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1903.

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MEMOIRS  
OF  
THE DUKE OF SULLY.

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Grandfather

THE  
M E M O I R S  
OF  
THE DUKE OF SULLY,  
PRIME-MINISTER TO  
HENRY THE GREAT.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY  
CHARLOTTE LENNOX.

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A NEW EDITION,  
REVISED AND CORRECTED; WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES, SOME  
LETTERS OF HENRY THE GREAT,  
AND  
A BRIEF HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

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EMBELLISHED WITH PORTRAITS.

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IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1810.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*IN presenting this new Edition of Mrs. Lennox's Translation of the Memoirs of Sully to the public, it is necessary to state in what respects it differs from those which have preceded it:—In the first place, the whole of the text has been carefully collated with the French, and such corrections made in it as were deemed justifiable, and such, the Editor is persuaded the ingenious Translator herself would have made on a careful revision of her Translation. Recourse has, next, been had to the original work composed under the direction of the Duke of Sully, entitled Mémoires ou Oeconomies royales d'Etat, domestiques, politiques, et militaires de Henry le Grand, par Maximilian de Bethune, Duc de Sully (from which the Mémoires de Sully were compiled in the middle of the last century by a M. l'Écluse); and wherever, on comparison, this original was found to be more clear and satisfactory in the narration of any particular event, it has been followed in preference to the modern work. The Editor was first induced to collate this very curious, and, in England, but little known book, with the modern Memoirs, by reading a tract published in France, soon after the appearance of the latter, intitled Observations on the new Form of the Memoirs travesty of the Duke of Sully,\* in which the compiler is accused, not without cause, of having garbled, and, in some cases, misrepresented, his original.*

\* Observations sur la nouvelle Forme des Mémoires travestis de M. le duc de Sully. It may be seen in the ninth volume of the French edition of Sully in 12°, 1778.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

*A few additional Notes have been added where they seemed necessary, either to correct or explain any passage in the text ; and in the last volume some Letters from Henry IV. to one of his mistresses. These are given for two reasons ; first, because they turn chiefly upon several occurrences noticed by Sully in his Memoirs ; and, secondly, because they tend still farther to illustrate the character of that great and extraordinary Prince, who amidst the toils and dangers of a most harassing and cruel warfare, seems to have given way to all the impulses of the tenderest of passions, and to have been as anxious to deserve and secure the affection of his mistress, as he was to defeat the plots of his enemies, and assert his right to the crown of France.*

*From the abrupt manner in which these Memoirs commence, the Editor has been induced to prefix a brief historical Introduction :—some apology is perhaps due for this performance ; but as it aims at nothing more than a detail of the leading events from the accession of Francis II. to the year 1570, he hopes it will be received as such ; he has endeavoured to render it as perspicuous as his narrow limits would allow ; and though it may not deserve the attention of readers deeply versed in the history of that period, yet he trusts it will be of some use to those who have not always leisure or opportunity to consult the original sources from whence it is drawn.*

*March 20th, 1810.*

TO THE

HIGH, PUISSANT, AND MOST NOBLE PRINCE,

THOMAS HOLLES-PELHAM,

DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, MARQUIS AND EARL OF CLARE,

VISCOUNT HAUGHTON, AND BARON PELHAM OF LAUGHTON,

AND BARONET, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

AUTHORS are often unfortunate in the choice of their Patrons: and Works are devoted with great solemnity, to the use of those who cannot use them, and the pleasure of those whom they cannot please.

That I have avoided this impropriety, in dedicating to your Grace these MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE OF SULLY, a whole Nation, whose affairs you have so long and so happily directed, will bear me witness; But then I can claim no praise from my own discernment; because I only echo the Voice of the People, and address myself, where that leads me.

Though my sex and manner of life make me a stranger to public affairs; I yet discover of myself, that the History I have translated, is not only interesting but important; and that the original author of it was not only well versed in all the prime operations of government, but

## DEDICATION.

that he saved a Nation, by bringing method and order into every branch of her revenues, and administering the whole with the most accurate economy.

A Book, thus filled with political wisdom, could be fitly offered only to him, who lays out his whole time and attention, in labours of the same tendency; and for the service of a more free, and therefore a nobler People.

That Providence may co-operate with your endeavours; and that your Grace may steer not only safely, but triumphantly, through every difficulty of the present conjuncture, are wishes so natural to all true Britons, that they cannot be thought improper even from a woman, and in this public manner. She is, with the profoundest respect,

MY LORD,

YOUR GRACE'S most obedient,

and most humble Servant,

CHARLOTTE LENNOX.

*London, Sept. 5, 1755.*



THE  
P R E F A C E  
TO THE  
F R E N C H E D I T I O N.

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As, in the judgment of good critics and lovers of literature, the MEMOIRS OF SULLY have been always ranked amongst our best books, I have no need to enter here into a disquisition which will be of little use to those who are acquainted with the work.

To give those an idea of these Memoirs who have never read them, it will be sufficient to observe, that they contain a history of whatever happened from the peace of 1570, to the first years of Lewis XIII. comprehending more than forty years of a period which has supplied the most copious subjects to the historians of France; and that they treat of the reign, or, to speak more properly, almost of the whole life, of Henry the Great. They presuppose, indeed, some knowledge of the foregoing commotions,\* which are only occasionally mentioned; but they display all the succeeding events with the utmost minuteness. These events are equally numerous and diversified; foreign and

\* These the Editor has endeavoured briefly to detail in the Introduction now prefixed to the Memoirs.

civil wars, interests of state and religion; master-strokes of policy; unexpected discoveries; struggles of ambition; stratagems of policy; embassies and negociations, are all to be found in this book, of which, however, they form but a part.

The Memoirs of Sully derive their value, perhaps their greatest value, from the innumerable recitals of a private kind, which scarcely belong to the province of history; this is the particular advantage of memoirs, they admit all subjects, however numerous, and all incidents however various, which one can desire to insert; and they are not subject to the burthen imposed upon history, of continuing the narrative through dry generalities, with which even the writer finds himself disgusted.

To obtain a complete knowledge of any prince, it is necessary that the picture of his private life be set to view, together with his public conduct; he must be shown with his courtiers and domestics, in those moments when he is little observed; his character must be fixed by his letters and conversation; the passions are better displayed by a single word, related as it was spoken, than by all the art which a historian can use. This idea of memoirs is quite answered by those of Sully; so that no man, till he has perused them, can have a just conception of Henry IV. They represent to us that great prince, in his good as well as his bad fortune; now as a private man, now as a king, as a warrior, or as a politician; and to come still lower, as a husband, father, or friend; and all told in so affecting a manner, that the reader cannot refrain from taking part in the most minute and indifferent incidents of his life: at most, I can only except some military recitals, which occur, perhaps, too often at the beginning of the work, and a small number of other

passages less pleasing ; though, on the other hand, these recitals are always connected with the public affairs, and diversified, like the rest, with the part which the duke of Sully bore in them.

The duke is as the second actor, and this double action makes no breach in the unity of interest, because this minister says almost nothing of himself which has not some relation to public affairs, or the person of his master. The reader will, doubtless, be pleased to know what judgment was formed of these Memoirs when they first appeared in the world, and I shall give him information from the author of an old discourse, to be found among the MSS.\* of the king's library: " One of the most beautiful  
" pictures of human prudence and fidelity," says he,  
" is to be found in the account left to the public, in  
" two volumes, by the duke of Sully, of the nature  
" of the advice he had given, and the services he  
" had done, to his king and benefactor, as well for  
" his particular and personal honour, as for the  
" prosperity of his kingdom. And, in truth, the for-  
" tune of Henry the Great, and the virtue of his  
" prime minister, are two things which appear alter-  
" nately, or, more properly, go hand in hand. The  
" minister, in this work, serves and obliges the king  
" in all the ways that a king can receive service or  
" obligation from a subject, with his hand, his  
" courage, his sword, and even with his blood, or  
" actions of bravery and adventure, but particularly  
" in his council and cabinet, with the greatest under-  
" standing, and most quick-sighted policy, the most  
" pure disinterestedness, and untainted sincerity,  
" that has ever been known to historians, either of  
" our own or other countries."

\* Vol. 9590.

It is natural, in the reign of a prince like Henry IV. to look for great generals, deep politicians, and skilful ministers; but we are surprised to find in one man, the warrior, the politician, the wise manager of business, the steady and unbending friend, as well as the close confidant and darling of his master. But what is more uncommon, is to see in a work where the actions of two such extraordinary persons are collected after their deaths, a great king forced to make a conquest of his own kingdom engaged with a minister in his way, not less great, in contriving means to make his undertakings successful; labouring afterwards, in concert with him, to make his kingdom not only peaceable but flourishing, regulating the revenue, laying the foundation of trade, methodizing the government, and, in short, recovering every part of the establishment from confusion.

In this work, therefore, are comprised two lives united together, and illustrating and adorning one another, the lives of a king and a minister, his confidant, nearly of the same age, carried on from the infancy of both to the death of the king, and to the retreat of the minister.

We may add that the Memoirs of Sully are yet farther valuable, by principles of excellent morality, by civil and political maxims derived from truth; by an infinite number of views, schemes, and regulations, of almost every kind, with which they are filled. The duke of Sully is said, by one of his cotemporaries, to have been the only man that ever discovered the means of uniting two things, which our fathers not only could not unite but considered in their own nature inconsistent, the increase of the king's revenue, and the relief of the people. He that would have an idea of a good subject and an

incorruptible minister, must look for it in this picture, where he will see economy in its full lustre, and policy in all its practice; the art of using and of gaining power; the science of reigning as a man; and of reigning as a king; the finest instructions and most forcible examples of morality are here exhausted, and the whole supported and adorned by a knowledge of every thing, from the highest arts to the lowest mechanic occupations.

However high this praise may seem, I do not find that the severest critics depart much from it; one need only consult the abbé Le-Laboureur, in his *Additions to the Memoirs of Castelnau*, vol. II. book ii. p. 687, father Le-Long, and a multitude of modern writers; for who is there that does not cite the *Memoirs of Sully* as the first political treatise that has shewn us the real power of this kingdom, and in which are contained the seeds of whatever has been done by Richelieu, Mazarine, and Colbert; and in which is opened the best school for the art of government?

I will now quit this consideration for another, which I neither can nor ought to conceal; namely, that the pleasure which so valuable a book affords, is attended with a degree of fatigue which makes this ornament of libraries useless to the greater part of readers. This is to be imputed to want of method and defects of style: the subjects lie in the greatest confusion; those who have compiled them propose to entertain us with particular recitals of military, political, and domestic affairs; but they neither know how to keep them apart, nor to join them properly: a fact is cleared up, or a narrative continued, at the distance, sometimes, of an hundred pages; from the beginning of the first volume, one must often jump to the end of the second; the letters of

Henry, which ought to be regularly inserted in the narration, are bundled up together and put by themselves, or introduced where they only break the thread of the discourse, to which, very often, they have no relation: the maxims of law and government are driven off to a distant page, where it is often difficult to meet with them; they have the appearance of an independent note; and one might have known, that the compilers were mere men of business, though they had not told it.

As to the diction, it is not going too far to say, that it has every fault which diction can admit; it is too much diffused, obscured frequently by the enormous protraction of the sentences, and frequently by the impropriety of the words, which are sometimes creeping and low, and at others ridiculously inflated.

These two general reflections on the Memoirs of Sully, one would have imagined, might have induced some of our best writers to make them as agreeable as they are interesting and useful; the more so, as their excellence arises from the subject, while their defects consist only in the form in which they are presented. It is allowed on all hands, that they must be excepted from the number of those old books which cannot be altered without being spoiled; but the danger of giving offence to the nicety of critics has hitherto driven away all thoughts of such an undertaking: and I confess that I could never have engaged in it, had I not been urged on by that fondness for the original, which brings the passions as well as the genius into a work, and makes us blind to all the obstacles that may oppose us; for, to accommodate such a work as this to the present taste, a man must preserve at once the fidelity of a translator, and the liberty of a compiler: he must

carefully preserve the sense of his author, though he must abridge, transpose, and methodise his work.

An emendation, merely grammatical, which should reach no farther than to change those expressions, which are confessedly bad, and to retrench those that are apparently superfluous, would have been short of the reformation which the style requires; and, if nothing had been attempted but to bring the scattered parts of the story together, and methodise those things that are out of order, to free the book from the inconvenience of confusion, even this must have ended in the destruction of the text. I have tried every method that I could invent to avoid the necessity of taking the work wholly to pieces, and moulding it anew; but I saw, at last, that no other way would answer my intention: I was convinced that a style so faulty as that of these Memoirs, was far from deserving to be treated with the same respect as that of Comines, Montagne, and Amyot: that the mere general alterations, which are confessedly necessary, would change it so much from its original state, that to make it yet more different, was no great matter: and that these alterations, producing a necessity of connections and transitions which would naturally be of a different cast of language from the rest, many patches of new style appearing in those pages of antiquity, would have produced a disagreeable contrast: and that the original must not only be cleared from a great number of odd expressions, but of unnatural and unusual ideas, which appear even in the ridiculous singularity of the very title, *Oeconomies Royales, et Servitudes Loyales*: that such liberties as I have taken were necessary, in order to arrive at a just chronology and arrangement of matter: and that this liberty was consistent enough

with the obligation of preserving the sense of the original, and suffering the Memoirs of Sully to lose nothing by being put into a new language.

In the first place, I found it indispensably necessary to change the formal language of secretaries, who know nothing but to praise and flatter. What can be more tedious than to see them, at every line addressing their master to put him in mind of something that has already happened, and to confess that he understands the business better than themselves? This perpetual address makes the book little more than a long dedication; and yet this could not have been corrected without giving the work a new form.

I must add, that the historical narrative, which allows only the third person to be used, could not take place here, as I immediately found, when I endeavoured to apply it: for the Memoirs of Sully as I have already said, instead of one principal actor, present us with two, whose parts are constantly intermingled in the recital, or who almost always make their appearance together, either talking between themselves or with other persons. The pronouns *he* and *him*, which in other histories supply so conveniently the place of proper names, must, in a book like this, have been applied sometimes to one, sometimes to another, which would have produced an obscurity only to be avoided, by repetitions and circumlocutions equally inconvenient. If, to rid ourselves of this difficulty, which will be generally perceived, this book had been entitled Memoirs to contribute to a History of Henry IV. and the relation had been confined to the actions of that prince, this had at once cut off half the Memoirs, and perhaps that half which can least be spared; for the life and actions of Henry the Great are every where to be found; but those of the duke of Sully can be read



no where else : and it had been still less proper to have mentioned only the actions of the minister.

There remained therefore only one plan to pursue, that of making Sully tell his own story. I yielded with less reluctance to this necessity, as I found it likely to be the source of new pleasure ; for nothing is more proper to throw over a work those interesting passages, which put the heart into emotion, than to introduce the principal actor in a complicated affair, entertaining you with an account of the part which he acted ; and what an actor would he appear if one could attain to make him speak as such a minister, so favoured by his master, and so respected by all ranks of the community, might be supposed to speak at the present time.

This motive alone might prevail upon the public to grant me the indulgence which I require, for the only real liberty I have taken, if it should be found that I have in other respects, discharged the duty which this license made indispensable : but, as I cannot assume so much to myself, I shall found my defence upon a matter of fact ; which is, that, in reality, the duke of Sully himself is the true author of the Memoirs which bear his name ; since the original pieces are his own, and his secretaries did nothing more than tack them together. This is easily perceived in several places, where the pen of the minister being withheld, either by promise of secrecy or some consideration equally strong, you see the reader's expectation disappointed with regard to facts of which the secretaries themselves had apparently not the least knowledge. This is therefore no robbery, but an honest restitution, which I make to their master of his own works. In attestation of this, I can produce all our writers, who shew evidently when they quote the Memoirs of Sully, that they

consider them as the work of that great man, and depend upon his authority. The single doubt of Vittorio Siri\* is of no weight against so much evidence.

This critical disquisition I do not think of sufficient importance or amusement, to require that I should transcribe whole pages to establish this truth by exhibiting the words of Henry, Sully, or the secretaries themselves: he that thinks it worth his while, may consult the places marked in the margin;† I shall here offer only a conjecture, which I submit to the discernment of my reader.

The Memoirs of Sully were formed first upon the observations which M. de Rosny began, from his earliest youth, to make upon the events of his times, as well those that related to the public, as those that affected his master and himself. To these were added, in the next place, the observations which he set down at the entreaty of this prince, who soon began to distinguish a man of his character. M. de Rosny had plainly no intention to write a connected narrative, much less a formal history, but only a collection of pieces upon several events of his time, which he improved with his own reflections on government.‡ The term *Journal*, which is sometimes used, is not to be taken in the strictest sense: accounts consisting of pieces thus independent, were not things absolutely new in his time. It is not unlikely that he considered himself as collecting materials for more regular memoirs, which he afterwards thought fit to communicate to the public, under the name of his secretaries, rather than his own.

\* Mem. Rec. Vol. I. p. 29.

† Epit. des 1 et 3 Tom. Tom. II. p. 407, 409, 410, 434, 435, 440, 448. Tom. III. p. 82, 83, 294, 385, &c. Tom. II. p. 410.

