BOOK TENTH.

CHAPTER I. GRINGOIRE HAS MANY GOOD IDEAS IN SUCCESSION.--RUE DES BERNARDINS.

As soon as Pierre Gringoire had seen how this whole affair was turning, and that there would decidedly be the rope, hanging, and other disagreeable things for the principal personages in this comedy, he had not cared to identify himself with the matter further. The outcasts with whom he had remained, reflecting that, after all, it was the best company in Paris,--the outcasts had continued to interest themselves in behalf of the gypsy. He had thought it very simple on the part of people who had, like herself, nothing else in prospect but Charmolue and Torterue, and who, unlike himself, did not gallop through the regions of imagination between the wings of Pegasus. From their remarks, he had learned that his wife of the broken crock had taken refuge in Notre-Dame, and he was very glad of it. But he felt no temptation to go and see her there. He meditated occasionally on the little goat, and that was all. Moreover, he was busy executing feats of strength during

the day for his living, and at night he was engaged in composing a memorial against the Bishop of Paris, for he remembered having been drenched by the wheels of his mills, and he cherished a grudge against him for it. He also occupied himself with annotating the fine work of Baudry-le-Rouge, Bishop of Noyon and Tournay, De Cupa Petrarum, which had given him a violent passion for architecture, an inclination which had replaced in his heart his passion for hermeticism, of which it was, moreover, only a natural corollary, since there is an intimate relation between hermeticism and masonry. Gringoire had passed from the love of an idea to the love of the form of that idea.

One day he had halted near Saint Germain-l'Auxerrois, at the corner of a mansion called "For-l'Evêque" (the Bishop's Tribunal), which stood opposite another called "For-le-Roi" (the King's Tribunal). At this For-l'Evêque, there was a charming chapel of the fourteenth century, whose apse was on the street. Gringoire was devoutly examining its exterior sculptures. He was in one of those moments of egotistical, exclusive, supreme, enjoyment when the artist beholds nothing in the world but art, and the world in art. All at once he feels a hand laid gravely on his shoulder. He turns round. It was his old friend, his former master, monsieur the archdeacon.

He was stupefied. It was a long time since he had seen the archdeacon, and Dom Claude was one of those solemn and impassioned men, a meeting with whom always upsets the equilibrium of a sceptical philosopher.

The archdeacon maintained silence for several minutes, during which

Gringoire had time to observe him. He found Dom Claude greatly changed; pale as a winter's morning, with hollow eyes, and hair almost white. The priest broke the silence at length, by saying, in a tranquil but glacial tone,--

"How do you do, Master Pierre?"

"My health?" replied Gringoire. "Eh! eh! one can say both one thing and another on that score. Still, it is good, on the whole. I take not too much of anything. You know, master, that the secret of keeping well, according to Hippocrates; id est: cibi, potus, somni, venus, omnia moderata sint."

"So you have no care, Master Pierre?" resumed the archdeacon, gazing intently at Gringoire.

"None, i' faith!"

"And what are you doing now?"

"You see, master. I am examining the chiselling of these stones, and the manner in which yonder bas-relief is thrown out."

The priest began to smile with that bitter smile which raises only one corner of the mouth.

"And that amuses you?"

"'Tis paradise!" exclaimed Gringoire. And leaning over the sculptures with the fascinated air of a demonstrator of living phenomena: "Do you not think, for instance, that yon metamorphosis in bas-relief is executed with much adroitness, delicacy and patience? Observe that slender column. Around what capital have you seen foliage more tender and better caressed by the chisel. Here are three raised bosses of Jean Maillevin. They are not the finest works of this great master. Nevertheless, the naivete, the sweetness of the faces, the gayety of the attitudes and draperies, and that inexplicable charm which is mingled with all the defects, render the little figures very diverting and delicate, perchance, even too much so. You think that it is not diverting?"

"Yes, certainly!" said the priest.

"And if you were to see the interior of the chapel!" resumed the poet, with his garrulous enthusiasm. "Carvings everywhere. 'Tis as thickly clustered as the head of a cabbage! The apse is of a very devout, and so peculiar a fashion that I have never beheld anything like it elsewhere!"

Dom Claude interrupted him,--

"You are happy, then?"

Gringoire replied warmly;--

"On my honor, yes! First I loved women, then animals. Now I love stones. They are quite as amusing as women and animals, and less treacherous."

The priest laid his hand on his brow. It was his habitual gesture.

"Really?"

"Stay!" said Gringoire, "one has one's pleasures!" He took the arm of the priest, who let him have his way, and made him enter the staircase turret of For-l'Evêque. "Here is a staircase! every time that I see it I am happy. It is of the simplest and rarest manner of steps in Paris. All the steps are bevelled underneath. Its beauty and simplicity consist in the interspacing of both, being a foot or more wide, which are interlaced, interlocked, fitted together, enchained enchased, interlined one upon another, and bite into each other in a manner that is truly firm and graceful."

"And you desire nothing?"

"No."

"And you regret nothing?"

"Neither regret nor desire. I have arranged my mode of life."

"What men arrange," said Claude, "things disarrange."

"I am a Pyrrhonian philosopher," replied Gringoire, "and I hold all things in equilibrium."

"And how do you earn your living?"

"I still make epics and tragedies now and then; but that which brings me in most is the industry with which you are acquainted, master; carrying pyramids of chairs in my teeth."

"The trade is but a rough one for a philosopher."

"'Tis still equilibrium," said Gringoire. "When one has an idea, one encounters it in everything."

"I know that," replied the archdeacon.

After a silence, the priest resumed,--

"You are, nevertheless, tolerably poor?"

"Poor, yes; unhappy, no."

At that moment, a trampling of horses was heard, and our two interlocutors beheld defiling at the end of the street, a company of the king's unattached archers, their lances borne high, an officer at their head. The cavalcade was brilliant, and its march resounded on the pavement.

"How you gaze at that officer!" said Gringoire, to the archdeacon.

"Because I think I recognize him."

"What do you call him?"

"I think," said Claude, "that his name is Phoebus de Châteaupers."

"Phoebus! A curious name! There is also a Phoebus, Comte de Foix. I remember having known a wench who swore only by the name of Phoebus."

"Come away from here," said the priest. "I have something to say to you."

From the moment of that troop's passing, some agitation had pierced through the archdeacon's glacial envelope. He walked on. Gringoire followed him, being accustomed to obey him, like all who had once approached that man so full of ascendency. They reached in silence the Rue des Bernardins, which was nearly deserted. Here Dom Claude paused.

"What have you to say to me, master?" Gringoire asked him.

"Do you not think that the dress of those cavaliers whom we have just seen is far handsomer than yours and mine?"

Gringoire tossed his head.

"I' faith! I love better my red and yellow jerkin, than those scales of iron and steel. A fine pleasure to produce, when you walk, the same noise as the Quay of Old Iron, in an earthquake!"

"So, Gringoire, you have never cherished envy for those handsome fellows in their military doublets?"

"Envy for what, monsieur the archdeacon? their strength, their armor, their discipline? Better philosophy and independence in rags. I prefer to be the head of a fly rather than the tail of a lion."

"That is singular," said the priest dreamily. "Yet a handsome uniform is a beautiful thing."

Gringoire, perceiving that he was in a pensive mood, quitted him to go and admire the porch of a neighboring house. He came back clapping his hands.

"If you were less engrossed with the fine clothes of men of war, monsieur the archdeacon, I would entreat you to come and see this door. I have always said that the house of the Sieur Aubry had the most superb entrance in the world."

"Pierre Gringoire," said the archdeacon, "What have you done with that little gypsy dancer?"

"La Esmeralda? You change the conversation very abruptly."

"Was she not your wife?"

"Yes, by virtue of a broken crock. We were to have four years of it. By the way," added Gringoire, looking at the archdeacon in a half bantering way, "are you still thinking of her?"

"And you think of her no longer?"

"Very little. I have so many things. Good heavens, how pretty that little goat was!"

"Had she not saved your life?"

