he had done, the more they had to fear; and, if they wished to retain the position in which he had placed them, they must strive to show themselves worthy of it; for whether they kept it or not would depend entirely on their own merits. He said this in the presence of a few courtiers and of the principal valets of the household; and it was immediately known to everybody. It was a tolerably clear revelation of what he was thinking, but refrained from saying.

An unpleasant impression was produced on the Court and society by the infamous servility of Marshal d’Huxelles, who came to thank the King for what he had done for the bastards, as if he had received a personal favour. He also gave them a great dinner on one of the days which they spent in Paris, while formally soliciting the support of members of the Parliament. He dared not, however, invite to it any Dukes or persons of distinction. He was fidgeting to be admitted to the Council, and in a fever to be made a Duke; but his mean flattery procured him neither one nor the other of these objects.

But there was another thing which gave me something to think about. On one of the two days thus spent at Paris M. du Maine and the Count de Toulouse dined in private with the President de Maisons. I do not understand how a clever man could imagine that such a thing could escape notice; he did think so, however; and with that object he invited no other guests. He was much put about when I alluded to it; however, I pretended not to notice his embarrassment, and received his excuses as valid, namely, that the two Princes were pressed for time to get through their visits, because they did not sleep at Paris, and did not know where to get a hasty meal; for they would not stop to dinner. This conduct on his part seemed to me very inconsistent with the outbursts of fury which I had wit-
napped so few days before. I could hardly believe that these two gentlemen, when at the very apogee of their glory, were reduced to such extremities as not to know where they could find refreshments; especially as they both had houses of their own in Paris. If Maisons had the honour of this private visit, it was because he had asked for it; I took care to impress this on the Duke of Orleans, to whom Maisons was always haranguing against the bastards. I always thought the explanation of the scene I had witnessed at his house was, that he knew I should report it to the Duke of Orleans.

The two brothers, without giving notice of the hour of their intended visits, called on every Duke and every magistrate who had a seat in the Grand Chamber. As all protesting voices had been stifled, and people dared not even sigh, it may be supposed that to refuse their invitation to attend in Parliament would have been an unpardonable crime, for which only the excuse of a real and notorious illness could be pleaded. Sunday, the 2nd of August, was the day fixed for the consummation of the measure which was possibly to give a crown to this new order of Princes of the Blood-Royal. M. le Duc, the Prince of Conti, and all the Peers who could attend, about twenty in number, were present. I was there; I witnessed the shudder which passed through the crowd when the two bastards appeared; and I heard the sort of stifled murmur which arose as they crossed the floor of the Chamber.

Hypocrisy was depicted on the countenance, and in the whole bearing, of M. du Maine; those of the Count de Toulouse, who followed him, were marked by modest shame. The elder brother, bending over his stick with studied humility, stopped at every step so that his bows to right and left might be the deeper; sometimes there was a marked pause before he raised himself again, and when he turned towards the side where I was sitting I really thought he was about to prostrate himself. His face, composed to an expression of mild gravity, seemed to say non sum dignus from the depths of his soul; but the joy which sparkled in his eyes, as he darted furtive glances over the assembly, gave the lie to this assumed humility. When he reached his place he again bowed repeatedly before sitting down; and it was delightful to watch him during and after the proceedings. The two Princes of the Blood
seemed to come in for the smallest share of his cringing bows; they were too young for him to trouble himself about their opinions.

The Count de Toulouse, with erect figure and impassive demeanour as usual, kept his eyes downcast, only raising them to look at the persons whom he saluted; his bows were neither so deep nor so numerous as those of his brother. It was easy to see that he disliked the whole business, and went through it against his will; when he reached his place he sat down in silence and remained motionless, paying hardly any attention to what was going on. On the other hand, it was evident that M. du Maine had great difficulty in keeping himself quiet. He was at leisure to enjoy, if so disposed, the sulky silence of the assembly, broken only by an occasional stifled murmur, and the disapproval strongly expressed in every face, except that of the First-President alone; who, for his part, was overjoyed, and indiscreet enough to show it.

When the proceedings were over the First-President gave a great dinner to these newly constituted heirs-presumptive to the Crown, at which Marshal d'Huxelles was present, and surpassed himself in servility; the other guests were a few hangers-on of these two gentlemen; some magistrates, hungry for promotion; d'Antin, but no other Duke or person of distinction; and a few présidents-à-mortier, among them Maisons, who had appeared very grave and reserved throughout the sitting. In the evening the two bastards returned to Marly.

END OF VOL. IV