‡ Tom. II. p. 448. Tom. III. p. 83, 385.

These registers,\* of which there has been already mention, were put into the hands of four of his secretaries, two of whom composed at first the two former volumes, such as they now appear; the two other secretaries, (those who were taken into the service of Sully at the time of his retreat,) were busy, at the same time, upon the first of his two following volumes, which comprises a space of five years, from 1605 to the death of Henry IV. and conceiving their labour incomplete, unless they should produce two volumes as well as their fellows, they fell to tumbling over all their master's papers, and at last attained their purpose. But notice must be taken, that they are not to be believed too easily with respect to the place where these Memoirs are said to be printed; for they had an interest in imposing upon the public, by making it be believed that these Memoirs were not printed in France.† Guy-Patin, father Le-Long, the abbé Lenglet, and several others, are confident that the two first volumes were printed at the castle of Sully; and for the two last, it is a known fact that their first appearance was in an edition printed at Paris in 1662, by the care of the abbé Le Laboureur.

In the Memoirs of Mademoiselle mention is made of letters, and a great number of other original pieces, which the count de Bethune kept with great care, and shewed as a curiosity to those that came to see him. Of these, part, at least, may be thought the minutes of the duke of Sully. But since none of these pieces are found in the vast collection of manuscripts presented by the count de Bethune, in 1664, to the late king, we may conclude that, after

\* Epit. Limin du Tom. III. Tom. II. p. 410.

† Epit. Limin. *ibid.*

the publication of these Memoirs, those minutes were destroyed as of no farther use; but, for my part, I make so little reckoning of the works of the compilers, that I could wish to have only the originals as they had them; for what they have given us of their own makes no essential addition, nor has any consequence but that of concealing the true work of Sully, which, in many places, cannot be distinguished or disintangled from theirs; for they did not content themselves with arranging their pieces according to the order of time, which was the best thing they were capable of doing.

I know not whether there is not even room to suspect them of having suppressed some pieces of considerable importance. One may safely charge them, at least, with having destroyed *The Treatise of War, The Marshal de Camp, The Military and Political Instructions*, and some other works of the duke of Sully, which have certainly been once in existence. They have been sought for in vain in the closet of the present duke of Sully,\* notwithstanding the pains which he, who is so well known for his love of literature and antiquities, has taken to recover monuments which can contribute so much to the honour of his family. He has little more than some accounts and memoirs relating to the different employments of Maximilian duke of Sully, of which the substance is found in this book. The only manuscripts that raise much curiosity, are, the original copy of the first volume of the Memoirs of Sully from which the impression was certainly taken; and the two last volumes of a kind of heroic romance, of which the two first have been lost. These adventures, or allegorical histories of that age, are entituled

\* Louis Pierre-Maximilian de Bethune.

*Gelastide, ou les Illustres Princesses et belliqueuses Pucelles du puissant Empire de la grande Sclarame Dolosomorie, les Starazones diamantées, Percy de Rubicelle, et Pyrope*; titles as singular as that of the *Memoirs of Sully*, and which shew that they are drawn up by the same hand.

It is possible that the loss of these originals is to be imputed to Sully himself, since his secretaries acted not only under his orders, but under his own eyes.\* In that case we shall be forced to confess, that a little vanity, from which this minister was not free, kept him from suffering his *Memoirs* to appear in his own name: he perceived that he could not forbear to give himself the honour of the brightest part of the reign of Henry IV. and, not caring either to praise himself or to lose the praise he had deserved, he determined to have that said by others which he could not modestly say himself.

He is charged with another fault proceeding equally from vanity, but which, if we examine it well, may appear very pardonable; it is the freedom with which he acts and speaks. Let us hear, on this head, our old dissertator. “That stiff and haughty  
“humour,” says he, “which so often obliges his  
“prince to speak first, and to open himself to him.  
“if it had been softened and made more easy, would  
“have been perhaps more perfect, and more deserv-  
“ing of imitation; but, if the original was as it is  
“represented, and nature had formed it of this cast,  
“it ought not to be flattered or disguised: if this  
“gravity and general circumspection, which his  
“enemies mention as a reproach to his memory, was  
“the very quality which gave so much value to his  
“ministry and his credit, we ought not to regret it

\* Tom III. p. 83 and 294.

“ in him as a blot, or condemn it as a defect.” And indeed, if a minister is of known honesty, and unsuspected of any bad design, why should he, in speaking to his master, or transacting business with him, recede from the privilege of following the severe dictates of truth? Without this liberty the condition of private men would be much happier than that of princes: but we may sufficiently prove, that Sully deserves no reproach of this kind, by observing that he never received any from his master, who not only allowed, but loved and praised his freedom of speech. Whatever may be said, for instance, of the famous promise of marriage which Sully tore in pieces in the hands of Henry, I see nothing in that affair which does not deserve admiration, and there is no fear that it shall be drawn into precedent.

The necessity of being beforehand with the reader for my own sake, has given occasion to these two remarks. I have considered it as indecent in Sully to relate all that happened of this kind with Henry IV. and as to personal commendations, I cut off what was uttered by secretaries, and could never have been said by him, and keep all that he has said or suffered others to say to him, that was for his own honour, or for that of the family of Bethune. In like manner I let all stand which the same vanity joined with his religious prejudices, disposed him to advance with relation to the greatest families; such as the house of Austria, among others, or concerning private persons, to whom he has not always done justice; such as the dukes of Nevers and Epernon, messieurs de Villeroi, Jeannin, and the cardinal d'Ossat, and others, amongst the Roman Catholics; and the dukes of Rohan, Bouillon, and La-Tremouille, Du-Plessis-Mornay; and to conclude, with respect to a society deserving esteem,

for purity of manners, and the service it has done the public, by the education of youth, and the advancement of polite literature.

If I stop at this head, it is only to show how much I detest every species of prejudice; as for the rest, I know well enough that I shall never be called to account about it; it was my duty to preserve the ground-work of the original inviolate; and as that original, (which I am far from supposing that my work will destroy,) must always remain in its true state, it would appear against me, if I had dared to alter it, and furnish an accusation against me, of dishonesty and flattery. All that I have been able to do, and I protest I have done it only out of regard to justice, is to shew my dislike by frequent corrections, from which alone the public is to judge of my real sentiments.

It appears indeed to me, that a single word is sufficient to put an end to the greatest part of the imputations thrown upon the Jesuits and other good Catholics by the duke of Sully; we must consider that they acted upon one principle, and that he judged of their actions upon another. It may be added, that in the circumstances under which these things took place, it was difficult to pass a right judgment upon the measures of the different parties: at present, when time has thrown new light upon their causes, motives, and means, we, who are neither carried away by the heat of action, nor overpowered by fear, hope, or desire, have, with respect to the subject on which we are treating, two opinions almost opposite; we detest the league, and have great reason to detest it; but, on the other hand, we judge, and with probability, that, without the league France was in danger of suffering the greatest

of all evils, the loss of the true religion. If the Villerois, the d'Ossats, and others, stand in need of defence, this is the principle upon which they must be defended.

A motive of the same kind determined me likewise to write notes upon passages where Sully speaks unfavourably of the Spaniards, the English, and other neighbouring states. I am as far from applauding his prejudices as espousing his quarrels. To see nothing in other nations worthy of praise, is to be blind ; to see it, and not own it, is to be weak.

Another article, which appears to me of yet greater importance than all these, is the liberty with which the author sometimes discovers his particular principles, with respect to the very substance of religion. At first it was natural to imagine, that a man full of knowledge, reflection, and of good qualities, must have been very dangerous when he was led to speak of the reformed religion, to which it is well known, the duke of Sully always remained a firm adherent ; and such was my idea ; but the first perusal of his Memoirs altered my opinion. I will quote, upon this occasion, for the last time, the writer whose testimony I have so often made use of, to shew that these Memoirs cannot make, at this time, those impressions which they were unable to make when they were new “ It is not,” says the “ author, upon account of his religious opinions, “ that he is to be considered as a model, or as an “ original ; we are to look into these Memoirs for a “ general, a master-general of the ordnance, a super- “ intendant of the finances, and a minister of an “ universal genius, concurring in all the schemes of “ his prince ; but you are not here to expect a “ picture of a Christian, and much less of a Catholic.



“ — These books,” says the same writer, in another place, “ do not shew him properly pious or religious “ because they do not shew him a Catholic.”

The author might have added another reason of yet greater force, which is, that when Sully represents himself either as a Huguenot or Catholic, that man, whose reasonings upon almost every other subject is solid and conclusive, appears so wretched as a divine, that the mere comparison of his writings with themselves is sufficient to confute him ; besides, how many confessions are drawn from him by the force of truth ? how much does he say against the mad determination of some Protestant synods, against the intrigues and bad designs of the chief of that party ; against the mutinous and seditious temper of the whole body ? It is something so singular, to see the duke of Sully by turns a Calvinist, and an enemy to Calvinists, that I thought it necessary to preserve whatever he has said on the subject of religion, lest, what I had suppressed had been thought of more importance than it really is. But I thought it necessary to be likewise liberal of my notes, in opposition to those passages,\* and perhaps under the notion, that I could never be careful enough of weak minds, I may, without thinking of it, have shewn some regard to my first scruples.

The notes have been considerably multiplied from another consideration. As I was desirous to make this work more clear and complete, I have shewn the same regard to things of mere entertainment as for those of necessity. I could not prevail upon myself to skip over a fact obscurely or but

\* Mrs. Lennox, in her translation, has judiciously omitted several of these ; they prove the author to have been a most intolerant bigot, and must have even been offensive, I think, to every liberal-minded Roman Catholic.

slightly touched, without clearing it up and explaining it. In one place, therefore, will be found a passage of pure amusement producing another of the same kind; in another place, a person of note is mentioned only by his name, and I have thought it necessary to add his christian or surname, his dignities or employments, and sometimes the year of his birth or his death. There are notes likewise, in which I have endeavoured to rectify false calculations and mistaken dates, and to adjust the valuation of coins; and on all these occasions, I have endeavoured to copy only from our best writers, and to draw immediately from the fountain-head: thus the *Memoirs of the League, d'Etoile and de Nevers*; *les Chronologies Novenaire et Septenaire of Cayet* and the *Mercure François*; *messieurs de Thou, Perefixe, Matthieu, Davila, Le-Grain, d'Aubigné*; the manuscripts of the king's library, the *Letters of the Cardinal d'Ossat*,\* &c. are my vouchers for facts; and for all the rest, my credit depends upon the books which have furnished the assistance that I happened to want. I have commonly contented myself with giving their words upon the subject before me, without entering into any disquisitions, except when contrariety of opinions seemed to require it. But notwithstanding this precaution, the margin of the five or six first books are somewhat crowded; nor was it in my power to do otherwise, the first years of Henry IV. affording a prodigious number of facts of every sort, which Sully has only hinted at, or mentioned very slightly.

To these might very properly have been added, notes upon politics, war, the finances, government,

\* For these letters I consulted the old folio edition, as also the old edition of L'Etoile's *Memoirs*.

and naval affairs; and I could not but, in compliance with my inclination, scatter a few upon the last books particularly, of which the subject made them often useful, and sometimes absolutely necessary.

As to maxims and reflections, the only use that could properly have been made of them, was to scatter them here and there in the places where they have relation. With respect to another part of this work, I have taken a contrary method; I have brought together all that was said in different places upon the great and famous design of Henry IV. which seems often to break the narration in an unpleasant manner; and finding no place where a recital of so many particulars could be inserted, I made a book of it by itself. I may be suspected upon these last heads, of having made great additions to my original; but let the reader suspend his judgment till he has read it from beginning to end. I am well aware, that the necessity of arranging these materials in a different order, has given this work a kind of original air, which distinguishes it from common translations, without giving it the rank of a work of invention. There are many other places where it will be seen, that if I had thought myself entitled to an absolute authority over my original I should often have given it another cast. As to references, it was not possible to put them all in the margin, and they would have only tired the reader.

The letters, which are scattered here and there, I could only make useful, by casting them into a narrative, and joining them with the fact to which they relate: by this means, I have contrived to diversify my history, and have made the letters more useful than they were before. It is common for those who write on things talked of by them before, to mention them imperfectly; these omissions I

commonly supply by a note, when the matter is such as can be discovered, or deserves explanation ; for of this prodigious number of letters, either of the king's or Sully's, the greater part contain only particulars of small importance : all these I consider as useless, and retrench them either wholly or in part ; and I take the same course with the recitals that are too long, with trifling remarks, with diffuse memorials and regulations of the finances, drawn out in particularities : but when I find letters, conversations, or other pieces, truly original, I copy them faithfully, except when I meet with a word that would offend the ear, I change it for another : this I intend for the gratification of those readers who would complain, if in these ancient memoirs, the personages who are introduced should talk always like men of our own time, and judge of the pleasure they must receive from the singularity of the ancient language, by that which it gives to myself.

I have followed the usual method of dividing a historical work into books, rather than into chapters ; there are here thirty books, reckoning the account of Henry's great project as one of them. Some were of opinion, that this project, having never been executed, might have been omitted ; but it seemed to me to make so considerable a part of Sully's Memoirs, that the public were likely to be offended with its suppression.

I thought it not for my purpose to proceed farther than the retreat of Sully, in which I have ventured to differ from my original : but besides, that, according to my scheme, I saw no use to be made of the pieces which had no relation either to Sully or Henry IV. I thought, judging of these pieces critically, that they did not deserve much attention

from mankind. I find nothing in the fourth volume which can truly be called the work of the duke of Sully, more than what he says of the new court, of the council, and of himself, till his departure from Paris; together with the regulations that he had formed for different purposes, and the evidence he gives of the great design of Henry IV. As to the furious invective against Villeroy, and the other pieces belonging to the reign of Lewis XIII. and, in a word, whatever is contained in the two hundred last pages of the fourth volume, the whole is apparently of another hand; so immethodical, so unconnected, and at the same time so trifling and so dull, that I could look upon it only as a thing compiled by one of his secretaries, without judgment, and for this only purpose, as themselves confess, that the last volume might be as large as the former;\* all this is to be ranked with the panegyrics, sonnets, and other pieces, both in French and Latin; which the reader, if such things happen to please him, may look for in the original.

As we cannot learn from these Memoirs what became of the duke of Sully from his retreat to his death, and as the reader may be curious about him, I have given a supplement. Nothing of the lives of great men should be lost or neglected: this supplement is more full and interesting than I at first could promise myself, by means of the information with which the duke of Sully has been pleased to supply me.

I make use, as I have already said, of the edition in folio; it is properly in four volumes, though in some libraries it is bound in two: the first and second of these volumes were printed at Amsterdam,

\* Epît. Limin. du Tom. III.

that is to say, at Sully, without the date of the year or the name of the printer, for that which appears at its head is counterfeit: this is commonly called the green-letter edition, on account of its VVV, and its vignette, coloured with green. The third and fourth volume, printed at Paris, by permission, by Augustine Courbé, in 1662; this edition is incorrect, but some of the others are mutilated, which is worse. I shall here enumerate the subsequent editions; the two first volumes were reprinted at Rouen 1649, in two volumes in folio; in a smaller letter, at Amsterdam, 1654, in four volumes 12°; at Paris, 1664, by Courbé, in two volumes in folio. The third and fourth volumes were reprinted at Paris, 1665, in eight volumes 12°; and at the same time at Rouen, in seven volumes 12°. The last edition is that of Trevoux, in 1725, in twelve volumes 12°.

What I have here to add is to assure the public, that I respect it too much to expose myself to its censure, by any faults that labour and attention could enable me to avoid; and as for any others, as they may serve, if not to correct my work, at least to mend myself for the future, I am so far from endeavouring to obviate them, that I entreat the world not to spare them; they shall never find me claiming the indulgence naturally due to the first attempt, nor do I plead my situation in excuse; though my situation was so little propitious to this kind of labour, that I should have seen myself obliged to throw it up, had I not been assisted by persons whose generosity was equal to their zeal for the advancement of learning. This confession is due to truth. I should likewise be guilty of extreme ingratitude, if I omitted to make it known,

that a man of genius and candour, who had been intimately acquainted with the two late dukes of Sully, not only gave me the first notion of this work, but assisted me likewise to form the plan, and promoted the execution by all the means which his friendship or generosity could dictate.

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**ERRATA.**

P. L.

34, 6, note, *for Eleventh read Ninth.*

144, 16, *for Fontenoy read Fontenai.*

254, 17, *for it read in.*

279, 18, *for duke read prince.*

386, 6, *for Champs read Chalons.*

## BOOK IV.

1590 to 1592.

I. A mutiny in Henry's army after the battle of Ivry; dissipation of the finances, and other causes of the little advantages he derived from his victory. Cities taken; fruitless attempts on others.—II. The taking of the suburbs of Paris; siege of that city; the causes which obliged Henry to raise it; the prince of Parma leads an army thither: his encampment, and other military details; an error committed by Henry: he obliges the prince of Parma to retire: the siege of Chartres; an adventure wherein Rosny is in danger of being killed: he retires to Rosny in discontent. Success of Henry the Fourth's arms; the taking of Corbie, Noyon, &c.; an enterprize upon Mante. The duke of Montpensier's expeditions in Normandy.—III. Preparations for the siege of Rouen; conduct of the siege; mutual animosities between the soldiers and officers of Henry's army. The prince of Parma re-enters France. Insolence of the council of sixteen. Henry advances to meet the prince of Parma. An enterprize badly seconded by the duke of Nevers. The battle of Amale.—IV. Henry raises the siege of Rouen: movements of the two hostile armies, in the neighbourhood of that city. Observations upon them. A glorious exploit of the prince of Parma at the passage of the Seine; Henry's army refuses to pursue him; causes of this refusal.