"'Tis true, pardieu!"

"Well, what has become of her? What have you done with her?"

"I cannot tell you. I believe that they have hanged her."

"You believe so?"

"I am not sure. When I saw that they wanted to hang people, I retired from the game."

"That is all you know of it?"

"Wait a bit. I was told that she had taken refuge in Notre-Dame, and that she was safe there, and I am delighted to hear it, and I have not been able to discover whether the goat was saved with her, and that is all I know."

"I will tell you more," cried Dom Claude; and his voice, hitherto low, slow, and almost indistinct, turned to thunder. "She has in fact, taken refuge in Notre-Dame. But in three days justice will reclaim her, and she will be hanged on the Grève. There is a decree of parliament."

"That's annoying," said Gringoire.

The priest, in an instant, became cold and calm again.

"And who the devil," resumed the poet, "has amused himself with soliciting a decree of reintegration? Why couldn't they leave parliament in peace? What harm does it do if a poor girl takes shelter under the flying buttresses of Notre-Dame, beside the swallows' nests?"

"There are satans in this world," remarked the archdeacon.

"'Tis devilish badly done," observed Gringoire.

The archdeacon resumed after a silence,--

"So, she saved your life?"

"Among my good friends the outcasts. A little more or a little less and I should have been hanged. They would have been sorry for it to-day."

"Would not you like to do something for her?"

"I ask nothing better, Dom Claude; but what if I entangle myself in some villanous affair?"

"What matters it?"

"Bah! what matters it? You are good, master, that you are! I have two great works already begun."

The priest smote his brow. In spite of the calm which he affected, a violent gesture betrayed his internal convulsions from time to time.

"How is she to be saved?"

Gringoire said to him; "Master, I will reply to you; Il padelt, which means in Turkish, 'God is our hope.'"

"How is she to be saved?" repeated Claude dreamily.

Gringoire smote his brow in his turn.

"Listen, master. I have imagination; I will devise expedients for you.

What if one were to ask her pardon from the king?"

"Of Louis XI.! A pardon!"

"Why not?"

"To take the tiger's bone from him!"

Gringoire began to seek fresh expedients.

"Well, stay! Shall I address to the midwives a request accompanied by the declaration that the girl is with child!"

This made the priest's hollow eye flash.

"With child! knave! do you know anything of this?"

Gringoire was alarmed by his air. He hastened to say, "Oh, no, not I! Our marriage was a real forismaritagium. I stayed outside. But one might obtain a respite, all the same."

"Madness! Infamy! Hold your tongue!"

"You do wrong to get angry," muttered Gringoire. "One obtains a respite; that does no harm to any one, and allows the midwives, who are poor women, to earn forty deniers parisis."

The priest was not listening to him!

"But she must leave that place, nevertheless!" he murmured, "the decree is to be executed within three days. Moreover, there will be no decree; that Quasimodo! Women have very depraved tastes!" He raised his voice: "Master Pierre, I have reflected well; there is but one means of safety for her."

"What? I see none myself."

"Listen, Master Pierre, remember that you owe your life to her. I will tell you my idea frankly. The church is watched night and day; only those are allowed to come out, who have been seen to enter. Hence you can enter. You will come. I will lead you to her. You will change clothes with her. She will take your doublet; you will take her petticoat."

"So far, it goes well," remarked the philosopher, "and then?"

"And then? she will go forth in your garments; you will remain with hers. You will be hanged, perhaps, but she will be saved."

Gringoire scratched his ear, with a very serious air. "Stay!" said he, "that is an idea which would never have occurred to me unaided."

At Dom Claude's proposition, the open and benign face of the poet had abruptly clouded over, like a smiling Italian landscape, when an unlucky

squall comes up and dashes a cloud across the sun.

"Well! Gringoire, what say you to the means?"

"I say, master, that I shall not be hanged, perchance, but that I shall be hanged indubitably.

"That concerns us not."

"The deuce!" said Gringoire.

"She has saved your life. 'Tis a debt that you are discharging."

"There are a great many others which I do not discharge."

"Master Pierre, it is absolutely necessary."

The archdeacon spoke imperiously.

"Listen, Dom Claude," replied the poet in utter consternation. "You cling to that idea, and you are wrong. I do not see why I should get myself hanged in some one else's place."

"What have you, then, which attaches you so strongly to life?"

"Oh! a thousand reasons!"

"What reasons, if you please?"

"What? The air, the sky, the morning, the evening, the moonlight, my good friends the thieves, our jeers with the old hags of go-betweens, the fine architecture of Paris to study, three great books to make, one of them being against the bishops and his mills; and how can I tell all? Anaxagoras said that he was in the world to admire the sun. And then, from morning till night, I have the happiness of passing all my days with a man of genius, who is myself, which is very agreeable."

"A head fit for a mule bell!" muttered the archdeacon. "Oh! tell me who preserved for you that life which you render so charming to yourself? To whom do you owe it that you breathe that air, behold that sky, and can still amuse your lark's mind with your whimsical nonsense and madness? Where would you be, had it not been for her? Do you then desire that she through whom you are alive, should die? that she should die, that beautiful, sweet, adorable creature, who is necessary to the light of the world and more divine than God, while you, half wise, and half fool, a vain sketch of something, a sort of vegetable, which thinks that it walks, and thinks that it thinks, you will continue to live with the life which you have stolen from her, as useless as a candle in broad daylight? Come, have a little pity, Gringoire; be generous in your turn; it was she who set the example."

The priest was vehement. Gringoire listened to him at first with an undecided air, then he became touched, and wound up with a grimace which

made his pallid face resemble that of a new-born infant with an attack of the colic.

"You are pathetic!" said he, wiping away a tear. "Well! I will think about it. That's a queer idea of yours.--After all," he continued after a pause, "who knows? perhaps they will not hang me. He who becomes betrothed does not always marry. When they find me in that little lodging so grotesquely muffled in petticoat and coif, perchance they will burst with laughter. And then, if they do hang me,--well! the halter is as good a death as any. 'Tis a death worthy of a sage who has wavered all his life; a death which is neither flesh nor fish, like the mind of a veritable sceptic; a death all stamped with Pyrrhonism and hesitation, which holds the middle station betwixt heaven and earth, which leaves you in suspense. 'Tis a philosopher's death, and I was destined thereto, perchance. It is magnificent to die as one has lived."

The priest interrupted him: "Is it agreed."

"What is death, after all?" pursued Gringoire with exaltation. "A disagreeable moment, a toll-gate, the passage of little to nothingness. Some one having asked Cercidas, the Megalopolitan, if he were willing to die: 'Why not?' he replied; 'for after my death I shall see those great men, Pythagoras among the philosophers, Hecataeus among historians, Homer among poets, Olympus among musicians.'"

The archdeacon gave him his hand: "It is settled, then? You will come to-morrow?"

This gesture recalled Gringoire to reality.

"Ah! i' faith no!" he said in the tone of a man just waking up. "Be hanged! 'tis too absurd. I will not."

"Farewell, then!" and the archdeacon added between his teeth: "I'll find you again!"

"I do not want that devil of a man to find me," thought Gringoire; and he ran after Dom Claude. "Stay, monsieur the archdeacon, no ill-feeling between old friends! You take an interest in that girl, my wife, I mean, and 'tis well. You have devised a scheme to get her out of Notre-Dame, but your way is extremely disagreeable to me, Gringoire. If I had only another one myself! I beg to say that a luminous inspiration has just occurred to me. If I possessed an expedient for extricating her from a dilemma, without compromising my own neck to the extent of a single running knot, what would you say to it? Will not that suffice you? Is it absolutely necessary that I should be hanged, in order that you may be content?"

The priest tore out the buttons of his cassock with impatience: "Stream of words! What is your plan?"

"Yes," resumed Gringoire, talking to himself and touching his nose with his forefinger in sign of meditation,--"that's it!--The thieves are brave fellows!--The tribe of Egypt love her!--They will rise at the

first word!--Nothing easier!--A sudden stroke.--Under cover of the disorder, they will easily carry her off!--Beginning to-morrow evening. They will ask nothing better.