I. **T**HE same day that the king gained the battle of Ivry, his party also prevailed in Auvergne, \* where Randan † commanded the troops of the league; but fortune, as it should seem, when she gave this prince success sufficient to put him in possession of many crowns, took pleasure, at the same time, in producing circumstances which hindered the effect, and

\* At Issoire. See an account of it in Cayet, *ibid.* 329. De Thou, &c.

† John Lewis de la Rochefoucault, count of Randan.



left him no other fruit of his victories than the sole glory of having conquered. After the battle of Ivry, the terror and consternation of the whole party of the league were so great, that it seemed hardly possible for the king, who was now resolved to let slip none of his advantages, to have failed of drawing most important ones from the present posture of his affairs; but he little expected to see them ravished from him by a general mutiny in his army, particularly of the Swiss, who refused to advance a step farther, till they were paid those sums the king owed them.

At this time Henry had neither money nor means in readiness to raise any. He came to Mante, to demand some of the superintendant of the finances: this man, who secretly hated the king, and beheld his success with grief, took pleasure in adding to his perplexities, and had but one answer to make to all his solicitations. In this period of confusion, when the royal treasure became a prey to the first possessor, it was very difficult to manage the finances, and the king's revenues were scarcely sufficient to satisfy the avarice of the receivers, who generally enrich themselves by the public misery. Henry wanted that absolute authority, which alone was able to check them, and still more the means of convicting them of peculation; for he had not then the slightest knowledge of financial affairs. Notwithstanding this, he entered into a detail which became necessary for him, and obliged d'O \* to deliver up certain sums, which it was not difficult to prove he

\* Francis d'O, lord d'O, de Maillebois, and de Fresne, master of the wardrobe to Henry III. first gentleman of the chamber, superintendant of the finances, governor of Paris, and isle of France. He will be mentioned hereafter.

had received. These sums the king made use of to pacify his soldiers; but this affair took up at least five days, during which he could not leave Mante, and consequently could derive no advantage from his victory. I remember to have heard this prince declare, that he now, for the first time in his whole life, saw himself in a situation to convert his desires into designs: "I have often had desires," said he, "but never yet have found a fit opportunity to form designs." He gave the same meaning to this last expression that all wise men ought to give; a scheme, the success of which is secured by reflection and prudence: in this sense, it is true that every one can desire what to him seems advantageous, without injuring any one; but fools only rashly engage in designs, without any appearance of succeeding in them.

During the king's stay at Mante, d'Andelot went to him to complain of me, and he gave himself the trouble to come to Rosny, that he might hear us both. D'Andelot was there generally condemned, and the raillery his ridiculous claim drew upon him from the principal officers, made such an impression on his mind, that he went over to the party of the league. I did not think the same justice was done me with regard to the government of Mante, the taking of which was almost the only consequence of the battle of Ivry. The king, of whom I requested this post, bestowed it on a Catholic,\* at which I could not refrain from expressing my discontent. I confess, to my shame, that if I had seriously considered the situation the king was then in, every moment upon the point of being abandoned by the foreigners for want of payment, and those Catholics who were in

\* The government of it was given to M. de Rosny's youngest brother.

his service ready to seize the slightest occasion of discontent, for a pretence to quit him, I should not have murmured, that he granted to a Catholic, who had but little affection to his person, what he refused to a faithful servant. There was more greatness of mind in being satisfied with the friendship of this prince, independant of its effects, than in receiving favours, which he was obliged to grant through policy, and the necessity of the times.

All obstacles being removed, the king advanced with his troops, took Dreux, and marched towards Sens, which he expected would surrender through a correspondence he held within the city; but in this he was disappointed, and, unwilling to come so far in vain, and being besides informed that the place was destitute of ammunition, he undertook the siege of it. It was not long before he found himself, through the malice of his secret enemies, in a general want of all things necessary to complete this enterprize, and he was therefore obliged to abandon it. To efface the shame of it, he gave out, that he only raised the siege, in order to go and invest Paris itself, and he took his route thither by Corbeil, Meulan, Lagny, and St. Denis, \* which he seized in his way.

II. I WAS not at any of these sieges; and my wounds were only half cured when I learnt that the king had invested Paris. I could not resist the desire I had to be present at this enterprize; I therefore set out, though with my arm in a scarf, and supported by two crutches. The king, forgetting all my complaints respecting Mante, received me with his usual goodness, and ordered me to stay near his person: he communicated to me the design he had formed upon Paris, all the suburbs of which he was resolved

\* Cities of the isle of France.

to make himself master of at the same time, in order to deprive the city of the subsistence it drew from them, such as fruit, vegetables, &c. He chose a very dark night to begin the attack, in order that he might have a better view of the effect of the artillery: he divided his army into ten divisions, which he ordered to carry the suburbs of St. Antoine, St. Martin, St. Denis, Montmartre, St. Honoré, St. Germain, St. Michael, St. Jacques, St. Marceau, and St. Victoire, after which he withdrew to the abbey of Montmartre, whither he was followed by all the aged, the wounded, and the gentlemen of the robe and pen; he took his station at one of the windows of the abbey, where he ordered a chair to be brought for me, and conversed with M. du Plessis, Rusé, M. de Fresne, and, I believe, M. Alibour,\* and myself. The cannonade began about midnight, and continued for upwards of two hours, and with such regularity and effect, that the whole of the city and the suburbs seemed to be in flames: could it have been possible to represent the scene which this night presented; the noise of the combatants, the roar of the cannon and musquetry, and the flashes of fire which appeared at intervals, nothing would have been more awful. The king's plan succeeded so well, that all the suburbs were carried nearly at the same instant, and the gates of the town so closely blockaded, that nothing could either go out or enter, which occasioned the greatest distress and misery amongst the wretched inhabitants:† but I leave the recital of

\* Du-Plessis Mornay.—Martin Rusé, lord of Beaulieu, and Peter Forget, lord of Fresne, his majesty's secretaries.—Alibour, his physician.

† Perefixe, Cayet, and many others are of opinion, that the king was withheld from taking Paris by storm, and from yielding to the repeated entreaties of his soldiers, particularly the Huguenots, by

these melancholy events to the historian, and shall only add here, that if the king had been faithfully his having perceived, that on this occasion they were resolved to revenge the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by putting all within Paris to the sword. “The duke of Nemours,” says Perefixe, “sent all the useless mouths out of Paris: the king’s council opposed his granting them a passage; but he being informed of the dreadful scarcity to which these miserable wretches were reduced, ordered that they should be allowed to pass. ‘I am not surprised,’ said he, ‘that the Spaniards, and the chiefs of the league, have no compassion upon these poor people, they are only tyrants; but for me, who am their father and their king, I cannot hear the recital of their calamities, without being pierced to my inmost soul, and ardently desiring to afford them relief.’” Perefixe, part 2d. The cardinal de Gondy, bishop of Paris, having been sent during this siege, to make Henry propositions for peace: “I will not dissemble,” said he, “but declare my sentiments to you freely: I wish for peace, nay I desire it; for a battle I would lose one finger, and for a general peace two. I love my city of Paris, she is my eldest daughter, I am jealous of her, I am desirous of doing her service, and would grant her more favours than she demands of me; but I would grant them voluntarily, and not be compelled to it by the king of Spain or the duke of Maienne.” It must be added, that Henry IV. expected the Parisians would capitulate before the prince of Parma’s arrival. The extremity to which the city was reduced, raised at once compassion and horror: in the space of a month, 30,000 persons died of hunger: mothers fed upon the flesh of their children: by the Spanish ambassador’s advice, they dug up the dead bodies, and made use of their bones pounded, to compose a kind of dough. This detestable food cost the greatest part of those who eat of it their lives. See a relation of this in the historians, particularly in the second volume of Villeroy’s *Memoirs of State*, p. 358, &c. Read also the fine verses of the *Henriade* upon this subject, Canto X. The Parisians owed their safety chiefly to the duke of Nemours, whose gallant defence has been highly praised by our writers. The people seconded him with an obstinate eagerness, which had more of fury than true courage in it. There was a regiment of priests and monks, Capuchins, Folietanis, Carthusians, &c. grotesquely armed above their frocks. This awkward regiment being eager to salute the legate, killed his secretary at his side. The monks of St Genevieve, St. Victor, the Benedictins, the Celestins, and some others, would take no part in this military masquerade. Cayet’s *Ch. Novenn.* ib. 360.

obeyed, and the greater part of the officers and other persons in authority, had not allowed the entry of provisions, in exchange for scarfs, plumes, silk-stockings, gloves, sashes, beavers, and similar articles of dress, the city could not possibly have held out till succoured by the prince of Parma,\* whose arrival compelled the king to raise the siege, in the hope, as he said, of giving him battle.† Accordingly, in the beginning of the month of September, 1590, he withdrew his troops in the greatest order and regularity about two hours before day-break, and then appointed a place of general rendezvous, to which he repaired, intending to act according to circumstances. Learning soon after that the prince of Parma had encamped in the environs of Meaux, Henry sent his light cavalry to Claye,‡ with orders to reconnoitre, and take up a position, or at least to learn the disposition of the enemy's army: in doing this several sharp skirmishes took place, which I shall not particularise, as I was not present at any of them: our troops, however, abandoned their post to the enemy, and two days after Claye also, though greatly against the king's will, and that of several of his oldest officers; but the marshal Biron prevailed upon him to do it, and to encamp at Challes,§ which he represented as a much better position: the

\* Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma and Placentia, son to Octavio Farnese, and Margeret of Austria, natural daughter to Charles V. He married Mary of Portugal, by whom he had Ranucio Farnese, duke of Parma, and Edward Farnese, a cardinal.

† De Thou says, that Henry IV. was obliged to pretend, that he only raised the seige of Paris in order to go and meet the prince of Parma, and to give him battle; for fear that his soldiers, whom the hopes of the plunder of Paris only had prevailed upon to stay with him, should abandon him. Book xcix.

‡ A town between Paris and Meaux.

§ Another town between Paris and Meaux.

duke of Parma also moved, and encamped about two cannon shot from thence, upon a high and steep eminence, at the foot of which, and between the two armies, lay a morass, very difficult to pass, and sufficient to prevent their coming to an action, except to the great disadvantage of whichever should begin the attack. Both armies continued in this position for three or four days, during which there was continual skirmishing. The prince of Parma, however, seized the opportunity to besiege Lagny,\* which he took by storm, almost before the king's eyes. Henry, sensible that this laid the way open to the enemy to throw supplies into Paris, the possession of which he had during this time in vain attempted to obtain by means of emissaries which he had in the city, now drew off his whole army towards the river Oise, and fixed his quarters at the castle of Creil, † where he was reduced to great straits and perplexities, on account of this apparent success of the enemy, and the relief of Paris; with his good or bad fortune, the dispositions and affections also changed of those who could not view without regret and envy, the superiority of the Huguenots, the heads of which, even at the slightest reverses, were always magnifying the most trifling errors of the king, and this, added to a want of money, cunningly and purposely created, gave cause of complaint even to his most zealous adherents.‡

\* A city of Brie upon the Marne. † A town upon the Oise.

‡ The above account of the attack upon Paris, and Henry's retreat to Creil, is according to the *original* Memoirs of Sully: I shall here subjoin the relation of these two events as given by the compiler of the *modern* Memoirs; it will serve as a striking example of those unjustifiable liberties which he has in too many instances taken with the plain, and simple narrations of the duke of Sully's secretaries. See more on this subject in the preface.—Edit.

“ He divided his army into ten small bodies, to equal the number of

Notwithstanding all these embarrassments, the king knowing by experience the danger of suffering an

the suburbs he had to force ; and having made choice of the night for the execution of his scheme, he withdrew to the eminence of Montmartre, that he might send supplies wherever there was occasion for them ; he took his station in the abbey, where he was not only followed by the wounded, who could have no share in the glory of that night, but also by all the aged, and the gentlemen of the robe and pen. He made me stay with him at a window, from whence he viewed the attack, during which, he conversed with Du-Plessis, Rusé, de Fresne, Alibour, and myself.

The attack began at midnight, with a frightful discharge of artillery, which was answered by that of the city. Every one thought that this immense city would be destroyed, either by the aim of the artillery, or the flames kindled in the midst of it: never was there a spectacle more capable of inspiring horror. Thick clouds of smoke, through which darted by intervals sparks of fire, or long trains of flame, covered all that space of earth, which, by the vicissitude of light and darkness, seemed now plunged in thick shades of night, and now swallowed up in a sea of fire. The thunder of the artillery, the clashing of arms, and the cries of the combatants, added to this object all that can be imagined terrible, which was farther increased by the natural horror of night. This scene continued two whole hours, and was closed with the reduction of all the suburbs, not excepting that of St. Antoine; although by its great extent we were obliged to begin the attack at a considerable distance. They blocked up the city-gates, so that nothing could enter without the permission of those who guarded them ; and the people immediately saw themselves reduced to an excess of misery and famine, which I cannot yet think of without horror.

I must be permitted to pass slightly over this part ; I cannot, with any pleasure, enlarge upon so dreadful a subject. The king, naturally compassionate, was moved with the distress of the Parisians : he could not bear the thoughts of seeing this city, the possession of which was destined for him by providence, become one vast cemetery. He secretly permitted every thing that could contribute to its relief, and affected not to observe the supplies of provisions which the officers and soldiers suffered to enter the city, either out of compassion to their relations and friends who were in it, or with a design to make the citizens purchase them at a high price. Without



army to lie idle, laid siege to Clermont,\* and continued it by frequent detachments. My company

doubt, he imagined this conduct would gain him the hearts of the Parisians; but he was deceived; they enjoyed his benefits without ceasing to look upon him as the author of their miseries, and, elated with the prince of Parma's arrival, they insulted him, who only raised the siege because he was too much affected with the miseries of the besieged.

To justify an action, in itself as much blamed by the masters in the art of war, as praised for its motive by hearts truly benevolent, the king caused it to be reported, that his design in raising the siege of Paris was to go and meet the prince of Parma, and by a decisive action put an end to a war which had already continued too long. He made use of all the precautions necessary to secure a safe retreat from so populous a city as Paris, and commanded every one to hold themselves in readiness for a general signal; to the end that, all the suburbs being evacuated in a moment, no person might remain at the mercy of the populace. This retreat required great wisdom and address, and was happily effected on the first or second of September 1590, after which the whole army arrived at the general rendezvous, without meeting with any accident.

The king having learnt that the prince of Parma had assembled his army in the neighbourhood of Meaux, posted himself between that city and Paris, and sent his light horse as far as Claye, where the two camps being so contiguous, several smart encounters ensued. The king, upon the marshal Biron's representation, preferred to this post that of Chelles, and went thither contrary to his own opinion; for he looked upon Claye to be a more advantageous post, and at the same time fitter to shut up the road to Paris from the enemy's general; for he had still views upon the city, and carried on a correspondence within it, which if the prince of Parma had entered, would have failed him, and which it did notwithstanding. The king then took possession of a rising-ground, which on one side presented nothing to view but a deep valley and a morass, that took away all possibility of acting in that place. The prince of Parma perceiving this, encamped on a hill opposite to ours. It was neither his design nor his interest to hazard a battle, but to give us a check; his camp answered this purpose exactly, as he was there sheltered from any attack, and out of the reach of the cannon. The king became sensible of the error, which too much complaisance for the opinion of

\* In Beauvoisis.

he posted in the neighbourhood of Mante, to keep the country of Chartrain, and part of the isle of France, in order. I obtained leave to continue near his person, though I was not in a condition to do him any very great services; the wound on my hip not permitting me to sit my horse but with great uneasiness, and that in my elbow took away the use of one of my hands.

It happened as the king had foreseen: the prince of Parma boasted of his advantage in being master of the field; and that he might profit by it, laid siege to Corbeil. The king had provided this place, as well as all the other royalist towns, with whatever

another had drawn him into, when, after remaining two or three days in this position, he saw Lagny taken before his eyes, without having it in his power to prevent it.

This event, joined to his raising the siege of Paris, mortified him extremely, because he was sensible that it might be concluded from thence, that the enemy was superior to him in judgment, which this prince considered as a matter of great importance in war. What gave him still more uneasiness was, that none were more ready to believe, or even to spread, these disadvantageous reports, than the Catholics of his own army. What reliance could he have on the assistance of persons, by whom the disobedience of his soldiers, and his want of money, were occasioned? and he was convinced that this disposition with regard to him was an incurable malady, which his good or his bad fortune equally increased. Such is the hatred that religion is the foundation of! and in the end, the king had a thousand fatal proofs of it.

He now resolved upon a very prudent measure, and indeed the only one that was left him. No longer persisting in his design of taking Paris, which so many circumstances concurred to ruin, he quitted his post at Chelles, where he ran great hazards with an army whose interests clashed with those of its leader, and suddenly abandoning all those quarters, retreated to the river Oise, and fixed at Creil; where, without ceasing to harass the prince of Parma, he suffered him slowly to consume of himself. During this time, he made no other motions than what served to hinder his army from being enervated by sloth. He laid siege," &c.

was necessary to enable them to hold out against a long siege. The enemy's general, who did not expect this, was greatly astonished at the firm resistance of Rigaut, the governor of Corbeil, whom he a long time despaired of subduing, but thinking his honour was engaged in this undertaking, he continued his efforts, and succeeded at last. It was with this single exploit, however, that the campaign ended; the duke had bought it too dear to attempt a second at the same price; and not being able to effect any thing against the king's army, any more than his towns, he thought the wisest thing he could do was to return to the Low Countries, which he did, to the extreme regret of the league, whom his presence had greatly elated.

The duke judged like an able general, that the king, who had (if the expression may be allowed) closed his eyes upon all the advances he had made, would open them upon his retreat; and that this would not be effected with the same ease as the rest. He was not mistaken; but he acted with so much prudence, that he prevented the last misfortune which must unavoidably have happened to any other. However, notwithstanding all his precautions, the king, by an infinite number of attacks and skirmishes, sometimes beat up his quarters. The most considerable of these little actions was at the passage of the river of Aine, where the baron de Biron\* engaged himself so far amongst the enemy's battalions, that had not the king with some gentlemen who were about him, made a most desperate charge, and brought him off, he would have lost his life there, or at least his liberty.

I was able to keep my rank with the rest during the whole of this march, which was an excellent

\* Charles de Gontaut, son to the marshal.

school for a soldier to learn his trade in; it no less justified the conduct the king had till then observed, than it did him honour by the manner in which he executed it. Laying aside only the terms ignominious and shameful, which the courtiers, eager to please this prince, applied (in my opinion very unjustly) to the prince of Parma's retreat, it is certain, that the manner in which the king rendered an army useless, which had promised itself the conquest of all France, his bravery in attacking a powerful enemy who did not retreat through weakness, and his dexterity, in seizing all advantages, gave matter for admiration to persons consummate in the art of war, and equally excited the admiration of the ignorant.\* The king's conduct upon this occasion, gave his partisans new courage. Several towns submitted, and some Catholics came over to his side; among others, the duke of Nevers, who brought his troops along with him, either because he began to be afraid of him, or was disgusted with the league.

It was not such allies as these that I wished the king: I found he dearly bought by his compliances the assistance of a man, who might have been indeed of some use to him; but who, in my opinion, only increased the number of his secret enemies† in the

\* "Henry IV." says father Matthieu, "when he was in pursuit of the prince of Parma, stole away from Attichy, and went, for the first time, to see the beautiful Gabriella at Cœuvres. He contented himself with eating some bread and butter at the gate, that he might not raise any suspicion in her father. Afterwards mounting his horse, he said, he was going towards the enemy, and that the fair one should soon hear what he had performed through his passion for her." Vol. II. p. 59.

† By all the letters that passed between the duke of Nevers and Henry III. which are at the end of the first volume of the Memoirs that bear his name, it appears, that the former served this prince effectually against the league, but without any kindness to the king

council; for thus I cannot help calling all those interested Catholics, who carried every thing there with a high hand, and thought they had a right to give laws to Henry.

During the king's stay in the neighbourhood of Mante, I took Gisors, † by means of a correspondence, which a gentleman in my company, named Fourges, carried on with his father, who was in the place. I did not imagine the government of this city would have been refused me; but it happened in this instance as it had done in many others; messieurs de Nevers, d'O, and other Catholics, put in practice all those mean artifices, which procured them favours that ought only to have been the rewards of merit, and prevailed upon the king to give this post to one of their own religion.

I was too sincere to dissemble my thoughts of such injustice; I chose to explain myself upon this subject at the very time when all these gentlemen might hear what I said, and concealed nothing that lay upon my heart. The king, who was a better politician than I was, seemed not to be moved with my invectives against the Catholics, although he secretly agreed that I was injured, and only answered me coolly, "I perceive you are heated at present; we will talk of this affair another time. I must confess," he added, after I retired, "that he has some reason for his complaints; his temper is naturally fiery: however, he will never be guilty of any thing base or wicked, for he is a good man,

of Navarre. When he joined this prince, their reciprocal letters shew, that the services he did Henry IV. were considerable indeed, but that he exacted a very high price for them, and that it was with difficulty Henry bore with his caprice, his jealousy, and his bad temper.

† A city of Vexin.

“and loves honour.” In the first emotions of my anger, I left my company to the care of my lieutenant, and went to make a tour in the valley of Aillant, and to Combrailles, upon my wife’s estate, taking only six gentlemen, and my domestics with me. I did not expect to be employed in any military duties in this journey; but while I was at Bontin,\* the count of Tonnerre† prevailed upon me to assist him in an attempt he made upon Joigny.‡ His design was to force with a petard a postern-gate, which for a long time before had not been opened, and through that to enter the town. Tonnerre, for this exploit, had only two hundred arquebusiers, which he had got together in haste; they followed him about two hundred steps into the city; but here their leader falling by a shot from an arquebuse, terror seized them, and they hastily retreated towards the postern, carrying the wounded count along with them. Their danger, or rather their fear, redoubling, they had the baseness to leave him upon the pavement, about thirty steps from the gate, where he would have been cut to pieces by the citizens, if I had not flown to his assistance, with only twenty men: for notwithstanding all my endeavours, I could not prevail upon those cowardly soldiers to face about. However, I rescued Tonnerre, who returned to Gien,§ of which he was governor, while I mustered up his fine troop, and resumed my way to Bontin.

The remembrance of the king’s former goodness to me, and an invincible inclination, drew me back to him. I found him employed in the siege of

\* Upon the confines of Champagne, and Orleanois.

† Francis Henry, count of Clermont and Tonnerre.

‡ In Champagne, upon the Yonne.

§ A city of Orleanois upon the Loire.

Chartres,\* the taking of which was principally owing to the valour and address of Chatillon.† I was prevented from being present at this siege, by an adventure the most dangerous I was ever engaged in, in my whole life; nor have the intentions of the authors of it, or even their names, ever come to my knowledge.

Returning from an assault which Chatillon made upon the body of the place, by means of a bridge of a new and very ingenious construction, the king, who observed that my former ardour for his service was not diminished, called me, and commanded me to bring my company before Chartres. I was obliged to go and get my men together myself, and at the same time to provide every thing necessary for their maintenance. About three leagues from Mante, near the town of Touvery, I saw a brigade of twenty horse in the field, which I ordered Tilly to reconnoitre. Upon his information that they wore white scarfs, I advanced without fear or precaution: as for them, continuing, their rout, as if they had not

\* “The magistrate of this city made him a very long harangue; and telling him, that he acknowledged the city was subject to the king, by divine and human law; the king, out of patience at his prolixity, interrupted him, pushing forward his horse to enter, and said, Ay, and add also, by the *canon* law.” Father Chalon’s History of France, vol. III. p. 227. This siege was long and bloody. See Matthieu, vol. II. p. 63. Cayet, vol. II. p. 415, and other historians.

† Francis de Coligny, son to the admiral, and admiral of Guyenne. He died this year, in his castle of Louve, thirty years of age, leaving by Margaret d’Ailly de Péquigny, three sons. The Calvinist party sustained a great loss in him, for it is believed, that if he had lived, he would even have excelled his father. De Thou, book cii. Three sons of d’Andelot, the Admiral’s brother, died at one time, in the year 1586; their names were Laval, Saily, and Rieux. They were sons of Francis de Coligny, and Claude de Breaux, sole heiress of the house of Laval. Book lxxxv.

seen us, they struck into the wood, from whence, according to the course of the road they had taken, I could not expect to see them come out. I rode on with Tilly, La-Poterie, and La-Ruë, before the rest of my troop, which consisted only of six other gentlemen, and four servants, who followed at some distance separately. These troopers, or robbers, I know not which to call them, were well acquainted with the wood, and had taken their measures so well, that they met us at the passage out of it, just where our road crossed their's. The two first took off their hats, when to the words, *Qui vive?* we answered, *Vive le roi*; but at the same time taking advantage of our confidence, they fired directly at our breasts. I saw three of the foremost take aim particularly at me. There was no probability that any of us would have escaped; but doubtless, precipitation, fear, and the terrors of conscience, caused the hands of these villains to tremble, so that of three shots fired at me, one only took effect, which entered my lip, and came out at the nape of my neck: it appeared to me, that La-Poterie and Tilly received the two others in their clothes. La-Ruë was the only person who fell.

The rest of my troop galloped up at the noise, and surrounded me, crying out, "*Vive Rosny!*" we then all charged our assailants, who retired, firing, to some houses, surrounded by hedges, whither we pursued them; when we approached the hedges, they fired upon us from within the houses with small shot, two or three of which entered my face. By this circumstance I concluded, that our adversaries were in a part of the country well known to them, and that this village was full of soldiers, who only sought, perhaps, to draw us nearer; therefore, after several times calling to these traitors to turn and accept a chal-



lenge, I thought it was the wisest way to leave them, and take some care of my wounds, especially that in my neck, which was the most considerable, and by which I lost a great deal of blood. I got to Touvery, where I had my wounds dressed in the house of monsieur d'Auteuil,\* and from thence retired to Mante, where I was six weeks under the surgeon's hands. During this interval, the king's army not only seized Chartres, but Corbie likewise. Parabere had the conduct of the latter siege, in the absence of the king, who was kept at St. Quentin† by his new passion for mademoiselle d'Estrées.‡

\* M. de Combault d'Auteuil.

† It is to this year, and while Henry IV. staid at St. Quentin, that we must bring back this prince's letter to M. de Rosny, which is without date, and may be seen amongst the MSS. of the king's library, the contents of which perfectly agree with the text of our Memoirs, and is as follows: "All the news I have from Mante are, that you  
" have been fatigued, and are much emaciated: if you have any de-  
" sire to refresh yourself and grow fat, it is my opinion, that you  
" ought to come hither; mean time your brother will send us news  
" from thence of our siege at Chartres," &c.

From several places in these Memoirs, where the share Henry IV. gave to M. de Rosny in all his resolutions is mentioned, particularly that relating to his conversion, which we shall come to presently, we may infer, that this prince had always an entire confidence in him. I have transcribed the foregoing letter to shew by another testimony, that this opinion is not ill founded; and that the duke of Sully has not through vanity imposed upon his readers. The historians have not mentioned this minister till he began to appear publicly at the head of affairs. It is more than probable, that a long time before that, he had been the soul of all the actions and councils of Henry the Great. It is easy to trace this time back to his most early youth; though indeed all the actions of the duke of Sully compose a life, wherein no period of it seems to have been that of youth. This advantage must be allowed to minds born, as it were, grave and serious, over those more lively and full of fire.

‡ She is often mentioned in the course of this work. Her name was Gabrielle; she was daughter of John Antony d'Estrées, and Frances Babou de la Bourdaisiere. She bore successively the names

The siege of Noyon followed that of Corbie. There is none which I could have more wished to have given a circumstantial relation of than this, if I had been a witness of it. A thousand brave actions were performed by the besieged. The duke of Maïenne, who knew this place was of great importance to the league, sent orders to the duke d'Aumale,\* the lieutenant-general, who was then at Ham with some of the forces of the party, not to neglect giving it all possible assistance till he approached. The duke d'Aumale endeavoured twice to throw succours into it, but La Chantalerie and Tremblecourt, who led them, were completely routed one after the other. The viscount de Tavannes,† the major-general, thinking he might be more successful, approached with four hundred arquebusiers: they met with a party of fifty or sixty horse, belonging to us, who, after the "Qui vive?" charged them boldly, and put them to flight: the principal officers, who made resistance, were all wounded, and taken prisoners, with Tavannes, their commander. D'Aumale flattered himself, that he should, in his turn, take two troops of light horse in their quarters, which he had ordered Bellanglise to reconnoitre; but he found them mounted, and going to meet the king; and having attacked them, these light horse, notwithstanding the great superiority of the enemy,

of the fair Gabrielle, madame de Liancourt, the marchioness of Monceaux, and dutchess of Beaufort.

\* Charles de Lorraine, duke d'Aumale, son of Claude, slain before Rochelle, in the year 1573. He was the third of Claude de Lorraine's sons; from whence issued all the branches of the house of Lorrain in France: that of d'Aumale was extinct soon after.

† John de Saulx, viscount of Tavannes, one of the marshals of the league. See a relation of the sieges of Noyon, Pierrefont, and of all these expeditions in the above-named historians.

defended themselves so long, and so bravely, that the baron de Biron, messieurs de la Hargerie,\* and de la Boissiere, had time to come up to their assistance; after which, these two troops joining, they defeated d'Aumale's whole detachment, which consisted of five hundred horsemen, and as many horse-archebusiers; very few reached Ham\* without wounds, and a great number of them were made prisoners.

The duke of Maienne arriving at Ham at the very moment that these shattered remains retreated thither, was a witness of his loss, and protested publicly, that he would efface this shame, either by raising the siege of Noyon, or by a battle. He drew together all his forces, ordered the baron de Rosne † to bring up the Spanish troops, which the prince of Ascoli commanded in Champagne; and finding himself at the head of nine hundred foot, and two hundred horse, he advanced towards Noyon. He forgot his oath, when he saw that he had to do with men, who seemed not even to heed his arrival. It was in vain, that the commander of Noyon had represented to him by a gentleman, whom the king permitted to pass through his army, that he had engaged to surrender the place in six days, if no succours were sent to him, as the duke of Maienne, the prince of Ascoli, and the duke of Aumale, suffered Noyon to be taken before their eyes. The governor certainly deserved to have been better seconded: his name was Rieux; and from a private soldier had become governor of Pierrefond, by his skill and bravery. Upon the report of Noyon's being attacked, he found means to throw himself into it, with fifty horse, and as many archebusiers, to ani-

\* Lewis d'Ognies de la Hargerie, count of Chaune.

† Another city upon the Somme.

‡ Christian de Savigny, baron of Rosne, in the duchy of Bar.

mate the inhabitants of the city, where all were in consternation and dismay, and with intention to hold out till the last extremity.

The duke of Maienne seeing that his army was now useless, sent it into quarters, and marched slowly towards Paris. He had long carried on a correspondence in Mante, and he now thought it time to execute his design upon that place. He privately drew out the garrisons of Paris, Dreux, and Pontoise, and suddenly presented himself within musket shot of Mante, before day. My brother\* was governor of it, and I was then there myself; my wound not permitting me to keep the field. As soon as I was informed of the enemy's arrival, I ran upon the ramparts with my head bound up; and causing some discharges to be fired at the assailants, forced them to abandon their design.

The duke of Maienne succeeded no better before Houdan,† which he alarmed as he passed by. My other brother, who was there with his regiment, and some companies, gave him such a reception, that he retreated with disgrace.

What had happened at Mante, joined to the information my brother had received, convinced us, that the enemy had a correspondence in the city. After consulting together upon what was necessary to be done on this occasion, I fixed upon the following expedient: I had still in my pay six of those brave soldiers, who served as a forlorn hope in the battle of Ivry, and to whom, besides their pay, I gave eight livres a month. They were then in my brother's garrison, to whom I could not refuse

\* Solomon de Bethune, called Baron de Rosny, the author's youngest brother, and the third of those four brothers he mentioned at the beginning of these Memoirs.

† On the borders of France and Normandy.

them, and their fidelity I was absolutely assured of. As it had been concerted with us two, they pretended to be discontented with the governor of Mante, and offering themselves to the garrison of Pontoise, were received with open arms. They immediately proposed to d'Alincourt\* to make him master of Mante by the connection which, they told him, they still had in that place: to convince the governor of this, they requested four soldiers, whom, by my connivance, they conveyed into Mante, and directed to get acquainted with such citizens, as were well disposed to engage in all sorts of factions, and by this means they soon knew all those persons in the town who favoured the league. In a little time every thing was agreed upon, and the day fixed for delivering up Mante to the enemy. These four soldiers found so little difficulty in the prosecution of their design, that d'Alincourt, believing the success of it infallible, would have all the honour of it to himself. My soldiers gave me exact information of every thing that was contriving in Pontoise, and the joy which so well concerted an enterprize occasioned there, where the general council of the league, headed by the cardinal of Bourbon,† resided.

\* Charles de Neufville, marquis d'Alincourt, son to Nicholas de Neufville de Villeroy, secretary of state: he will be mentioned afterwards.

† This is not the old cardinal, Charles of Bourbon, son of Charles of Bourbon, duke of Vendome, and brother to Antony, king of Navarre, whom the league had proclaimed king. He died of the stone the year before, at Fontenai, in Poitou, whither Henry IV. had caused him to be removed from Chinon, aged sixty-seven years; a prince who had reason to complain, that they obliged him to ascend a throne which had no allurements for him. He could not conceal his joy for the victory that Henry IV. gained at Coutras; and only accepted the crown, says Cayet, to preserve it for that prince, whom he loved. Chron. Novenn. vol. I. book ii. p. 357.