"The plan! speak," cried the archdeacon shaking him.

Gringoire turned majestically towards him: "Leave me! You see that I am composing." He meditated for a few moments more, then began to clap his hands over his thought, crying: "Admirable! success is sure!"

"The plan!" repeated Claude in wrath.

Gringoire was radiant.

"Come, that I may tell you that very softly. 'Tis a truly gallant counter-plot, which will extricate us all from the matter. Pardieu, it must be admitted that I am no fool."

He broke off.

"Oh, by the way! is the little goat with the wench?"

"Yes. The devil take you!"

"They would have hanged it also, would they not?"

"What is that to me?"

"Yes, they would have hanged it. They hanged a sow last month. The headsman loveth that; he eats the beast afterwards. Take my pretty Djali! Poor little lamb!"

"Malediction!" exclaimed Dom Claude. "You are the executioner. What means of safety have you found, knave? Must your idea be extracted with the forceps?"

"Very fine, master, this is it."

Gringoire bent his head to the archdeacon's head and spoke to him in a very low voice, casting an uneasy glance the while from one end to the other of the street, though no one was passing. When he had finished, Dom Claude took his hand and said coldly: "'Tis well. Farewell until to-morrow."

"Until to-morrow," repeated Gringoire. And, while the archdeacon was disappearing in one direction, he set off in the other, saying to himself in a low voice: "Here's a grand affair, Monsieur Pierre Gringoire. Never mind! 'Tis not written that because one is of small account one should take fright at a great enterprise. Bitou carried a great bull on his shoulders; the water-wagtails, the warblers, and the buntings traverse the ocean."

CHAPTER II. TURN VAGABOND.

On re-entering the cloister, the archdeacon found at the door of his cell his brother Jehan du Moulin, who was waiting for him, and who had beguiled the tedium of waiting by drawing on the wall with a bit of charcoal, a profile of his elder brother, enriched with a monstrous nose.

Dom Claude hardly looked at his brother; his thoughts were elsewhere. That merry scamp's face whose beaming had so often restored serenity to the priest's sombre physiognomy, was now powerless to melt the gloom which grew more dense every day over that corrupted, mephitic, and stagnant soul.

"Brother," said Jehan timidly, "I am come to see you."

The archdeacon did not even raise his eyes.

"What then?"

"Brother," resumed the hypocrite, "you are so good to me, and you give me such wise counsels that I always return to you."

"What next?"

"Alas! brother, you were perfectly right when you said to me,--"Jehan! Jehan! cessat doctorum doctrina, discipulorum disciplina. Jehan, be wise, Jehan, be learned, Jehan, pass not the night outside of the college without lawful occasion and due leave of the master. Cudgel not the Picards: noli, Joannes, verberare Picardos. Rot not like an unlettered ass, quasi asinus illitteratus, on the straw seats of the school. Jehan, allow yourself to be punished at the discretion of the master. Jehan go every evening to chapel, and sing there an anthem with verse and orison to Madame the glorious Virgin Mary."--Alas! what excellent advice was that!"

"And then?"

"Brother, you behold a culprit, a criminal, a wretch, a libertine, a man of enormities! My dear brother, Jehan hath made of your counsels straw and dung to trample under foot. I have been well chastised for it, and God is extraordinarily just. As long as I had money, I feasted, I lead a mad and joyous life. Oh! how ugly and crabbed behind is debauch which is so charming in front! Now I have no longer a blank; I have sold my napery, my shirt and my towels; no more merry life! The beautiful candle is extinguished and I have henceforth, only a wretched tallow dip which smokes in my nose. The wenches jeer at me. I drink water.--I am overwhelmed with remorse and with creditors.

"The rest?" said the archdeacon.

"Alas! my very dear brother, I should like to settle down to a better life. I come to you full of contrition, I am penitent. I make my confession. I beat my breast violently. You are quite right in wishing that I should some day become a licentiate and sub-monitor in the college of Torchi. At the present moment I feel a magnificent vocation for that profession. But I have no more ink and I must buy some; I have no more paper, I have no more books, and I must buy some. For this purpose, I am greatly in need of a little money, and I come to you, brother, with my heart full of contrition."

"Is that all?"

"Yes," said the scholar. "A little money."

"I have none."

Then the scholar said, with an air which was both grave and resolute: "Well, brother, I am sorry to be obliged to tell you that very fine offers and propositions are being made to me in another quarter. You will not give me any money? No. In that case I shall become a professional vagabond."

As he uttered these monstrous words, he assumed the mien of Ajax, expecting to see the lightnings descend upon his head.

The archdeacon said coldly to him,--"Become a vagabond."

Jehan made him a deep bow, and descended the cloister stairs, whistling.

At the moment when he was passing through the courtyard of the cloister, beneath his brother's window, he heard that window open, raised his eyes and beheld the archdeacon's severe head emerge.

"Go to the devil!" said Dom Claude; "here is the last money which you will get from me?"

At the same time, the priest flung Jehan a purse, which gave the scholar a big bump on the forehead, and with which Jehan retreated, both vexed and content, like a dog who had been stoned with marrow bones.

CHAPTER III. LONG LIVE MIRTH.

The reader has probably not forgotten that a part of the Cour de Miracles was enclosed by the ancient wall which surrounded the city, a goodly number of whose towers had begun, even at that epoch, to fall to ruin. One of these towers had been converted into a pleasure resort by the vagabonds. There was a drain-shop in the underground story, and the rest in the upper stories. This was the most lively, and consequently the most hideous, point of the whole outcast den. It was a sort of monstrous hive, which buzzed there night and day. At night, when the remainder of the beggar horde slept, when there was no longer a window lighted in the dingy façades of the Place, when not a cry was any longer to be heard proceeding from those innumerable families, those ant-hills of thieves, of wenches, and stolen or bastard children, the merry tower was still recognizable by the noise which it made, by the scarlet light which, flashing simultaneously from the air-holes, the windows, the fissures in the cracked walls, escaped, so to speak, from its every pore.

The cellar then, was the dram-shop. The descent to it was through a low door and by a staircase as steep as a classic Alexandrine. Over the door, by way of a sign there hung a marvellous daub, representing new sons and dead chickens,* with this, pun below: Aux sonneurs pour les trépassés,--The wringers for the dead.

* Sols neufs: poulets tués.

One evening when the curfew was sounding from all the belfries in Paris, the sergeants of the watch might have observed, had it been granted to them to enter the formidable Court of Miracles, that more tumult than usual was in progress in the vagabonds' tavern, that more drinking was being done, and louder swearing. Outside in the Place, there, were many groups conversing in low tones, as when some great plan is being framed, and here and there a knave crouching down engaged in sharpening a villanous iron blade on a paving-stone.

Meanwhile, in the tavern itself, wine and gaming offered such a powerful diversion to the ideas which occupied the vagabonds' lair that evening, that it would have been difficult to divine from the remarks of the drinkers, what was the matter in hand. They merely wore a gayer air than was their wont, and some weapon could be seen glittering between the legs of each of them,--a sickle, an axe, a big two-edged sword or the hook of an old hackbut.

The room, circular in form, was very spacious; but the tables were so thickly set and the drinkers so numerous, that all that the tavern contained, men, women, benches, beer-jugs, all that were drinking, all that were sleeping, all that were playing, the well, the lame, seemed piled up pell-mell, with as much order and harmony as a heap of oyster shells. There were a few tallow dips lighted on the tables; but the real

luminary of this tavern, that which played the part in this dram-shop of the chandelier of an opera house, was the fire. This cellar was so damp that the fire was never allowed to go out, even in midsummer; an immense chimney with a sculptured mantel, all bristling with heavy iron andirons and cooking utensils, with one of those huge fires of mixed wood and peat which at night, in village streets make the reflection of forge windows stand out so red on the opposite walls. A big dog gravely seated in the ashes was turning a spit loaded with meat before the coals.