Meantime I took my measures very cautiously, that no affectation might appear in my conduct. I caused trains of gunpowder to be laid upon the ramparts which they intended to scale, without any one's perceiving it; and shut up all the houses that stood near that side; after which I introduced into the place by small divisions at different times, the best soldiers of the garrisons of Nogent, Vernon, and Meulan. This done, I thought myself obliged to send and inform the king, who was at Compeigne, of all that passed, which ruined our project. This prince could not resist the desire he had to receive the duke of Maienne himself in Mante, and imagined he took sufficient precaution against injuring our scheme, by not entering Mante till the night on which it was to be executed, and by carrying in with him only fifty horse, and the same number of foot. For me, when I saw him arrive, I was so well persuaded that all our measures were frustrated, that I could not help reproaching him with some warmth for coming thus to undo our plan, and exposing, perhaps the lives of the four soldiers, who conducted it, by means of the evidences that might appear against them. The king assuring me, that nothing of what I feared would happen, went to sup at the governor's, where, being fatigued with his long journey, he threw himself upon a bed with his clothes and large boots on.

Day came, without any appearance of the enemy: I watched for them all night upon the ramparts with one of my brothers; the other staid with the king. Just as I had retired to rest, Bellengreville,

The person mentioned here, is the cardinal, his nephew, named Charles after him, son to Lewis the first, prince of Condé, slain at Jarnac, and brother to the prince of Condé who died at St. John d'Angely, to the prince of Conti, and the count of Soissons. He is mentioned in another place.

whom I had ordered to observe the enemy's motion without, came to me, and informed me, that the duke of Maienne having received advice that some troops, led by the king in person, had entered Mante in the night, supposed his design was discovered, and had retreated, after having advanced as far as Bourgenville. I carried him to the king, to whom he made the same report, and as a proof of the truth of what he said, produced two carts, laden with rope-ladders, and such other instruments, which the leaguers, imagining they already saw the king at their heels, had left in the field, that they might not obstruct their retreat. The affair became public and irretrievable; for the soldiers who escaped on both sides could not be silent.

The king succeeded better at Louviers.\* This town kept a priest† it its pay, who from the top of a belfry, which he never left, played the part of a spy with great exactness. If he saw but a single person in the field, he rung a certain bell, and hung out at the same side a great flag. We did not despair of being able to corrupt his fidelity, which two hundred crowns, and a promise of a benefice worth three thousand livres a year, effected. There remained only to gain some of the garrison; the sieur du Rollet took this upon himself, and succeeded. He addressed himself to a corporal and two soldiers, who easily prevailed upon the rest of the garrison to trust the guard of one of the gates to them only. Every thing being thus arranged, the king presented himself before Louviers, at twelve o'clock in the night.‡ No one rung the bell, nor was there the least motion in the garrison. Du Rollet entered, and opened the gate, through which

\* In Upper Normandy.

† This priest was called John de la Tour.

‡ June 5.

the king passed, without the smallest resistance, into the centre of the town. Fontaine Martel made some ineffectual efforts to draw the garrison together; as for the citizens, they were employed in concealing their wives and daughters. The town, whose chief riches consisted in its magazines of linen and leather, was wholly pillaged; I had a gentleman with me, called Beaugrard, a native of Louviers, who was of great use to us in discovering where these sort of goods were concealed, and a prodigious quantity of them was amassed together. The produce of my share amounted to three thousand livres. The king consigned to Du Rollet the government of Louviers.

The same good fortune attended the duke of Montpensier in all his enterprises in Normandy.\* This success was no more than necessary to console the king for the news he received, that the duke of Guise,† whom he considered as his principal enemy, had escaped from the castle of Tours, where

\* In the Lower Normandy Falaise, Baïeux, Argentan Lizieux, &c. were in the interest of the league; Caën, Alençon, Sécz, Ecouché, &c. in the king's. The most considerable action happened in April, 1589, in the field of Argentan, near Pierrefitte, Villars, and Commeaux, where the duke of Montpensier cut off the leaguers of those cantons, whom they called Gantiers, to the number of five or six thousand. They were commanded by the count of Brissac, Pierrecourt, Louchan, the baron d'Echaufour, and others. Three thousand were left dead upon the spot, and a thousand taken prisoners; the rest escaped to Argentan. Commeaux, which is at present scarce a village, was taken with great difficulty. At length the duke of Montpensier extirpated this whole party, and reduced several of the rebellious cities. He was assisted by the count of Torigny, messrs. d'Emery, de Loncaunai, de Benvron, de Viques, de Bacqueville, l'Archant, and others. See these expeditions in the third volume of the Memoirs of the League.

† Charles of Lorraine, son of Henry, duke of Guise, who was slain at Blois, and of Catherine of Cleves; he was born in the year



he had been confined ever since the assassination at Blois.

III. HENRY, through the persuasions and offers of the Normans, and the hopes of assistance from the queen of England, the Dutch, and the Germans, which they had severally promised him, whenever he should undertake any important enterprise, now determined upon the siege of Rouen: he therefore quitted Mante, where for some time past he had fixed his abode, and made it a little capital for the residence of his court and council, and caused his troops to file off towards Rouen; and, while preparations were making for this important siege, he took a private journey to Compeigne, of which love was the true cause, though he gave out that it was for the purpose of sending the viscount Turenne to Germany for a supply of horse; this the viscount undertook through gratitude for the king's having effected his marriage with mademoiselle de Sedan,\* daughter, and sole heiress of the deceased

1571. "The flight of the duke of Guise will ruin the league," said Henry IV. as it is related by Le Grain. The duke's valet de chambre having found means to amuse Rouvrai and his guards, either by play, or drinking, let him down from the highest window in the castle at mid-day, with a rope, which he afterwards made use of to descend himself. The duke got into a small boat, which carried him to the other side of the river, where two horses waited for them, &c. Matthieu, vol. II. p. 81. Cayet, vol. II. book iii. p. 465, &c.

\* Charlotte de la Mark, daughter of Robert de la Mark, sovereign prince of Sedan, and of Frances of Bourbon Montpensier; by the death of her brother, William Robert de la Mark, duke of Bouillon, which happened at Geneva, in the year 1588, she became heiress of this principality. The duke, in his last will, forbade his sister to marry a Roman Catholic. This circumstance, the king's friendship for the viscount Turenne, his desire of taking the lady from the dukes of Lorraine, Montpensier, and Nevers, each of whom demanded her for his son; policy, which advised him to give an ambitious neighbour to the duke of Lorraine, and perhaps the belief

duke of Bouillon, and honoured his nuptials with his presence, which were celebrated this year. I remained at Mante, where I first saw madame de Chateaupers, of whom I became so enamoured that in a few days I resolved upon marrying her. During my stay here, I had a humourous adventure, which I shall relate.

The king had expressly forbidden all commerce, and exportation of merchandise, and every kind of provision into Paris or Rouen, as being cities in open rebellion: but in this he was very ill obeyed, the governors of the towns, especially on the banks of the Seine, gained by the immense sums which they procured them, almost publicly granted the necessary passports for merchants, and masters of boats. De Fourges, whom I have formerly mentioned, came one day and informed me that a large boat laden with fish, whose cargo was reputed worth fifty thousand crowns, had gone up the river to Paris, where, after a few days stay, a less one would bring back the produce in silver to Rouen, which he was well assured of, because his father had charge of the boat. I caused it to be so well watched, that in its return it fell into my hands, and I saw with astonishment that the passport was signed by Berengueville, and my brother, the one governor of Meulan, and the other of Mante; but they did not care to mention this to me, nor did I take any notice of it to them, but caused the boat and its master to be brought to Mante. I opened two large packets, where I expected to find the fifty thousand crowns in specie; But seeing only some pieces of gold and silver

that this marriage would induce the viscount to lay aside his design of making himself head of the Calvinists in France: these were the motives which determined Henry IV. to marry the heiress of Sedan to the viscount Turenne.

thread, and a piece of Spanish silk, I threatened to put the master of the boat in prison if he did not tell me the truth. The elder Fourges, alarmed at this threat, presented me with letters of exchange for six and thirty thousand crowns, which he would have persuaded me was the whole produce of the sale; but he using much violent action as he spoke, the weight of the gold he had about him broke his pockets, and so great a quantity fell from them, that the floor was in an instant covered with crowns of the sun.\* He probably intended to apply this sum to his own use, or thought it could be in no place so secure as about himself. It is impossible to express the confusion he was in at this accident. After diverting myself some time in obliging him to take several turns about the room, I ordered him to strip, and found seven thousand crowns in gold sewed up in his clothes. I was then in some necessity for money, and waiting for the sale of my corn, wood, and hay, at Rosny: the king made me a present of the whole of this sum, and was extremely amused with the recital of poor Fourges's adventure; as for Berengueville, and my brother, they were very angry with me. But to return to the preparations for the siege of Rouen. The people of Caen, and other towns of Normandy in the king's interest supplied money, provisions, and ammunition: the queen of England sent over four thousand men under the command of a general named Roger Williams, † and

\* A gold coin current at that time; it was first struck in the reign of Lewis XI. and so called, because there was the figure of a sun above the crown. The value of these crowns at this time is sixty-four sols.

† Sully is wrong here; Sir Roger Williams had only about six hundred men under his command, with which he landed at Dieppe; the whole of the forces, indeed, sent over by Elizabeth at this time

during the siege, her favourite, the earl of Essex, with a body of infantry, and a large train of English nobility.\* The United Provinces, besides the two regiments in the service of the king, sent a fleet of fifty sail well equipped, on board of which were two thousand five hundred soldiers, under the command of count Philip of Nassau, to the coast of Normandy. The duke of Bouillon (for the viscount Turenne took this title after his marriage) succeeded so well in his negotiation in Germany, that he brought back five or six thousand horse, and some companies of foot, with the prince of Anhalt at their head. These foreign auxiliaries, and six thousand Swiss, which the king had in his pay, added to different reinforcements that came from several places, particularly Normandy, and to those troops, whether Protestants or Catholics, which were at his own disposal, composed, in all, an army of forty thousand men. The marquis of Villars,† well known for his courage and capacity, shut himself up in Rouen, with the son of the duke of Maienne, resolved to bury themselves under its ruins: indeed, from the day that we sat down before this city, till the prince of Parma's arrival, which obliged us to raise the siege, there passed almost six months; and what was worse, six winter months; for it was invested

amounted to about three thousand; but the greater part of them landed in Brittany under Sir John Norris. EDIT.

\* The earl of Essex did not land with his forces during the siege, but some time previous to its commencement, and while Henry was at Noyon. The earl had four thousand men under his command, besides a great number of volunteers. See many interesting particulars respecting his expedition in Sir Robert Carey's *Memoirs*, p. 51. EDIT.

† André de Brancas Villars, of the ancient family of Brancacio, originally Neapolitan. It must not be confounded with that of the marquis of Villars, who is descended from Honoré, bastard of Savoy.

the first of October, and abandoned the twentieth of March following, after attempts on the part of the besiegers, and a resistance on that of the besieged some circumstances of which I shall relate.

The troops of the besiegers were placed in different quarters; the king's were at Darnetal, where I took a private lodging for myself, as I foresaw that the siege would not be the work of a few days: my company was stationed at Fresne l'Esplen, whither I seldom went, as I was generally with the king or the marshal de Biron, being desirous of witnessing whatever was done in the trenches, the erection of the batteries, and the different attacks, at all which I endeavoured to be present. At first there appeared such an emulation amongst the officers to be employed, that, to avoid all disputes, the king regulated the time and duration of each of their services; and declared that every fourth day he would himself work in the trenches with the gentlemen who were about his person, who were to the number of two or three hundred, and of which he named me one.

The baron de Biron, marshal de camp, was posted upon the high ground near Fort St. Catherine, against which it was determined (according to the advice, or rather will, of his father, who could not brook contradiction,) to make the most vigorous attack:\* this design I condemned, for I was always

\* Perhaps they also depended upon blowing up the fort of St. Catherine with the mine; but the design was discovered by the besieged. *Memoirs of the League*, vol. V. Those writers who have defended the marshal Biron's advice against that given by the duke of Sully, with regard to the place at which they should begin the attack, say, that it was very difficult, and, at the same time very dangerous, for the army of Henry IV. to leave behind them the fort of St. Catherine, the hill especially being so near the city. See, upon the operations of this siege, *F. Matthieu*, vol. II. p. 96, and follow-

of opinion, that the city itself should be attacked at once, as it was very weak in many places, and, consequently, might be easily carried,\* and that we should not put off our time by directing our operations against a given point of so small extent that M. de Villars (who with wonderful courage and diligence showed himself every where) could defend it with double the number of men we could bring to oppose him: in fact, instead of our advancing towards the Fort, the besieged carried out new works towards us; this circumstance gave rise to a report that the old marshal Biron, through envy and discontent, did every thing in his power to prevent the reduction of the place, because the king had refused him the government of the city, which he had already promised to du Hallot,† at the request of the duke de Montpensier.

ing. Cayet, Chron. Novenn. vol. II. book iv. (who is for the duke of Sully's opinion against that of the marshal Biron), and other historians.

\* The duke of Sully and the earl of Essex seem to have been of the same opinion, with respect to the conduct of this siege: "We lay long there," says sir Robert Carey "and to little purpose; for though the town walls were weak, and of no force to endure a battery, which my lord [Essex] would fain have been at, and offered the king that he and his troops should be the first that should enter, if he would make a breach (which four cannons would soon have done) it would not be hearkened unto; *old Byron* thinking it better by continuing the siege, for want of victuals to make them come to composition, than to hazard the wealth of the town to the spoil of the soldiers, if it should be won by assault." Again: "All our attempts were against the Fort [St. Catherine], my lord [Essex] still urging the king to batter some part of the town, but it would never be yielded to." Carey's *Memoirs*, p. 46, 50, where the reader will find many other particulars respecting this siege. EDIT.

† Francis de Montmorency Du Hallot, lieutenant-general for the king in Normandy. He was wounded at the siege of Rouen, and afterwards slain by the marquis d'Alegre.

The king wished to give me charge of one of the batteries; but the marshal, M. de la Guiche, de Bort, la Fayolles,\* and others, would not consent to it, although I offered to serve under them, so great was my desire to learn the management of artillery: however, it was probably a fortunate circumstance that they did refuse me, as the battery to which the king destined me, was soon after taken by the besieged. The reason why the marshal objected to my appointment was my having told him, one day, when at dinner with him, that if he would but reduce the town first, he would soon be master of the castle.

The siege being formed, the first sorties of the besieged were against the quarters of the German auxiliaries, who were posted towards the river: as they found themselves hard pressed they very willingly resigned their lodgements to the Dutch, who solicited them, being more accustomed to sieges than the former, and they soon entrenched themselves in such a way as to prevent, in a great degree, the enemy from sallying from the town on that side. It was not long before the king perceived that he had engaged in a very difficult attempt; but nothing, he imagined, was impossible to continued labour. Villars was not contented with defending himself within; he sallied out of the castle, and caused a deep trench to be cut upon the declivity of the hill, over against the Fort, with which the end of it communicated, and placed there in the night a guard of six or seven hundred men. As this new work was extended a considerable distance from the town, and not only incommoded the besiegers in their attacks upon the castle, but also

\* Philibert de La-Guiche—John du Durfort de Boner—Bertrand de Melet de Fayolles.

exposed them to be fallen upon in the rear, while, at the same time, they had the garrison from within in front, the king resolved to seize it, and render it useless to the enemy. For this purpose he made choice of the same night when it was his turn to watch at the trench with his three hundred gentlemen, whom he commanded to be completely armed, and to have, besides their usual arms, halberts in their hands, and pistols at their girdles, and to this troop he added four hundred musquetiers. It was at midnight, and amidst the extreme cold of December, that we attacked this trench in different places. The action, which was very obstinate, continued half an hour with equal animosity on both sides; We used our utmost endeavours to gain the brink, and the besieged repulsed us several times. I was twice thrown to the ground, my halbert broke, and my armour loosened or broke in pieces; but Maignan, whom I had obtained permission to keep near me, raised me, put my armour again in order, and gave me his halbert. The trench was at last carried by main force, and we cleared it of more than fifty dead or dying enemies, whom we threw from the top of the hill. This trench was open to the cannon of the fort, but the king had the precaution to order some gabions, hogsheads, and pieces of wood to be brought there, which covered the English, to whom he committed the guard of it.

Villars did not expect to have seen his outworks carried in so short a time; when he was told it, and that it was the king himself who had conducted the enterprize, "By heavens," said he, "this prince  
"deserves a thousand crowns for his valour. I am  
"sorry that, by a better religion, he does not in-  
"spire us with as strong an inclination to gain him



“ new ones as to detain from him his own ; but it  
“ shall never be said, that I have failed to attempt  
“ in my own person what a great king has per-  
“ formed in his.” In effect, he put himself at the  
head of four hundred men, armed as he had been  
told the king’s were, and taking also eight hundred  
musquetiers selected out of his whole number, he  
attacked the English with such fury and obstinacy,  
that after a contest of two hours, during which it is  
said the English performed wonders, the latter were  
driven out, with the loss of fifty men killed or  
taken. The king, piqued with the vanity of Villars,  
determined to attempt the recovery of this post the  
next time he should mount guard. The English  
general hearing this, and being desirous of doing  
away the reproaches which the enemies of the re-  
formed religion cast upon his troops for having lost  
the post which was committed to their charge,  
entreated the king to take a hundred of the English  
nobility, and instead of French infantry, such of the  
English as he should select, assuring his majesty,  
that they would either regain their lodgements, or  
perish in the attempt: to this the king consented,  
and when his turn came, he repaired according to  
custom to the trenches, with the whole of the force  
destined for the attack: at the hour appointed, the  
English nobility, who had insisted upon being fore-  
most, mounted, being ably seconded by the king’s  
party, who were again most valiantly supported by  
the English infantry: the enemy astonished at so  
impetuous an assault, retreated towards the fort  
after a very slight resistance, for about half an  
hour: as soon as the trenches were carried the En-  
glish fixed themselves so firmly in them, and kept so  
well upon their guard, that the enemy could never

after dislodge them, nor even prevent them from sometimes advancing almost to the counterscarps of their ravelins.

The day following the above affair, the king having learned that we blamed him for exposing his person too much, that M. de Villars and I were very intimate, and that the former had a steward, who was once in my service, and who was still much attached to me, he took me aside into the embrasure of one of the windows of his apartment, and spoke to me in the following words: "Well! what is your opinion of the two late encounters, in which we have been so successful? are they not worthy of being remembered?" In reply, I said, that considering the part his majesty had taken in them, and the manner in which he had exposed his person to every danger, I did not think they were surpassed by any thing either in ancient or modern story; that, if there was any thing to blame it was our allowing him to be present in such hazardous enterprises, because if he should happen to lose his life, no person would be left capable of saving France: "I cannot do otherwise, my friend," he replied, "for since it is for my glory and my crown that I fight, my life and every thing else ought to be of no consideration with me; this is my fixed resolution, as you will see whenever occasion shall offer during this important siege, which I am much afraid we shall, in the end, be compelled to relinquish as well as that of Paris; for I learn that the prince of Parma is about to march for the express purpose of succouring the place, though he will not approach it till he hear it is reduced to the last extremity; and we have to do with a man who is wonderfully resolute and determined, I mean M. de Villars, whom it will not be easy to

“terrify, and who will never think of capitulating  
“while he has the least hope of relief: the reason  
“why I tell you this,” continued the king, “is  
“because I am informed there is great intimacy be-  
“tween you and him, and that he has a steward  
“named La Fond, who was formerly in your service,  
“and who governs Villars in all things: now, if by  
“La Fond’s means you could bring over Villars to  
“my party, there is no favour which I would not  
“grant them both; for by this plan I should quietly  
“make myself master of the whole of Normandy.”  
This was a subject to which my attention had been al-  
ready directed, and I had even endeavoured through  
La Fond to procure an interview with Villars; but  
he would never listen to it, saying, he should  
thereby excite suspicion amongst his own troops,  
and dishearten those who were advancing to his  
assistance; that he was not yet in such a condition  
as to need a mediator, and, if that should ever  
happen, he would have no other but me: this was  
all the answer I could obtain. I now related this cir-  
cumstance to the king, and added, that he must deter-  
mine whether it would be better to meet the prince  
of Parma as soon as he should approach Neufchatel,  
and give him battle, or make him repass the Somme  
with loss and shame; or, instead of wasting his  
time in attacking Fort St. Catherine, to attack the  
city at once; “for your majesty has an army,” I  
added, “capable of doing either, nor do I think you  
“can ever collect such another; besides, there are  
“many reasons for suspecting, that those who are  
“so obstinate in advising the attack of this fort, are  
“little desirous of the reduction of the city, or that  
“you should succeed in your designs, while you  
“continue of the reformed religion; nay, there are  
“some who make no secret of this, and who have

“ even had the boldness to tell me so.” “ I believe all  
“ you tell me,” said the king, “ and what is worse,  
“ I see that the greater part of the most zealous Ca-  
“ tholics are tired of this war, and will not, in the  
“ end scruple to desert me, and either form a party  
“ of themselves, or join the leaguers, with whom  
“ they do not hesitate to say they would agree bet-  
“ ter than with the Huguenots; this will be the  
“ ruin of the state, and of the house of Bourbon, be-  
“ cause if I am once rejected, they will never choose  
“ another out of it, whatever my relations may think;  
“ for all these reasons, therefore, I endure a thou-  
“ sand things which give me much trouble, and I  
“ thus daily endanger my life, to maintain my re-  
“ putation, resigning myself and my affairs to God,  
“ since it is much better that I should die with arms  
“ in my hands, than live to see my kingdom ruined,  
“ and myself forced to seek assistance in a foreign  
“ country. My determination is, to march against  
“ the enemy, as soon as I shall hear they have joined  
“ the French rebels, but not with the whole of my  
“ army, as that would be raising the siege too soon,  
“ and we have to do with an old and experienced  
“ general, who would not fail, were he to accomplish  
“ his object, while at such a distance, to make a  
“ boast of it, and then return without hazarding an  
“ engagement; but I will shew him that there are  
“ as good generals in the world as he is. As the  
“ city of Rouen is very well situated for my pur-  
“ pose, I conceive it will be sufficient to take six  
“ thousand horse, and one thousand horse-arque-  
“ busiers (which are of no use in the siege, but  
“ rather an incumbrance), and advance towards the  
“ frontiers, and endeavour to bring some of their  
“ troops to action (which would be no difficult task  
“ if the duke of Maïenne, or Parma think fit to

“oppose me with their cavalry) or prevent them  
“from crossing the Somme: in short, I will endea-  
“your to penetrate their designs, and reconnoitre  
“their forces.” Here the king concluded with  
saying he would detain me no longer, as the Catho-  
lics became jealous whenever he spoke in secret to  
a Huguenot, and desired me to repair to the quarters  
of my company, and to select about fifteen or twenty  
of those best armed and mounted, and to bring them  
with me, as he wished I should accompany him in  
his march. By this time messieurs Nevers, de  
Longueville, de la Guiche, d’O, and Chateau-vieux  
were whispering with each other in a corner of the  
room; the king, therefore, with a view to remove  
their suspicions, told them that we had been con-  
versing about the reply which M. de Villars had  
made to my overtures, and on what was to be done  
farther in that business. I quitted the room im-  
mediately, and repaired to my company’s quarter’s,  
where I remained two days, in the course of which  
I secretly ordered about fifteen or twenty of the  
best of my men to hold themselves in readiness to  
march at the first notice.

I returned in the course of two days from Fresne  
l’Esplen; and, on my arrival at Darnetal, I learnt  
that Villars had made a sally at the head of a hun-  
dred horse, with whom he overthrew the guard; and  
would have been the cause of much greater confu-  
sion, if the king, armed only with a cuirass, had not  
hastened thither, followed by the baron de Biron, an  
English officer (whose name I have forgot), Grillon,\*  
and some others, who were about him: these three  
gentlemen especially gained immortal glory there.  
Grillon’s arm was broke by a shot from an arque-  
buse. As for the king, having precipitated himself

\* Louis Berton de Crillon, or Grillon.

into a danger somewhat like that which is related of Alexander the Great in the city of the Oxydracæ, he extricated himself out of it with equal presence of mind and equal intrepidity; excepting indeed, that Alexander's exploit has all the appearance of a fable, while Henry's had two armies to be witnesses of it.

The prince of Parma, with his whole army, possessed the banks of the Somme, and, satisfied with recovering this river, made no other movement; for the governor of Rouen had sent to inform him, that, as he intended to strike some important blow, he might let it be a good while before he came to his assistance; and he likewise waited for the arrival of Sfondrato, who was to bring him the troops of his uncle pope Gregory XIV., \* and those of the duke of Maienne, who however came not immediately. He had been obliged to go with his best troops to Paris, to punish the insolence of the Council of Sixteen, who abusing the power he had trusted them with, had dared to hang the president Brisson, and some other counsellors † as venerable

\* Sixtus V. died in the month of August 1590. Henry IV. when he was informed of his death, said, "here is a trick of Spanish policy; I have lost a pope who was entirely devoted to me."

† Barnaby Brisson, Claude Larcher, and John Tardif, lord du Ru, counsellors of the parliament. "A catastrophe very unworthy of so learned and excellent a man," says Mezeray, speaking of the president Brisson, "but usual with those who think to keep in with two parties;" for the parliament being transferred by the king to Tours, Brisson was the only one of the six presidents who remained at Paris. The league obliged him to perform the duties of first president, and it was he that helped to degrade king Henry III. According to the duke of Nevers' observation, his death was looked upon to be a just punishment of his ingratitude, Henry III. having freely bestowed upon him the post of president. However, he was one of the greatest men of the robe. The duke of Maienne revenged his

for their virtue as their age; and who might possibly have carried their outrages farther, if the duke of Maienne, fearing perhaps some sudden caprice of these rebels \* against himself, had not doomed them to the like punishment, but as in executing this act of justice he had certain measures to keep, he did not join the prince of Parma so soon as had been expected.

The king, when he was informed of this disposition, thought it necessary to hasten his march. He left to the marshal Biron the care of carrying on the siege, and took with him about seven or eight thousand horse; consisting of from three to four thousand French troopers, as many German horse, and a thousand horse-arquebusiers, at the head of which he left Darnetal, and took the road to the Somme. He passed the first day by Boissiere and Neufchâtel; the second by Blangy, Londiniere, Longueville, Senerpont, and Gamache; and the third advanced to Folleville, with one detachment only, leaving the body of his cavalry behind him, under the conduct of the duke of Nevers.

We met a considerable party, led by messieurs de Rosne, † de Balagny, de Vitry, the baron de la

death, by causing Louchard, Ameline, Aimonet, and Anroux, four of the council of sixteen, to be hanged in a parlour of the Louvre. See the historians.

\* One of the sixteen, named Normand, said one day in the duke of Maienne's chamber, "Those who made him, are able to unmake him." Hamilton the curate of St. Côme, a furious leaguer, came himself, attended by priests, instead of soldiers, to seize the counsellor Tardif in his house.

† Christian or Chrêtan de Savigny, baron of Rosne.—John de Montluc de Balagny.—Lewis de l'Hopital, lord de Vitry.—Claude de La-Châtre.—Antony de St. Pol.—Valentine de Pardieu, lord de la Mothe, governor of Valenciennes. This last was a Frenchman, of the country of Beauvoisis; but he had all his life served in the

Châtre, St. Pol, La Mothe, and others, who had doubtless advanced with the same design as we, to discover the situation and forces of the enemy. The king commanded the baron de Biron, messieurs de Lavardin, de Givry,\* de St. Geran, de Marivaut, de Chanlivaut, La-Curée, d'Arambure, † and some others, to attack them, but they were repulsed, and handled very roughly, and part fell, among which was Lavardin. Henry advanced with three hundred horse to disengage them; and, believing this encounter might be followed by a more general action, at least between the cavalry of the two armies, which was what he ardently wished for, he sent orders to Nevers to hasten and join him: but the prince of Parma had a contrary design, and restrained his squadrons, who had retreated of themselves when they perceived ours advancing; and the king, seeing no appearance of effecting any thing in the midst of so many battalions, contented himself with observing this army closely, and checking its motions, as he went to his quarters at Breteuil, ‡ where his cavalry,

Spanish army, and was slain in the year 1595, at the seige of Dourlans, at the head of the Spanish artillery, very much regretted by the Spaniards. The king of Spain had just created him count of Ekelbeke. See his death and panegyric in De Thou, book cxii.

\* Anne d'Anglure, baron of Givry. This officer was equally celebrated for his abilities in war, and his taste for polite literature.—Claude de l'Isle Marivaut.—René-Viau, lord of Chanlivaut;—Filhet de La-Curée: he was one of those persons in whom the king confided, and was called by him nothing but Curée. He performed wonders at the battle of Ivry, and on many other occasions. The vol. of manuscripts marked 8929, of the royal library is filled with relations of his intrepidity: we shall, perhaps, have occasion to mention him hereafter. He was killed in an encounter at the siege of Montauban.

† John lord d'Arambure.

‡ This town, and some of those places abovementioned, are in Picardy: the others are in the country of Caux.



to prevent a surprise, were obliged to keep themselves extremely close, and part of them even lay without all night, though the ground was covered with snow.

The ardour with which the king went to meet an enemy so greatly superior to him in numbers, awakened all our fears for the dangers to which he exposed his person, and obliged us to represent the consequences to him in very strong terms. But this prince, who had no conception of that caution we proposed to him, when glory was in question, did not alter his conduct; but satisfied himself with naming thirty of us to continue near his person, and not to leave him upon any occasion whatever; an employment highly honourable indeed, but the danger of which, in some degree, made it less desirable. With this precaution, which was no more than necessary, he only resigned himself still more to his eager thirst of glory.

Being informed that the duke of Guise, who commanded the prince of Parma's vanguard, had put himself at the head of his troop to facilitate the lodgment of his infantry in a large town called Bures,\* he resolved to cut off this troop, which he executed with the utmost bravery, at the head of twelve hundred horse and a thousand horse-arquebusiers. A great number of the enemy were left dead upon the spot, and the rest betook themselves to flight; the duke of Guise's green standard was taken, and all the baggage plundered. Henry, who was not willing that any of these troopers should escape, especially their colonel, sent immediate orders to the duke of Nevers † to advance to Bully, that he might possess

\* In Beauvoisis.

† Lewis de Gonzague de Mantua, duke of Nevers by his marriage with Henrietta of Cleves, dutchess of Nevers.

himself of the road through which he supposed the duke of Guise and the fugitives would retreat to the rest of the army, and to take them prisoners. I was ordered to support the duke of Nevers with sixty horse, which I obeyed with reluctance, not doubting but in such hands the affair would have an end very unworthy the beginning.

The duke of Nevers, who was the slowest of all men, began by sending to make choice of the most favourable roads, and having fixed upon that which lay through Bully, he set out at a slow pace in his coach, with his hands in a muff, with which he covered his nose and mouth. This once he had no occasion to boast of his extreme caution: it was so long before he arrived that he gave time to the prince of Parma, who was more diligent than he, to dispatch a regiment of five or six hundred men to Bully, who made such haste that they reached the town in the beginning of the night. As for the duke of Nevers, the sun was risen the next day when he had just ascended the mountain, at the bottom of which Bully is situated, preceded by his couriers, whom he had that day doubled through an excess of caution against a flying enemy: the first, to the number of fifty, marched two or three miles before him; and the second, which amounted to an hundred, went some few paces before his coach. But unfortunately, with all his foresight, he forgot to make sure of this passage, and had not sent a single soldier to keep guard there. He began to descend the mountain with great tranquillity, and the more so, as he was ignorant of the troops that were in Bully. His first couriers reached the town without creating the least alarm, till they had got within it, when they saw near the gate a body of soldiers having the appearance of enemies, well armed, and sitting round a

large fire; the one party was not less surprised than the other; but those at the fire no sooner perceived the white scarfs of the others than they flew to arms, and shut the gates; our men finding they could not retreat the way they entered, galloped through the town with their pistols in their hands, and escaped out at a gate on the opposite side, before the troops of the enemy had time to stop them. Whilst this was going forward, the duke of Nevers was descending the mountain, not doubting but his advanced guard had proceeded onward without meeting with any opposition, and his coach was sunk into the deepest part of a declivity, equally steep, rugged, and winding. It was in this place that the duke heard the noise of some fusileers who were firing after his first couriers, and the second coming to make their report, full of consternation, he was frozen with terror, and resolving now to lose no time, threw away his muff and his furs, not without several times exclaiming, "The devil!" and quarrelling with his servants for not coming soon enough to help him out. All their endeavours could not turn the coach, which they were forced to drag back to the top of the mountain, where the duke again made use of it, to return with more speed to the place where he had lain the preceding night. It was thus that we seconded the king upon this occasion: a truly ridiculous exploit, where the danger was far less than the fear, since not a single man was lost.

The king finding that the prince of Parma, to avoid being forced to an action without his infantry, durst not, for the future, suffer his van-guard to be separated from the army; and perceiving that the king almost never lost sight of him, redoubled his vigilance and caution, which was, without doubt, the cause that he did not take all the advantage he might

have done of the encounter at Aumale, an action uncommonly bold on the king's side, and well deserving of a particular relation here.

Some days after the defeat of the duke of Guise, the king following the prince of Parma at a great distance, had advanced with six thousand horse as far as Aumale. Givry, whom he had sent at the head of some troopers to get intelligence, returned and informed him, that the enemy's army was advancing directly towards him in the plain, in good order, apparently with a design to force him back, and to cut him off in his retreat. The king called a council, and finding, as he said, that he had too many and too few soldiers, he resolved to send all his cavalry back to Ophy, Blangy, and Neufchâtel and to keep with him only four hundred troopers, and five hundred horse-arquebusiers, and with this body of men to advance into the plain, to discover exactly the condition and number of the enemy; and, hovering about them, to take or cut off some squadrons.