Great as was the confusion, after the first glance one could distinguish in that multitude, three principal groups which thronged around three personages already known to the reader. One of these personages, fantastically accoutred in many an oriental rag, was Mathias Hungadi Spicali, Duke of Egypt and Bohemia. The knave was seated on a table with his legs crossed, and in a loud voice was bestowing his knowledge of magic, both black and white, on many a gaping face which surrounded him. Another rabble pressed close around our old friend, the valiant King of Thunes, armed to the teeth. Clopin Trouillefou, with a very serious air and in a low voice, was regulating the distribution of an enormous cask of arms, which stood wide open in front of him and from whence poured out in profusion, axes, swords, bassinets, coats of mail, broadswords, lance-heads, arrows, and viretons,* like apples and grapes from a horn of plenty. Every one took something from the cask, one a morion, another a long, straight sword, another a dagger with a cross--shaped hilt. The very children were arming themselves, and there were even cripples in bowls who, in armor and cuirass, made their way between the legs of the drinkers, like great beetles.

* An arrow with a pyramidal head of iron and copper spiral wings, by which a rotatory motion was communicated.

Finally, a third audience, the most noisy, the most jovial, and the most numerous, encumbered benches and tables, in the midst of which harangued and swore a flute-like voice, which escaped from beneath a heavy armor, complete from casque to spurs. The individual who had thus screwed a whole outfit upon his body, was so hidden by his warlike accoutrements that nothing was to be seen of his person save an impertinent, red, snub nose, a rosy mouth, and bold eyes. His belt was full of daggers and poniards, a huge sword on his hip, a rusted cross-bow at his left, and a vast jug of wine in front of him, without reckoning on his right, a fat wench with her bosom uncovered. All mouths around him were laughing, cursing, and drinking.

Add twenty secondary groups, the waiters, male and female, running with jugs on their heads, gamblers squatting over taws, merelles,* dice, vachettes, the ardent game of tringlet, quarrels in one corner, kisses in another, and the reader will have some idea of this whole picture, over which flickered the light of a great, flaming fire, which made a thousand huge and grotesque shadows dance over the walls of the drinking shop.

* A game played on a checker-board containing three concentric sets of squares, with small stones. The game consisted in getting three stones in a row.

As for the noise, it was like the inside of a bell at full peal.

The dripping-pan, where crackled a rain of grease, filled with its continual sputtering the intervals of these thousand dialogues, which intermingled from one end of the apartment to the other.

In the midst of this uproar, at the extremity of the tavern, on the bench inside the chimney, sat a philosopher meditating with his feet in the ashes and his eyes on the brands. It was Pierre Gringoire.

"Be quick! make haste, arm yourselves! we set out on the march in an hour!" said Clopin Trouillefou to his thieves.

A wench was humming,--

> "Bonsoir mon père et ma mere,
> Les derniers couvrent le feu."*

* Good night, father and mother, the last cover up the fire.

Two card players were disputing,--

"Knave!" cried the reddest faced of the two, shaking his fist at the other; "I'll mark you with the club. You can take the place of Mistigri in the pack of cards of monseigneur the king."

"Ugh!" roared a Norman, recognizable by his nasal accent; "we are packed in here like the saints of Caillouville!"

"My sons," the Duke of Egypt was saying to his audience, in a falsetto voice, "sorceresses in France go to the witches' sabbath without broomsticks, or grease, or steed, merely by means of some magic words. The witches of Italy always have a buck waiting for them at their door. All are bound to go out through the chimney."

The voice of the young scamp armed from head to foot, dominated the uproar.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" he was shouting. "My first day in armor! Outcast! I am an outcast. Give me something to drink. My friends, my name is Jehan Frollo du Moulin, and I am a gentleman. My opinion is that if God were a gendarme, he would turn robber. Brothers, we are about to set out on a fine expedition. Lay siege to the church, burst in the doors, drag out the beautiful girl, save her from the judges, save her from the priests, dismantle the cloister, burn the bishop in his palace--all this we will do in less time than it takes for a burgomaster to eat a spoonful of

soup. Our cause is just, we will plunder Notre-Dame and that will be the end of it. We will hang Quasimodo. Do you know Quasimodo, ladies? Have you seen him make himself breathless on the big bell on a grand Pentecost festival! Corne du Père! 'tis very fine! One would say he was a devil mounted on a man. Listen to me, my friends; I am a vagabond to the bottom of my heart, I am a member of the slang thief gang in my soul, I was born an independent thief. I have been rich, and I have devoured all my property. My mother wanted to make an officer of me; my father, a sub-deacon; my aunt, a councillor of inquests; my grandmother, prothonotary to the king; my great aunt, a treasurer of the short robe,--and I have made myself an outcast. I said this to my father, who spit his curse in my face; to my mother, who set to weeping and chattering, poor old lady, like yonder fagot on the and-irons. Long live mirth! I am a real Bicêtre. Waitress, my dear, more wine. I have still the wherewithal to pay. I want no more Surène wine. It distresses my throat. I'd as lief, corboeuf! gargle my throat with a basket."

Meanwhile, the rabble applauded with shouts of laughter; and seeing that the tumult was increasing around him, the scholar cried,--.

"Oh! what a fine noise! Populi debacchantis populosa debacchatio!" Then he began to sing, his eye swimming in ecstasy, in the tone of a canon intoning vespers, Quoe cantica! quoe organa! quoe cantilenoe! quoe meloclioe hic sine fine decantantur! Sonant melliflua hymnorum organa, suavissima angelorum melodia, cantica canticorum mira! He broke off: "Tavern-keeper of the devil, give me some supper!"

There was a moment of partial silence, during which the sharp voice of the Duke of Egypt rose, as he gave instructions to his Bohemians.

"The weasel is called Adrune; the fox, Blue-foot, or the Racer of the Woods; the wolf, Gray-foot, or Gold-foot; the bear the Old Man, or Grandfather. The cap of a gnome confers invisibility, and causes one to behold invisible things. Every toad that is baptized must be clad in red or black velvet, a bell on its neck, a bell on its feet. The godfather holds its head, the godmother its hinder parts. 'Tis the demon Sidragasum who hath the power to make wenches dance stark naked."

"By the mass!" interrupted Jehan, "I should like to be the demon Sidragasum."

Meanwhile, the vagabonds continued to arm themselves and whisper at the other end of the dram-shop.

"That poor Esmeralda!" said a Bohemian. "She is our sister. She must be taken away from there."

"Is she still at Notre-Dame?" went on a merchant with the appearance of a Jew.

"Yes, pardieu!"

"Well! comrades!" exclaimed the merchant, "to Notre-Dame! So much the better, since there are in the chapel of Saints Féréol and Ferrution

two statues, the one of John the Baptist, the other of Saint-Antoine, of solid gold, weighing together seven marks of gold and fifteen estellins; and the pedestals are of silver-gilt, of seventeen marks, five ounces. I know that; I am a goldsmith."

Here they served Jehan with his supper. As he threw himself back on the bosom of the wench beside him, he exclaimed,--

"By Saint Voult-de-Lucques, whom people call Saint Goguelu, I am perfectly happy. I have before me a fool who gazes at me with the smooth face of an archduke. Here is one on my left whose teeth are so long that they hide his chin. And then, I am like the Marshal de Gié at the siege of Pontoise, I have my right resting on a hillock. Ventre-Mahom! Comrade! you have the air of a merchant of tennis-balls; and you come and sit yourself beside me! I am a nobleman, my friend! Trade is incompatible with nobility. Get out of that! Hola hé! You others, don't fight! What, Baptiste Croque-Oison, you who have such a fine nose are going to risk it against the big fists of that lout! Fool! Non cuiquam datum est habere nasum--not every one is favored with a nose. You are really divine, Jacqueline Ronge-Oreille! 'tis a pity that you have no hair! Holà! my name is Jehan Frollo, and my brother is an archdeacon. May the devil fly off with him! All that I tell you is the truth. In turning vagabond, I have gladly renounced the half of a house situated in paradise, which my brother had promised me. Dimidiam domum in paradiso. I quote the text. I have a fief in the Rue Tirechappe, and all the women are in love with me, as true as Saint Eloy was an excellent goldsmith, and that the five trades of the good city of

Paris are the tanners, the tawers, the makers of cross-belts, the purse-makers, and the sweaters, and that Saint Laurent was burnt with eggshells. I swear to you, comrades.