He ascended the hill of Aumale\* with his nine hundred horse, and marched two leagues without perceiving any thing, till the sky, which had been extremely cloudy and dark, becoming very clear, he a second time saw Givry return, who came to satisfy him in every particular relating to this army, which was so near that they heard distinctly the sound of the trumpets and drums. The king, however, willing to observe it himself, reconnoitred it very closely, and found that it consisted of seventeen or eighteen thousand infantry, with seven or eight thousand cavalry, all marching very close, the cavalry in the midst of the battalions, and the whole flanked with chariots and baggage, that ren-

\* In Normandy, upon the borders of Picardy.

dered all approach impossible. From this situation of the enemy, he found he had still too many men; and retaining only an hundred troopers, ordered the eight hundred others to repass the dyke and town of Aumale, and three hundred horse of his squadron to stop upon the declivity of the hill, to be ready to assist him, if there should be occasion. Five hundred arquebusiers he gave to the conduct of Lavardin, with orders to post them in the ditches and hedges that were at the entrance of the town, from whence they might harass the enemy, if they approached too near. As for himself, he not only waited for the enemy with his hundred horse, but even marched to meet them.

We now gazed upon each other with the utmost astonishment at the rashness of a design, which seemed to expose the king to inevitable death. No one durst venture to expostulate with him, yet knew not how to be silent. At length I was chosen, and deputed by the rest to represent to the king, in the name of us all, the danger to which he exposed himself, and to intreat him to change his resolution. This commission I performed with all imaginable caution. "It is fear," replied the king, "that occasions this request: from you, of all others, I never expected to hear such a proposition." I conjured him not to think so unjustly of any of us; and told him, that all we required was that he would give us what orders he pleased, provided he would himself retire. Henry confessed to me afterwards, that he was sensibly affected with these words; and repenting of what he had said to me, replied, that no expressions of our fidelity could equal the idea he conceived of it. "But," added he, coolly, and with an air that convinced me how vain it would be to speak to him any more upon this subject, "be

“you also assured, that I am not so rash as you  
“imagine; that I am as careful of myself as any  
“other, and that I will retreat so seasonably that no  
“misfortune shall happen.”

The prince of Parma looked upon this bold attempt as a snare that was laid for him, to draw his cavalry into an open field where he should meet with the king's, which he supposed to be concealed, and much superior to his; he even suspected a long time, that the king's whole army was not far off; and, having no design to engage him, he did not quit his post, which was in the centre of the army, where he was seated in an uncovered chariot, without arms or boots, and employed in giving orders to restrain the ardour of the soldiers, who suffered with impatience a hundred men to insult thirty thousand. However, when he was assured, by the report of his light horse and his carabineers, that at present he had but a hundred horse in front, and that if there were any cavalry it must be on the other side of the valley, he thought he should risk nothing by attacking us; which he did with such fury, and on so many points, that we were broke through, and driven back as far as the valley. Here it was that our arquebusiers had posted themselves; and on our arrival the king cried to them to charge, after having first warned us not to stir, in order that the enemy might suspect an ambuscade in this place, and stop. In effect, they did stop short; but finding that this cry was followed only with fifty or sixty shots which we fired upon them, they came on again more furiously.

Our arquebusiers, seized with fear, or perhaps willing to choose a more advantageous ground, had retired much lower than the place that had been assigned them, and they were the principal cause of

the misfortune that happened. The enemy's squadrons, encouraged by the little resistance they found, forced our ranks, and we could not hinder them from mixing amongst us. We saw ourselves reduced to the necessity of fighting with this vast multitude with pistols and swords, in a danger that may be easily imagined; and indeed, in my opinion, there could not be a greater; for our hundred troopers were already reduced to forty. Henry, seeing that none came to his assistance in this extremity, resolved to make his retreat, which, on this occasion, was almost as dangerous as a defence, because we had a bridge to pass, and that bridge at a great distance. This prince, with a composure truly admirable, placed himself in the rear of his troop, and made it file off towards the bridge of Aumale, which, by the order he caused to be observed, it passed over without confusion. He was the last to pass, and held firm against the enemy till every one of us was on the other side: that moment he was shot in the reins, which fortunately was the only wound he received, and which did not hinder him from continuing to fight on the other side of the bridge, while he was endeavouring to gain the hill, where the four hundred horse he had sent thither made so good an appearance, that the prince of Parma, being more than ever persuaded that the king only sought to draw him to a battle, forbid his troops to advance, and ordered them all to return to Aumale.

The king reached Neufchâtel, where his wound obliged him to go to bed. The surgeons removed our fears and consternation by assuring us that it was a very inconsiderable one. He obliged us to come near his bed, and conversed with us familiarly on the dangers of that day: upon which I observed,

as something very extraordinary, that amongst all of us, who were in the room, there were not two who agreed\* in the recital of the most particular circumstances of the action.† However, there are, perhaps few kings whose lives will afford so splendid an instance of valour and good conduct. But Henry was always too prodigal of his own blood, and too careful of that of his soldiers.

The prince of Parma's extreme prudence failed him upon this occasion: it hindered him from cutting off our whole squadron, and finishing the war that day by the death or capture of the king; for the one or other was inevitable. But he was determined to undertake nothing till he was joined by the duke of Maienne, not being willing to bear alone all the inconveniences of a war, of which he was not to have the sole advantage.

The duke could not comprehend the cause of this delay in the chief of the league: the suspicions he entertained of it made him suddenly change the march

\* There is scarce any skirmish or battle of which as much may not be said. Although there are a great number of writers, and even contemporaries, who have treated of the military exploits contained in these Memoirs, I cannot meet with two who agree exactly in these descriptions. D'Aubigné, in that of the encounter at Aumale does not even mention the king's wound, which was the only one he ever received in his life. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 100, and our best historians, differ but little from our Memoirs.

† Henry having sent to the prince of Parma to ask his opinion of this retreat, he replied, that "indeed it was a very fine one: but that, for his part, he never engaged in any place from whence he was obliged to retire." *Peres.* *ibid.* part ii. It was on this occasion that Du-Plessis-Mornay wrote this excellent letter to the king: "Sire you have been long enough an Alexander: it is time you should now be an Augustus; it is our glory and duty to die for you, and yours, I dare tell you, sire, to live for France," &c. Notes upon the *Henriade*.



of his army, and take the road back again to the Somme, an action very pardonable in a foreigner, who saw himself in the midst of a strange country, where he alone was to sustain the war. Henry, who, without considering what was glorious for himself in this last battle, called it only the *error of Aumale*, and being solicitous to repair this heroic error, could not resolve to suffer the Spanish general quietly to retreat; putting off therefore the cure of his wound to another time, he again mounted his horse, and harassed the prince continually, only regretting that he could not do more. But he had a most wary general to deal with, who, notwithstanding all his endeavours, presented him always with an infantry in front, which he could not break through; and observed so prudent a conduct, that it was not possible, even at the passage of the river, to have an encounter with him. The king at length, quitting him at Pontdormy, returned to Neufchâtel, to have his wound cured, at the house of monsieur de Claire; where I was received as a friend and relation. I kept only a valet de chambre, a page, and a footman with me, and sent all the rest of my equipage to my quarters before Rouen.

The success of the siege became more uncertain every day: at last the king was informed, by a courier, that Villars, at the head of two hundred musquetiers, and three or four hundred soldiers, had in the night made a furious sally on the side of Darnetal; that he had penetrated even into the king's quarters, where he had cut all the German foot to pieces, and carried off six pieces of cannon, and all the powder; that afterwards, pursuing his advantage he had fallen upon the trench, which he attacked from behind; had killed there three or four hundred men, and put the rest to flight: in a word, that he

did not retire till he had destroyed almost all the works of the besiegers.

This news gave great displeasure to the king, because he knew these disasters had happened through the negligence of the marshal Biron, though he would not accuse him for fear of giving him offence,\* and of creating any misunderstanding with the most ill-disposed of the Catholics (who on the least disaster attributed every thing to the king's religion), lest they should abandon him at this important conjuncture: therefore not to displease the ill natured, nor to discourage the good, he affected to make light of the matter, and said aloud, that it was nothing, and that he would in a few days repair all these little reverses (inseparable from warfare) by gaining a second, or rather a third battle. But this language could not regain the affections of the most ill-tempered of the Catholics, nor prevent their betraying by their looks and gestures, and their predictions of bad fortune as long as ever the king continued a Huguenot, how unwillingly they endured the power of a sovereign of that religion, and their hatred against the professors of it: indeed, they were so far impelled by this hatred, as to recommend one of the most cruel and shameful actions imaginable, this was to dig up the bodies of the

\* There cannot be a stronger proof of the respect and deference which Henry IV. thought himself obliged to shew the marshal Biron, than what this prince said one day to Châtillon, on a certain occasion, when that young man offered some very reasonable advice, but contrary to that given by the marshal: "The goslings," said he, "would lead the geese to pasture. When your beard is white, perhaps you will have acquired some knowledge, but at present I do not approve of your speaking so freely:" that belongs only to my father here," pointing to Biron, who had threatened to retire. "We must," pursued he, embracing him. "go all to his school." *Matthieu*, vol. II. p. 16.

Huguenots who had fallen in the late sortie, and who had been interred promiscuously with the Catholics in the neighbouring churchyards, and to cast them to the wolves and crows: but the difficulty of distinguishing the one from the other, and the threats of retaliation by the army (two-thirds of which were Huguenots) deterred the authors of such outrages from their design. The king was more afflicted by these dissensions than either by his wound, or his other misfortunes; but his resolution, his constancy, and invincible courage, soon changed the face of things.

IV. A few days after the above events Henry received certain intelligence that the duke of Maienne, after having restored order in Paris, had joined the prince of Parma, with all the troops he could collect, and also those under the duke de Sfondrato, and that they were advancing with the intention of giving him battle. The king immediately forgetting all his late reverses, testified so much joy at this intelligence, and appeared so confident of a victory, should he bring the enemy to an engagement, that he completely regained those who had become indifferent to his cause, and the fate of France.

That he might gain time to abandon his lines without confusion, and regulate the order of his march, the king sent Givry to throw himself into Neufchâtel,\* which the enemy would be obliged to take before they could come to Rouen. This, although a very strong place, did not hold out near so long as was expected: the cause of which is difficult to be assigned; but the whole blame was cast upon Palcheux, who was much weaker, and worse sustained, than Givry.† Although an old officer,

\* A city in the county of Caux.

† “Neufchâtel might have been taken in an hour’s time,” says

and distinguished by his actions and his wounds, he sustained all the violence of the storm, and was put under arrest at Dieppe. The relations and friends whom the garrison of Neufchâtel had in the party of the league, seemed to me to be the true cause why the place made so slight a resistance. It surrendered in the middle of March, 1592. The king, by his care and diligence, repaired this misfortune, and brought off his troops from Rouen without receiving the least check;\* and, putting himself at their head, advanced without loss of time to that side on which the prince of Parma was approaching the city.

On his arrival at a plain, where the enemy's army must pass, he waited for it; and as soon as it appeared, sent and offered the prince of Parma battle. The prince accepted it with a joy that was far from being sincere: he was afraid of engaging with a general such as he knew Henry to be, and of exposing to the event of a battle the reputation of the greatest warrior in Europe, which a long series of great actions had acquired him amongst his partizans. Finding himself now in a situation where he might be forced to fight, he had recourse to one of the most artful stratagems imaginable to avoid it: he caused the best troops in his army to advance, and composed of them a front of battle, behind which he drew

Matthieu; who nevertheless, as well as the duke of Sully, blamed Givry for surrendering without making greater resistance, vol. II. p. 102.

\* This siege cost the king a great many soldiers: it was said at the time, that he lost three thousand men, and the besieged only a hundred and twenty. The earl of Essex challenged admiral de Villars to single combat, who replied that his quality of governor would not allow him to accept his challenge. See the Chron. Novenn. and Mezerai.

up, as without design, all his cavalry. Under favour of this front of infantry, in such order as was usual for an action, and seeming to wait only for the signal, all his cavalry, the remainder of his foot, and the whole baggage, entered into the defiles which served for an outlet to the enemy's camp; and, covered by hills and bushes, which the prince of Parma knew well how to take advantage of, they saw themselves immediately out of reach of the king's army, who were ignorant of all that passed behind the camp. This front of infantry, which had no depth, taking the same rout after the others, in four and twenty hours all disappeared; nor was it possible, on account of the ground being full of narrow streights and necks of mountains, to disorder the enemy's retreat, or to engage with his rear guard.

The prince of Parma was extremely rejoiced, that, without the least loss, he had reached almost the gates of Rouen. He knew no person would be rash enough to attempt to attack him under the walls of that city; his design, therefore, was to stay there six weeks, which was a sufficient time to refresh his army, and afterwards to march back to the Somme by Neufchâtel, Aumale, St. Valery, \* and Pontdormy, confining all the expeditions of this campaign to the advantage of putting this capital, and the rest of the cities that kept firm to the league, in such a condition as to apprehend nothing from the king's army. Henry penetrated into this general's views, and laying aside his design of making head against an army so advantageously posted, suffered the prince of Parma to enjoy his triumph, and laid another snare for him. He disbanded his

\* St. Valery in Picardy.

whole army, as if it were now become useless to him, or that he were constrained to it by necessity. Part was dispersed in Arques, Dieppe, Gournai, Andely, Gisors, Magny, and other distant places; and part had Mante, Meulan, and the adjoining places for its quarters: the rest he spread about Pont de l'Arche,\* Evreux, Passy, Vernon, Conches, and Breteuil, and fixed his head quarters at Louviers. This conduct was sufficiently justified by appearances: it would not have been long possible to have subsisted a numerous army, had he kept them together; but by the disposition of his quarters, particularly the last, where he had distributed all his best troops, and the promise he had exacted from his officers to repair to Pont de l'Arche at the first order, it was easy for him to reassemble his army in a short time. This separation, he did not doubt, would make the Spanish general perfectly secure, and furnish him with some means of surprising him, at least in his retreat.

Indeed the prince of Parma, fearing that Rouen, surrounded by so large an army, would be in want of provisions, and being told that there would be no danger in spreading his army over the country, he sent part of his troops to Pontaudemer: D'Hacqueville † delivered up this city to him cowardly enough; and the king not only seemed to be indifferent about it, but also feigned ignorance of the enemy's design upon Caudebec,‡ which greatly

\* All these cities, as well as the places abovenamed, are in Upper Normandy.

† — de Vieuxpont, lord d'Hacqueville. He was gained, it is said, by a sum of money.

‡ Upon the Seine, above Rouen.

annoyed the city of Rouen, and neglecting to send supplies to La Garde, who was governor of it, suffered this place to be taken likewise. He observed, with extreme satisfaction, that the enemy, after these two conquests, drawn by the conveniency of lodgings and provisions, extended themselves along the Seine, below Rouen, as far as they could. The Spanish general, however, was not without suspicion of some design in this inactivity, so unusual with Henry; and probably, had he been the sole commander of this army, he would not have hazarded so much; but his colleague, the duke of Maienne, who was detained in Rouen by indisposition, assured him there was no danger; and he believed it, upon a supposition that he was better acquainted with the state of the country.

The king, finding the enemy contributed of themselves to serve his designs, resolved to hasten the execution of them. In less than eight days he assembled twenty thousand foot, and eight thousand horse, with which he speedily advanced to Vari-carville and Fontaine-le-bourg. He shut up all the passages between Rouen and Caudebec, and began with revenging himself completely for the taking of this place and Pontaudemer, by cutting off from the troops, which were there, all communication with the main body of the army, which put them wholly into his power. He afterwards went in person with ten thousand foot, and three thousand troopers, to attack the enemy's vanguard, commanded by the duke of Guise. The surprise into which his sudden arrival threw this troop, gave him an easy conquest of them. The duke's squadrons were broken through at the first onset, and he was obliged to fly with precipitation towards the

body of the battalions, leaving, with a great number of the slain, all the baggage, which was very considerable, in the power of the victor.