"Que je ne beuvrai de piment,
Devant un an, si je cy ment.*

* That I will drink no spiced and honeyed wine for a year, if I am lying now.

"'Tis moonlight, my charmer; see yonder through the window how the wind is tearing the clouds to tatters! Even thus will I do to your gorget.--Wenches, wipe the children's noses and snuff the candles.--Christ and Mahom! What am I eating here, Jupiter? Ohé! innkeeper! the hair which is not on the heads of your hussies one finds in your omelettes. Old woman! I like bald omelettes. May the devil confound you!--A fine hostelry of Beelzebub, where the hussies comb their heads with the forks!

"Et je n'ai moi,
Par la sang-Dieu!
Ni foi, ni loi,
Ni feu, ni lieu,

Ni roi,

Ni Dieu."*

* And by the blood of God, I have neither faith nor law, nor fire nor dwelling-place, nor king nor God.

In the meantime, Clopin Trouillefou had finished the distribution of arms. He approached Gringoire, who appeared to be plunged in a profound revery, with his feet on an andiron.

"Friend Pierre," said the King of Thunes, "what the devil are you thinking about?"

Gringoire turned to him with a melancholy smile.

"I love the fire, my dear lord. Not for the trivial reason that fire warms the feet or cooks our soup, but because it has sparks. Sometimes I pass whole hours in watching the sparks. I discover a thousand things in those stars which are sprinkled over the black background of the hearth. Those stars are also worlds."

"Thunder, if I understand you!" said the outcast. "Do you know what o'clock it is?"

"I do not know," replied Gringoire.

Clopin approached the Duke of Egypt.

"Comrade Mathias, the time we have chosen is not a good one. King Louis XI. is said to be in Paris."

"Another reason for snatching our sister from his claws," replied the old Bohemian.

"You speak like a man, Mathias," said the King of Thunes. "Moreover, we will act promptly. No resistance is to be feared in the church. The canons are hares, and we are in force. The people of the parliament will be well balked to-morrow when they come to seek her! Guts of the pope I don't want them to hang the pretty girl!"

Chopin quitted the dram-shop.

Meanwhile, Jehan was shouting in a hoarse voice:

"I eat, I drink, I am drunk, I am Jupiter! Eh! Pierre, the Slaughterer, if you look at me like that again, I'll fillip the dust off your nose for you."

Gringoire, torn from his meditations, began to watch the wild and noisy scene which surrounded him, muttering between his teeth: "Luxuriosa res vinum et tumultuosa ebrietas. Alas! what good reason I have not to

drink, and how excellently spoke Saint-Benoit: 'Vinum apostatare facit etiam sapientes!'"

At that moment, Clopin returned and shouted in a voice of thunder: "Midnight!"

At this word, which produced the effect of the call to boot and saddle on a regiment at a halt, all the outcasts, men, women, children, rushed in a mass from the tavern, with great noise of arms and old iron implements.

The moon was obscured.

The Cour des Miracles was entirely dark. There was not a single light. One could make out there a throng of men and women conversing in low tones. They could be heard buzzing, and a gleam of all sorts of weapons was visible in the darkness. Clopin mounted a large stone.

"To your ranks, Argot!"* he cried. "Fall into line, Egypt! Form ranks, Galilee!"

* Men of the brotherhood of slang: thieves.

A movement began in the darkness. The immense multitude appeared to form

in a column. After a few minutes, the King of Thunes raised his voice once more,--

"Now, silence to march through Paris! The password is, 'Little sword in pocket!' The torches will not be lighted till we reach Notre-Dame! Forward, march!"

Ten minutes later, the cavaliers of the watch fled in terror before a long procession of black and silent men which was descending towards the Pont an Change, through the tortuous streets which pierce the close-built neighborhood of the markets in every direction.

CHAPTER IV. AN AWKWARD FRIEND.

That night, Quasimodo did not sleep. He had just made his last round of the church. He had not noticed, that at the moment when he was closing the doors, the archdeacon had passed close to him and betrayed some displeasure on seeing him bolting and barring with care the enormous iron locks which gave to their large leaves the solidity of a wall. Dom Claude's air was even more preoccupied than usual. Moreover, since the nocturnal adventure in the cell, he had constantly abused Quasimodo, but in vain did he ill treat, and even beat him occasionally, nothing disturbed the submission, patience, the devoted resignation of the faithful bellringer. He endured everything on the part of the archdeacon, insults, threats, blows, without murmuring a complaint. At the most, he gazed uneasily after Dom Claude when the latter ascended the staircase of the tower; but the archdeacon had abstained from presenting himself again before the gypsy's eyes.

On that night, accordingly, Quasimodo, after having cast a glance at his poor bells which he so neglected now, Jacqueline, Marie, and Thibauld, mounted to the summit of the Northern tower, and there setting his dark lanturn, well closed, upon the leads, he began to gaze at Paris. The night, as we have already said, was very dark. Paris which, so to speak was not lighted at that epoch, presented to the eye a confused collection of black masses, cut here and there by the whitish curve of

the Seine. Quasimodo no longer saw any light with the exception of one window in a distant edifice, whose vague and sombre profile was outlined well above the roofs, in the direction of the Porte Sainte-Antoine. There also, there was some one awake.

As the only eye of the bellringer peered into that horizon of mist and night, he felt within him an inexpressible uneasiness. For several days he had been upon his guard. He had perceived men of sinister mien, who never took their eyes from the young girl's asylum, prowling constantly about the church. He fancied that some plot might be in process of formation against the unhappy refugee. He imagined that there existed a popular hatred against her, as against himself, and that it was very possible that something might happen soon. Hence he remained upon his tower on the watch, "dreaming in his dream-place," as Rabelais says, with his eye directed alternately on the cell and on Paris, keeping faithful guard, like a good dog, with a thousand suspicions in his mind.

All at once, while he was scrutinizing the great city with that eye which nature, by a sort of compensation, had made so piercing that it could almost supply the other organs which Quasimodo lacked, it seemed to him that there was something singular about the Quay de la Vieille-Pelleterie, that there was a movement at that point, that the line of the parapet, standing out blackly against the whiteness of the water was not straight and tranquil, like that of the other quays, but that it undulated to the eye, like the waves of a river, or like the heads of a crowd in motion.

This struck him as strange. He redoubled his attention. The movement seemed to be advancing towards the City. There was no light. It lasted for some time on the quay; then it gradually ceased, as though that which was passing were entering the interior of the island; then it stopped altogether, and the line of the quay became straight and motionless again.

At the moment when Quasimodo was lost in conjectures, it seemed to him that the movement had re-appeared in the Rue du Parvis, which is prolonged into the city perpendicularly to the façade of Notre-Dame. At length, dense as was the darkness, he beheld the head of a column debouch from that street, and in an instant a crowd--of which nothing could be distinguished in the gloom except that it was a crowd--spread over the Place.

This spectacle had a terror of its own. It is probable that this singular procession, which seemed so desirous of concealing itself under profound darkness, maintained a silence no less profound. Nevertheless, some noise must have escaped it, were it only a trampling. But this noise did not even reach our deaf man, and this great multitude, of which he saw hardly anything, and of which he heard nothing, though it was marching and moving so near him, produced upon him the effect of a rabble of dead men, mute, impalpable, lost in a smoke. It seemed to him, that he beheld advancing towards him a fog of men, and that he saw shadows moving in the shadow.

Then his fears returned to him, the idea of an attempt against the gypsy

presented itself once more to his mind. He was conscious, in a confused way, that a violent crisis was approaching. At that critical moment he took counsel with himself, with better and prompter reasoning than one would have expected from so badly organized a brain. Ought he to awaken the gypsy? to make her escape? Whither? The streets were invested, the church backed on the river. No boat, no issue!--There was but one thing to be done; to allow himself to be killed on the threshold of Notre-Dame, to resist at least until succor arrived, if it should arrive, and not to trouble la Esmeralda's sleep. This resolution once taken, he set to examining the enemy with more tranquillity.

The throng seemed to increase every moment in the church square. Only, he presumed that it must be making very little noise, since the windows on the Place remained closed. All at once, a flame flashed up, and in an instant seven or eight lighted torches passed over the heads of the crowd, shaking their tufts of flame in the deep shade. Quasimodo then beheld distinctly surging in the Parvis a frightful herd of men and women in rags, armed with scythes, pikes, billhooks and partisans, whose thousand points glittered. Here and there black pitchforks formed horns to the hideous faces. He vaguely recalled this populace, and thought that he recognized all the heads who had saluted him as Pope of the Fools some months previously. One man who held a torch in one hand and a club in the other, mounted a stone post and seemed to be haranguing them. At the same time the strange army executed several evolutions, as though it were taking up its post around the church. Quasimodo picked up his lantern and descended to the platform between the towers, in order to get a nearer view, and to spy out a means of defence.

Clopin Trouillefou, on arriving in front of the lofty portal of Notre-Dame had, in fact, ranged his troops in order of battle. Although he expected no resistance, he wished, like a prudent general, to preserve an order which would permit him to face, at need, a sudden attack of the watch or the police. He had accordingly stationed his brigade in such a manner that, viewed from above and from a distance, one would have pronounced it the Roman triangle of the battle of Ecnomus, the boar's head of Alexander or the famous wedge of Gustavus Adolphus. The base of this triangle rested on the back of the Place in such a manner as to bar the entrance of the Rue du Parvis; one of its sides faced Hôtel-Dieu, the other the Rue Saint-Pierre-aux-Boeufs. Clopin Trouillefou had placed himself at the apex with the Duke of Egypt, our friend Jehan, and the most daring of the scavengers.

An enterprise like that which the vagabonds were now undertaking against Notre-Dame was not a very rare thing in the cities of the Middle Ages. What we now call the "police" did not exist then. In populous cities, especially in capitals, there existed no single, central, regulating power. Feudalism had constructed these great communities in a singular manner. A city was an assembly of a thousand seigneuries, which divided it into compartments of all shapes and sizes. Hence, a thousand conflicting establishments of police; that is to say, no police at all. In Paris, for example, independently of the hundred and forty-one lords who laid claim to a manor, there were five and twenty who laid claim to a manor and to administering justice, from the Bishop of Paris, who had five hundred streets, to the Prior of Notre-Dame des Champs, who had

four. All these feudal justices recognized the suzerain authority of the king only in name. All possessed the right of control over the roads. All were at home. Louis XI., that indefatigable worker, who so largely began the demolition of the feudal edifice, continued by Richelieu and Louis XIV. for the profit of royalty, and finished by Mirabeau for the benefit of the people,--Louis XI. had certainly made an effort to break this network of seignories which covered Paris, by throwing violently across them all two or three troops of general police. Thus, in 1465, an order to the inhabitants to light candles in their windows at nightfall, and to shut up their dogs under penalty of death; in the same year, an order to close the streets in the evening with iron chains, and a prohibition to wear daggers or weapons of offence in the streets at night. But in a very short time, all these efforts at communal legislation fell into abeyance. The bourgeois permitted the wind to blow out their candles in the windows, and their dogs to stray; the iron chains were stretched only in a state of siege; the prohibition to wear daggers wrought no other changes than from the name of the Rue Coupe-Gueule to the name of the Rue-Coupe-Gorge* which is an evident progress. The old scaffolding of feudal jurisdictions remained standing; an immense aggregation of bailiwicks and seignories crossing each other all over the city, interfering with each other, entangled in one another, enmeshing each other, trespassing on each other; a useless thicket of watches, sub-watches and counter-watches, over which, with armed force, passed brigandage, rapine, and sedition. Hence, in this disorder, deeds of violence on the part of the populace directed against a palace, a hotel, or house in the most thickly populated quarters, were not unheard-of occurrences. In the majority of such cases, the neighbors

did not meddle with the matter unless the pillaging extended to themselves. They stopped up their ears to the musket shots, closed their shutters, barricaded their doors, allowed the matter to be concluded with or without the watch, and the next day it was said in Paris, "Etienne Barbette was broken open last night. The Marshal de Clermont was seized last night, etc." Hence, not only the royal habitations, the Louvre, the Palace, the Bastille, the Tournelles, but simply seignorial residences, the Petit-Bourbon, the Hôtel de Sens, the Hôtel d' Angoulême, etc., had battlements on their walls, and machicolations over their doors. Churches were guarded by their sanctity. Some, among the number Notre-Dame, were fortified. The Abbey of Saint-German-des-Pres was castellated like a baronial mansion, and more brass expended about it in bombards than in bells. Its fortress was still to be seen in 1610. To-day, barely its church remains.

* Cut-throat. Coupe-gueule being the vulgar word for cut-weazand.

Let us return to Notre-Dame.

When the first arrangements were completed, and we must say, to the honor of vagabond discipline, that Clopin's orders were executed in silence, and with admirable precision, the worthy chief of the band, mounted on the parapet of the church square, and raised his hoarse and surly voice, turning towards Notre-Dame, and brandishing his torch whose light, tossed by the wind, and veiled every moment by its own smoke,

made the reddish façade of the church appear and disappear before the eye.

"To you, Louis de Beaumont, bishop of Paris, counsellor in the Court of Parliament, I, Clopin Trouillefou, king of Thunes, grand Coësre, prince of Argot, bishop of fools, I say: Our sister, falsely condemned for magic, hath taken refuge in your church, you owe her asylum and safety. Now the Court of Parliament wishes to seize her once more there, and you consent to it; so that she would be hanged to-morrow in the Grève, if God and the outcasts were not here. If your church is sacred, so is our sister; if our sister is not sacred, neither is your church. That is why we call upon you to return the girl if you wish to save your church, or we will take possession of the girl again and pillage the church, which will be a good thing. In token of which I here plant my banner, and may God preserve you, bishop of Paris."

Quasimodo could not, unfortunately, hear these words uttered with a sort of sombre and savage majesty. A vagabond presented his banner to Clopin, who planted it solemnly between two paving-stones. It was a pitchfork from whose points hung a bleeding quarter of carrion meat.

That done, the King of Thunes turned round and cast his eyes over his army, a fierce multitude whose glances flashed almost equally with their pikes. After a momentary pause,--"Forward, my Sons!" he cried; "to work, locksmiths!"

Thirty bold men, square shouldered, and with pick-lock faces, stepped

from the ranks, with hammers, pincers, and bars of iron on their shoulders. They betook themselves to the principal door of the church, ascended the steps, and were soon to be seen squatting under the arch, working at the door with pincers and levers; a throng of vagabonds followed them to help or look on. The eleven steps before the portal were covered with them.

But the door stood firm. "The devil! 'tis hard and obstinate!" said one. "It is old, and its gristles have become bony," said another. "Courage, comrades!" resumed Clopin. "I wager my head against a dipper that you will have opened the door, rescued the girl, and despoiled the chief altar before a single beadle is awake. Stay! I think I hear the lock breaking up."

Clopin was interrupted by a frightful uproar which re-sounded behind him at that moment. He wheeled round. An enormous beam had just fallen from above; it had crushed a dozen vagabonds on the pavement with the sound of a cannon, breaking in addition, legs here and there in the crowd of beggars, who sprang aside with cries of terror. In a twinkling, the narrow precincts of the church parvis were cleared. The locksmiths, although protected by the deep vaults of the portal, abandoned the door and Clopin himself retired to a respectful distance from the church.