The prince of Parma, struck as with a thunderbolt at this news, applied himself wholly to securing his other quarters, by placing the duke of Guise at Yvetot, and in fortifying the camp, in which he lodged his dispersed troops, on all sides. He was desirous of quartering all the army there; but as this camp was too small to contain it, he commanded the rest not to remove far from it, to guard their posts with great care, and to keep themselves very close. After this precaution, which he did not think sufficient, to support all the lodgments spread around his camp, he posted three thousand men in a wood which bounded them, fortified this wood all round with intrenchments, and united it by a line of communication with his camp. The last step the king had taken made him extremely formidable to the prince of Parma; but that prince thought to escape him by his great foresight and diligence in going wherever his presence was necessary: however, he was again mistaken. The next day the king ordered the baron de Biron to attack the wood with a body of eight thousand infantry, composed of an equal number of English, Dutch, and Germans, in order that they might be animated by emulation to excel each other, and caused them to be supported by six hundred troopers completely armed. The attack lasted three hours, at the end of which the wood was carried; those who defended it, seeing themselves broke through, fled in disorder to the fortified camp, after having lost eight hundred of their men. Their flight exposed the greatest part of the lodgments, particularly that of Yvetot, where the prince of



Parma thought he had inclosed, as in a safe asylum, the duke of Guise, with the same vanguard that had been so badly handled before. Henry, as if he had a personal hatred to the duke of Guise, hastened to reconnoitre the quarter of Yvetot, and judging by the alarm, and the confused cries he heard there, that their consternation was not yet over, he fell upon this quarter with four hundred musquetiers and a thousand foot, armed with pistols and halberds, and attacked it in several places at the same time. The prince of Parma, who had not expected such rapid exploits, saw his whole vanguard upon the point of being put to the sword; and taking counsel only of necessity, hastened thither himself, and vigorously repulsed our efforts, till the troops of this whole quarter had gained the fortified camp. He lost there seven or eight hundred men, almost all private soldiers. The greatest misfortune was, that in this action, wherein he behaved like a man who knew as well how to fight as to command, he received a very dangerous wound in the arm.\*

\* The little reliance one can have on the exactness of those military details which the historians gave us, is shewn particularly in this, in which I have observed a great many contradictions amongst them, with regard to the encampments, and the number and date of the encounters. The author of these Memoirs relates all these expeditions in such a manner, that he seems to allow but three or four days for actions which could not, and were not, performed in less than three weeks. He can no otherwise be justified, than by supposing that he intended to give a slight notion only of this campaign. D'Aubigné, either because he was ignorant of the facts, or had no design to relate them minutely, gives room for the same mistake as our Memoirs, vol. III. b. iii. c. 15. It is in De Thou, Davila, Matthieu, Cayet, and the Memoirs of the League for the year 1592, that we must look for them; although, as I have just said, their relations differ in many circumstances. According to the Memoirs of the League, which, in my opinion, merit most to

Night approached before this battle was ended. The king, instead of taking any rest after a day of such extraordinary fatigue, employed the night wholly in preparing himself for greater advantages. Judging, therefore, that the enemy's army, numerous indeed, and covered with intrenchments, yet dismayed, and half vanquished, would keep close within the camp, where their numbers would do them more harm than good, he hesitated not a moment in resolving to storm it. That readiness and dispatch which governed all the actions of this prince, was in him not only the effect of nature, but the fruit of reading, in particular the lives of Cæsar and Scipio, whom he studied in preference to all the conquerors of antiquity. He drew out in the night six pieces of cannon, which he directed against the fortification of the camp, that he might make use of them at the dawn of day. He visited his whole army; and kept it in such a disposition, that it might at the same time and place be drawn out in order of battle. His commands were executed with the greatest exactness: his former successes gave

be credited, the king defeated the duke of Guise on the 28th of April, and another body of troops on the first of May: on the 5th he attacked the fortifications before the camp; and on the 10th, at five o'clock in the morning, began the great attack, in which the prince of Parma received his dangerous wound, vol. V. De Thou will have it, that it was at the taking of Caudebec that the prince of Parma was wounded, and that he did not pass the Seine till the 22d of May, b. ciii. Cayet is of the same opinion, vol. II. b. iv. p. 82, and following. Matthieu blames Henry IV. for not taking the duke of Maienne prisoner at the skirmish of Yvetot, and, with as little reason, for avoiding a decisive battle, p. 109. The king is by some others accused of a still greater error, in being ignorant of the prince of Parma's preparations to pass the river, and with not knowing how to prevent him.

an authority to all his words, that made the most mutinous obedient.

Here it is impossible to forbear praising the prince of Parma for a conduct, which, in my opinion, can never be sufficiently admired. His camp lay between Rouen and Caudebec, at some distance from the Seine, over which, in all that space, there was not any bridge; yet the next morning the whole camp was deserted; all the troops, who indeed lay there, it may be said, in heaps one upon another, those that were in Caudebec, and, in general, all that were spread about the neighbourhood of it, had transported themselves to the other side of the river. Scarce could the king and his army trust the evidence of their own eyes.

The prince of Parma had foreseen the king's resolution to attack him in his camp the next day; and he did not doubt, after what had passed, but it would be stormed, and his whole army delivered up to the mercy of the victors: a useless foresight, and only productive of despair to any other, whose prudence had not beforehand provided a resource: for notwithstanding all the duke of Maienne's representations, he had not delivered himself up so entirely to that security he would have inspired him with, as to neglect any means that might extricate him from danger, if it should happen that he should be one day obliged to engage with the enemy in a country where there were so few resources, as on the borders of the Seine below Rouen.

These measures had been to provide himself secretly with all the boats he could find, which he caused to be brought near Caudebec, and it was to this precaution, which few generals would have

been capable of, that the prince of Parma owed the safety of his troops, and the preservation of his glory, reputation, and perhaps his life. He caused these boats to be laid over the river in the night; and notwithstanding the disorder of his camp, and the inconvenience arising from his wound, he gave such good orders, that a bridge was built that very night, over which his whole army and baggage passed securely. This we received particular information of the next day at Caudebec, which surrendered as soon as we approached. He only deserves the reputation of a consummate warrior, who, before a battle, is as cautious as if he were persuaded he should be conquered, and in it behaves as if he were sure of conquering.

On the king's side, but one moment was lost in astonishment: all the others were employed in taking speedy measures to deprive the Spanish general of part of the fruits of his dexterity. Henry, after having well considered his attempt, and removed all doubts of success from his own mind, held a council of war, and there proposed to pass his army over Pont de l'Arche, or at Vernon, and pursue the enemy immediately. Some of us, though indeed a very small number, supported this proposition as it deserved: if it had been followed, this campaign had perhaps put an end to the war; but, as it should seem, the prince of Parma, having performed actions that raised him above humanity, obliged fortune now to come over to his side; for, upon the proposal of marching the army to Pont de l'Arche, a cry was raised in the council, and a kind of general mutiny, as if the king had made the most unreasonable proposition imaginable. The Catholics, the Protestants, and the foreigners, seemed to outvie each other in searching for difficulties to

oppose it : they exclaimed that the prince of Parma's army, being in a level country, might reach the gates of Paris\* in four or five days ; whereas it would be as long before we could gain Pont de l'Arche. They represented to the king, that the way through which they must pass being full of forests, mountains, and defiles, the army could reach the rendezvous only in small divisions ; and that, although it should even have time to come up with that of the league, the fatigue of so troublesome a march would make it impossible for them to attack it. In a word, they all treated this proposal as a design equally ridiculous and chimerical.

The king, more enraged at the secret intentions of those who talked to him in this manner, than the purport of their discourse, could not refrain from replying, with some bitterness, that all these difficulties were only insurmountable to those, to whom fear, and a dislike of fatigue, made them appear so. He plainly shewed them that they might reach Pont de l'Arche in two days, and Vernon in four, from whence they could always send detachments of four or five hundred horse to retard the prince of Parma's march, to which also the many obstacles he would meet with would contribute, such as the passage over the river Eure ; Louviers, Passy, Maintenon, Nogent-le-Roi, and Chartres, all being sufficient to oblige him to go greatly out of his way : that the enemy had no bridges open to them, but those of Aquigny, Cocherel, Serisi, and two or three others, which lay out of their road ; and that it would not be impossible to break down or

\* It is acknowledged by de Thou, that the king might have stopt this army, by sending his cavalry to shut up the passage to Pont de l'Arche. It is with great injustice, as we find here, that he charges Henry IV. with this error.

burn part of these bridges, before the enemy could arrive.

These arguments sufficiently proved the king's scheme to be not only possible but practicable; and it may be said, that the general officers, by refusing to yield to them, resisted the strongest conviction. And this naturally occasions two reflections: first, how it happened that a prince, who in all his expeditions made use of mercenaries, picked up wherever he could find them, of different countries, manners, religions, and interests, often a very small number, and always ready to mutiny, was able to perform what is related of him? The second is, what this prince would have done, if, instead of such troops, he had had a considerable number of well-disciplined soldiers under his command, all united, obedient to his will, constantly attached to his person, and willing to sacrifice their lives for him; in a word, such troops as those conquerors had, whose actions have been so highly extolled by posterity? If these reflections are not made every time they offer, it is because that must be done in every page: and, besides, no one can be ignorant, that we should judge very ill of merit and abilities by success, if we did not at the same time judge of the success by the obstacles.

It is scarce possible to assign a reason for that invincible obstinacy which the general officers in the king's army discovered upon this occasion, in opposing so prudent a proposal, unless it was owing to that disposition of mind which I have just now mentioned. If a small number of French Protestants be excepted, whose fidelity was unquestionable, and most of the English troops, who seemed to act sincerely with us, all the rest of the king's

army, Protestants, Catholics, and foreigners, served him without affection, often unwillingly, and perhaps wished, more than they feared, that he might suffer some considerable loss. However, notwithstanding this bad disposition towards their leader, on some occasions they all performed their duty, and seconded him bravely: such were the attack of the duke of Guise, the encounter at the wood, and the battle that followed it. Such would have been the attack of the prince of Parma's camp, if he had waited for us; for at that time all the king's operations, which he knew well how to make dependent upon each other, were executed with such rapidity, that he did not suffer their courage, when once heated, to have time to cool, nor their minds to return to their usual habits of thinking: the behaviour, likewise, of a small number of brave men is alone sufficient to raise emulation in a whole army, and force it to follow their example, when they are once engaged: but this fierceness, and this ardour abated, their former ideas return with greater violence, and are so much the more capable of embittering their minds, as they then become sensible that they have done the very contrary of what they intended.

Unhappily the leaders of the royal army were in this unfavourable disposition, when the king made a motion to pursue the prince of Parma. The Catholics, who had a little time before publicly declared that they were resolved to withdraw their assistance, if the king did not abjure Calvinism within a certain term, which they prescribed to him, and reunite themselves with the rest of France, in order to elect a king of their own religion, these Catholics could not relish a project, which, by

making the king master of his enemies, would consequently put him in a condition to give them law, instead of receiving it from them.

The Huguenots, who feared this change of religion as much as the Catholics endeavoured to enhance the necessity of it, took umbrage at every thing, and always thought they were upon the point of being sacrificed, while the king only sacrificed himself to that necessity which obliged him to endeavour to gain the Catholics. Through an apprehension that, by extirpating the league, they should only labour for the Catholics against their own interest, they the easier reconciled themselves to circumstances which would at least make the balance even, and render them necessary: and, in case the king should one day forsake their religion, they were resolved to take such measures beforehand, as might make them be feared both by the Catholics, and by him whom they should give them for a master.

These precautions were, to procure a number of towns to be yielded to them, to obtain such favourable edicts, and so many other securities, that the king, although a Catholic, should find it his interest to keep on good terms with them. It was towards this end that the duke of Bouillon, who governed absolutely the resolutions of the party, directed all his views, and to which he made the five or six hundred German horse under his command subservient. On the slightest occasion of discontent, or rather on the first caprice, they broke into murmurs, and threatened, as they did then, that they would return immediately to Germany. The king, being obliged to behave in such a manner as to satisfy equally parties so opposite, was greatly perplexed by his endeavours to stifle these seeds of



division: he was desirous of avoiding an open rupture, or at least of protracting it, till he should be out of danger. It was this perplexity that reduced him to compliances very prejudicial to his affairs.

No labyrinth was ever more intricate than that complication of interests which divided the different parties composing the king's army. I have yet but touched upon the smallest part. The Catholics, besides their common object, had each of them his own private one in view, which was to make Henry purchase their personal services at a very high price; and he was convinced, that without this satisfaction he could not bring affairs to a general conclusion. The interests of the French Calvinists were not entirely the same with those of the foreign Protestants. There were certain times when the English, who alone were united, murmured amongst themselves, that, in all the dangers they were exposed to, they were actuated by a principle of generosity, which, whatever turn affairs might take, would bring them no advantage; and, while this reflection employed their minds, they would look upon themselves as madmen, who sacrificed their lives purely to gratify the passions of foreigners, and demand leave to retire, as they did upon this occasion, when they absolutely refused to engage beyond the Seine, seeing neither any security or resource for them in a country at such a distance from the sea. To exasperate them still more, and to strengthen their suspicions, the Catholics seized those moments of discontent to persuade them, that the king's abjuration was become absolutely necessary.

With regard to the other foreigners, who only acted as they were paid for their services, d'O, and these same Catholics, had a secret equally short and

infallible, and they made use of it frequently: this was to keep the king in want of money. Therefore, when the Swiss and German horse were asked if they would pursue the prince of Parma, they replied only by demanding their pay; swearing, that, if it was not instantly given them, they would return to their homes, or engage in the service of the league.

Even the Spaniards, the king's declared enemies, had also their intrigues, and took part in this prince's affairs. At this very time they made a proposal to him, not only to withdraw their troops, but even to lend them to him, to serve him against the league, in a word, to put the crown upon his head, provided he would yield Burgundy and Brittany to them for ever; and, in order to remove those scruples which so liberal an offer might raise in the king's mind, they recalled to his remembrance the example of Francis I. who, they said, in a situation less pressing, had given up to them the sovereignty\* of Flanders and Artois; and that of Henry II. who had given Spain more towns than were contained in both those provinces.† The king had sufficient reason to believe that so unseasonable a proposition was a piece

\* By the treaty which was made during the imprisonment of that prince at Madrid, the 25th of February 1526, Francis I. resigned his claim there likewise to the dutchies of Burgundy and Milan, to the kingdom of Naples, &c. but this treaty was declared void by the states of the kingdom assembled at Cognac.

† By the treaty of Château-Cambresis, in Jan. 1559, after the battle of St. Quentin, for three cities only of Ham, Câtelet, and St. Quentin, France yielded to Spain and her allies more than an hundred and fifty fortified places. The constable Montmerency's jealousy of the duke of Guise, and his eagerness to be freed from his confinement, made him conclude this treaty, at which the whole kingdom murmured.

of Spanish artifice, similar to that attempted at Hagemau, which tended only to create more confusion, and render him suspected both by the Protestants and Catholics; but had this proposition been really sincere, he had an infinitely stronger motive for rejecting it, which was the implacable hatred he bore to Spain and the house of Austria.

At last even the league, for some view or other, entered into the resolutions that were taken in the king's council. Villeroy, Jeannin, Zamet, and others, offered in the name of the league, to place him on the throne under certain conditions. It is very difficult to guess the true cause of this step: whether disgust at the pride and insolence of the Spaniards, an artifice to procure new supplies, or a design to alienate the Protestants from the king. The only evidence of the sincerity of this proposition was the very hard conditions that were annexed to it: I shall soon have occasion to enlarge upon this subject.

One of the least of the consequences of this chaos of views and interests was the spreading over every affair an impenetrable obscurity, and creating in every mind jealousy and distrust. It is indeed surprising, that after this the Protestants and Catholics could live together in the same camp, without exposing the king to the grief of seeing them come to blows, and cutting each other's throats. Those who seek in a prince what is termed policy, will here find sufficient cause to praise the prudence of a king who kept so many jarring interests united, and to admire his discernment in distinguishing those who acted with fidelity towards him: nor ought it to pass unobserved, that while so many various designs were secretly agitated, in outward appearance all was tranquillity and order: falsehood assumed the

semblance of truth, and enmity concealed itself under the disguise of friendship. Those who pretended the greatest affection to the king, either betrayed him, or laboured only to advance their own interest.

It would be useless to dissemble, that the marshal de Biron often played this part, either through malice at being refused the government of Rouen, a desire of protracting the war,\* or a disposition that took pleasure in creating discord and confusion. He was never known to agree with the general opinion, or to yield to the king's inclinations: he always contradicted, either for the sole pleasure of contradicting, or because he would oblige every one to embrace his opinion. In the council, when the question that has occasioned this digression was debated, he was neither for pursuing the enemy, nor for staying in Normandy: he thought it was necessary to get before and wait for the prince of Parma on the frontiers of Picardy, through which he would be obliged to pass in his return to Flanders; a project uncommonly chimerical, but which was immediately applauded by the Protestants who were devoted to the will of the marshal.

The king saw plainly, that all endeavours to retain such discontented troops in his service would be in vain. The campaign was drawing towards an end, and a siege so long and fatiguing as that of Rouen made the soldiers extremely desirous of rest. The king was resolved to grant it them: he followed that maxim, that a prince should always have the appearance of doing voluntarily even what he is constrained to do. He told the foreigners, that he

\* "What then, rascal! wouldst thou send us to plant cabbages at Biron?" said the marshal to his son, who proposed to him an expedient to finish the war at one blow. *Prefixe, part ii. ibid.*

was willing they should return home, and gave them permission to do so. He distributed all the money he had amongst them, leaving himself without any to supply his necessary expenses; and though they were not wholly satisfied in this respect, yet they had reason to be pleased with the noble manner in which he praised and thanked them for their services. As he had left Normandy in peace, and (except Rouen, and a few other cities) entirely reduced under his obedience; and as there was no reason to apprehend that the army of the league would come thither soon, he permitted all the officers of his army, as well Catholics as Protestants, to retire to their homes: and, to lay the marshal de Biron under a necessity of not abandoning him with his Protestants, which, after this permission, he foresaw he would do, he declared that he would follow his advice, and in a few days would set forwards to Picardy; not that he really entered into the marshal's views, but as he had not yet shewn himself in that province, nor in Champagne, he thought it necessary to make himself known there, and to endeavour to conciliate the affections of the people towards him. A secret and more powerful motive\* contributed to favour and confirm this resolution; and Biron, who knew and flattered the king's weakness, drew from thence his best reason.

\* His passion for mademoiselle d'Estrées. He sometimes stole away from his army to go and see her. He once disguised himself like a countryman, passed through the midst of the enemy's guards, and came to her house, not without hazarding the danger of being taken. Notes upon the Henriade.