"I had a narrow escape!" cried Jehan. "I felt the wind, of it, tête-de-boeuf! but Pierre the Slaughterer is slaughtered!"

It is impossible to describe the astonishment mingled with fright which

fell upon the ruffians in company with this beam.

They remained for several minutes with their eyes in the air, more dismayed by that piece of wood than by the king's twenty thousand archers.

"Satan!" muttered the Duke of Egypt, "this smacks of magic!"

"'Tis the moon which threw this log at us," said Andry the Red.

"Call the moon the friend of the Virgin, after that!" went on Francois Chanteprune.

"A thousand popes!" exclaimed Clopin, "you are all fools!" But he did not know how to explain the fall of the beam.

Meanwhile, nothing could be distinguished on the façade, to whose summit the light of the torches did not reach. The heavy beam lay in the middle of the enclosure, and groans were heard from the poor wretches who had received its first shock, and who had been almost cut in twain, on the angle of the stone steps.

The King of Thunes, his first amazement passed, finally found an explanation which appeared plausible to his companions.

"Throat of God! are the canons defending themselves? To the sack, then! to the sack!"

"To the sack!" repeated the rabble, with a furious hurrah. A discharge of crossbows and hackbuts against the front of the church followed.

At this detonation, the peaceable inhabitants of the surrounding houses woke up; many windows were seen to open, and nightcaps and hands holding candles appeared at the casements.

"Fire at the windows," shouted Clopin. The windows were immediately closed, and the poor bourgeois, who had hardly had time to cast a frightened glance on this scene of gleams and tumult, returned, perspiring with fear to their wives, asking themselves whether the witches' sabbath was now being held in the parvis of Notre-Dame, or whether there was an assault of Burgundians, as in '64. Then the husbands thought of theft; the wives, of rape; and all trembled.

"To the sack!" repeated the thieves' crew; but they dared not approach. They stared at the beam, they stared at the church. The beam did not stir, the edifice preserved its calm and deserted air; but something chilled the outcasts.

"To work, locksmiths!" shouted Trouillefou. "Let the door be forced!"

No one took a step.

"Beard and belly!" said Clopin, "here be men afraid of a beam."

An old locksmith addressed him--

"Captain, 'tis not the beam which bothers us, 'tis the door, which is all covered with iron bars. Our pincers are powerless against it."

"What more do you want to break it in?" demanded Clopin.

"Ah! we ought to have a battering ram."

The King of Thunes ran boldly to the formidable beam, and placed his foot upon it: "Here is one!" he exclaimed; "'tis the canons who send it to you." And, making a mocking salute in the direction of the church, "Thanks, canons!"

This piece of bravado produced its effects,--the spell of the beam was broken. The vagabonds recovered their courage; soon the heavy joist, raised like a feather by two hundred vigorous arms, was flung with fury against the great door which they had tried to batter down. At the sight of that long beam, in the half-light which the infrequent torches of the brigands spread over the Place, thus borne by that crowd of men who dashed it at a run against the church, one would have thought that he beheld a monstrous beast with a thousand feet attacking with lowered head the giant of stone.

At the shock of the beam, the half metallic door sounded like an immense drum; it was not burst in, but the whole cathedral trembled, and the

deepest cavities of the edifice were heard to echo.

At the same moment, a shower of large stones began to fall from the top of the façade on the assailants.

"The devil!" cried Jehan, "are the towers shaking their balustrades down on our heads?"

But the impulse had been given, the King of Thunes had set the example. Evidently, the bishop was defending himself, and they only battered the door with the more rage, in spite of the stones which cracked skulls right and left.

It was remarkable that all these stones fell one by one; but they followed each other closely. The thieves always felt two at a time, one on their legs and one on their heads. There were few which did not deal their blow, and a large layer of dead and wounded lay bleeding and panting beneath the feet of the assailants who, now grown furious, replaced each other without intermission. The long beam continued to belabor the door, at regular intervals, like the clapper of a bell, the stones to rain down, the door to groan.

The reader has no doubt divined that this unexpected resistance which had exasperated the outcasts came from Quasimodo.

Chance had, unfortunately, favored the brave deaf man.

When he had descended to the platform between the towers, his ideas were all in confusion. He had run up and down along the gallery for several minutes like a madman, surveying from above, the compact mass of vagabonds ready to hurl itself on the church, demanding the safety of the gypsy from the devil or from God. The thought had occurred to him of ascending to the southern belfry and sounding the alarm, but before he could have set the bell in motion, before Marie's voice could have uttered a single clamor, was there not time to burst in the door of the church ten times over? It was precisely the moment when the locksmiths were advancing upon it with their tools. What was to be done?

All at once, he remembered that some masons had been at work all day repairing the wall, the timber-work, and the roof of the south tower. This was a flash of light. The wall was of stone, the roof of lead, the timber-work of wood. (That prodigious timber-work, so dense that it was called "the forest.")

Quasimodo hastened to that tower. The lower chambers were, in fact, full of materials. There were piles of rough blocks of stone, sheets of lead in rolls, bundles of laths, heavy beams already notched with the saw, heaps of plaster.

Time was pressing, The pikes and hammers were at work below. With a strength which the sense of danger increased tenfold, he seized one of the beams--the longest and heaviest; he pushed it out through a loophole, then, grasping it again outside of the tower, he made it slide along the angle of the balustrade which surrounds the platform, and

let it fly into the abyss. The enormous timber, during that fall of a hundred and sixty feet, scraping the wall, breaking the carvings, turned many times on its centre, like the arm of a windmill flying off alone through space. At last it reached the ground, the horrible cry arose, and the black beam, as it rebounded from the pavement, resembled a serpent leaping.

Quasimodo beheld the outcasts scatter at the fall of the beam, like ashes at the breath of a child. He took advantage of their fright, and while they were fixing a superstitious glance on the club which had fallen from heaven, and while they were putting out the eyes of the stone saints on the front with a discharge of arrows and buckshot, Quasimodo was silently piling up plaster, stones, and rough blocks of stone, even the sacks of tools belonging to the masons, on the edge of the balustrade from which the beam had already been hurled.

Thus, as soon as they began to batter the grand door, the shower of rough blocks of stone began to fall, and it seemed to them that the church itself was being demolished over their heads.

Any one who could have beheld Quasimodo at that moment would have been
frightened. Independently of the projectiles which he had piled upon the balustrade, he had collected a heap of stones on the platform itself. As fast as the blocks on the exterior edge were exhausted, he drew on the heap. Then he stooped and rose, stooped and rose again with incredible activity. His huge gnome's head bent over the balustrade, then an

enormous stone fell, then another, then another. From time to time, he followed a fine stone with his eye, and when it did good execution, he said, "Hum!"

Meanwhile, the beggars did not grow discouraged. The thick door on which they were venting their fury had already trembled more than twenty times beneath the weight of their oaken battering-ram, multiplied by the strength of a hundred men. The panels cracked, the carved work flew into splinters, the hinges, at every blow, leaped from their pins, the planks yawned, the wood crumbled to powder, ground between the iron sheathing. Fortunately for Quasimodo, there was more iron than wood.

Nevertheless, he felt that the great door was yielding. Although he did not hear it, every blow of the ram reverberated simultaneously in the vaults of the church and within it. From above he beheld the vagabonds, filled with triumph and rage, shaking their fists at the gloomy façade; and both on the gypsy's account and his own he envied the wings of the owls which flitted away above his head in flocks.

His shower of stone blocks was not sufficient to repel the assailants.

At this moment of anguish, he noticed, a little lower down than the balustrade whence he was crushing the thieves, two long stone gutters which discharged immediately over the great door; the internal orifice of these gutters terminated on the pavement of the platform. An idea occurred to him; he ran in search of a fagot in his bellringer's den, placed on this fagot a great many bundles of laths, and many rolls of

lead, munitions which he had not employed so far, and having arranged this pile in front of the hole to the two gutters, he set it on fire with his lantern.

During this time, since the stones no longer fell, the outcasts ceased to gaze into the air. The bandits, panting like a pack of hounds who are forcing a boar into his lair, pressed tumultuously round the great door, all disfigured by the battering ram, but still standing. They were waiting with a quiver for the great blow which should split it open. They vied with each other in pressing as close as possible, in order to dash among the first, when it should open, into that opulent cathedral, a vast reservoir where the wealth of three centuries had been piled up. They reminded each other with roars of exultation and greedy lust, of the beautiful silver crosses, the fine copes of brocade, the beautiful tombs of silver gilt, the great magnificences of the choir, the dazzling festivals, the Christmasses sparkling with torches, the Easters sparkling with sunshine,--all those splendid solemneties wherein chandeliers, ciboriums, tabernacles, and reliquaries, studded the altars with a crust of gold and diamonds. Certainly, at that fine moment, thieves and pseudo sufferers, doctors in stealing, and vagabonds, were thinking much less of delivering the gypsy than of pillaging Notre-Dame. We could even easily believe that for a goodly number among them la Esmeralda was only a pretext, if thieves needed pretexts.

All at once, at the moment when they were grouping themselves round the ram for a last effort, each one holding his breath and stiffening his muscles in order to communicate all his force to the decisive blow, a

howl more frightful still than that which had burst forth and expired beneath the beam, rose among them. Those who did not cry out, those who were still alive, looked. Two streams of melted lead were falling from the summit of the edifice into the thickest of the rabble. That sea of men had just sunk down beneath the boiling metal, which had made, at the two points where it fell, two black and smoking holes in the crowd, such as hot water would make in snow. Dying men, half consumed and groaning with anguish, could be seen writhing there. Around these two principal streams there were drops of that horrible rain, which scattered over the assailants and entered their skulls like gimlets of fire. It was a heavy fire which overwhelmed these wretches with a thousand hailstones.

The outcry was heartrending. They fled pell-mell, hurling the beam upon the bodies, the boldest as well as the most timid, and the parvis was cleared a second time.

All eyes were raised to the top of the church. They beheld there an extraordinary sight. On the crest of the highest gallery, higher than the central rose window, there was a great flame rising between the two towers with whirlwinds of sparks, a vast, disordered, and furious flame, a tongue of which was borne into the smoke by the wind, from time to time. Below that fire, below the gloomy balustrade with its trefoils showing darkly against its glare, two spouts with monster throats were vomiting forth unceasingly that burning rain, whose silvery stream stood out against the shadows of the lower façade. As they approached the earth, these two jets of liquid lead spread out in sheaves, like water springing from the thousand holes of a watering-pot. Above the flame,

the enormous towers, two sides of each of which were visible in sharp outline, the one wholly black, the other wholly red, seemed still more vast with all the immensity of the shadow which they cast even to the sky.

Their innumerable sculptures of demons and dragons assumed a lugubrious aspect. The restless light of the flame made them move to the eye. There were griffins which had the air of laughing, gargoyles which one fancied one heard yelping, salamanders which puffed at the fire, tarasques* which sneezed in the smoke. And among the monsters thus roused from their sleep of stone by this flame, by this noise, there was one who walked about, and who was seen, from time to time, to pass across the glowing face of the pile, like a bat in front of a candle.

* The representation of a monstrous animal solemnly drawn about in Tarascon and other French towns.

Without doubt, this strange beacon light would awaken far away, the woodcutter of the hills of Bicêtre, terrified to behold the gigantic shadow of the towers of Notre-Dame quivering over his heaths.

A terrified silence ensued among the outcasts, during which nothing was heard, but the cries of alarm of the canons shut up in their cloister, and more uneasy than horses in a burning stable, the furtive sound of windows hastily opened and still more hastily closed, the internal

hurly-burly of the houses and of the Hôtel-Dieu, the wind in the flame, the last death-rattle of the dying, and the continued crackling of the rain of lead upon the pavement.

In the meanwhile, the principal vagabonds had retired beneath the porch of the Gondelaurier mansion, and were holding a council of war.

The Duke of Egypt, seated on a stone post, contemplated the phantasmagorical bonfire, glowing at a height of two hundred feet in the air, with religious terror. Clopin Trouillefou bit his huge fists with rage.

"Impossible to get in!" he muttered between his teeth.

"An old, enchanted church!" grumbled the aged Bohemian, Mathias Hungadi Spicali.

"By the Pope's whiskers!" went on a sham soldier, who had once been in service, "here are church gutters spitting melted lead at you better than the machicolations of Lectoure."

"Do you see that demon passing and repassing in front of the fire?" exclaimed the Duke of Egypt.

"Pardieu, 'tis that damned bellringer, 'tis Quasimodo," said Clopin.

The Bohemian tossed his head. "I tell you, that 'tis the spirit Sabnac,

the grand marquis, the demon of fortifications. He has the form of an armed soldier, the head of a lion. Sometimes he rides a hideous horse. He changes men into stones, of which he builds towers. He commands fifty legions 'Tis he indeed; I recognize him. Sometimes he is clad in a handsome golden robe, figured after the Turkish fashion."

"Where is Bellevigne de l'Etoile?" demanded Clopin.

"He is dead."

Andry the Red laughed in an idiotic way: "Notre-Dame is making work for the hospital," said he.

"Is there, then, no way of forcing this door," exclaimed the King of Thunes, stamping his foot.

The Duke of Egypt pointed sadly to the two streams of boiling lead which did not cease to streak the black facade, like two long distaffs of phosphorus.

"Churches have been known to defend themselves thus all by themselves," he remarked with a sigh. "Saint-Sophia at Constantinople, forty years ago, hurled to the earth three times in succession, the crescent of Mahom, by shaking her domes, which are her heads. Guillaume de Paris, who built this one was a magician."

"Must we then retreat in pitiful fashion, like highwaymen?" said Clopin.

"Must we leave our sister here, whom those hooded wolves will hang to-morrow."

"And the sacristy, where there are wagon-loads of gold!" added a vagabond, whose name, we regret to say, we do not know.

"Beard of Mahom!" cried Trouillefou.

"Let us make another trial," resumed the vagabond.

Mathias Hungadi shook his head.

"We shall never get in by the door. We must find the defect in the armor of the old fairy; a hole, a false postern, some joint or other."

"Who will go with me?" said Clopin. "I shall go at it again. By the way, where is the little scholar Jehan, who is so encased in iron?"

"He is dead, no doubt," some one replied; "we no longer hear his laugh."

The King of Thunes frowned: "So much the worse. There was a brave heart under that ironmongery. And Master Pierre Gringoire?"

"Captain Clopin," said Andry the Red, "he slipped away before we reached the Pont-aux-Changeurs."

Clopin stamped his foot. "Gueule-Dieu! 'twas he who pushed us on

hither, and he has deserted us in the very middle of the job! Cowardly chatterer, with a slipper for a helmet!"

"Captain Clopin," said Andry the Red, who was gazing down Rue du Parvis, "yonder is the little scholar."

"Praised be Pluto!" said Clopin. "But what the devil is he dragging after him?"

It was, in fact, Jehan, who was running as fast as his heavy outfit of a Paladin, and a long ladder which trailed on the pavement, would permit, more breathless than an ant harnessed to a blade of grass twenty times longer than itself.

"Victory! Te Deum!" cried the scholar. "Here is the ladder of the longshoremen of Port Saint-Landry."

Clopin approached him.

"Child, what do you mean to do, corne-dieu! with this ladder?"

"I have it," replied Jehan, panting. "I knew where it was under the shed of the lieutenant's house. There's a wench there whom I know, who thinks me as handsome as Cupido. I made use of her to get the ladder, and I have the ladder, Pasque-Mahom! The poor girl came to open the door to me in her shift."

"Yes," said Clopin, "but what are you going to do with that ladder?"

Jehan gazed at him with a malicious, knowing look, and cracked his fingers like castanets. At that moment he was sublime. On his head he wore one of those overloaded helmets of the fifteenth century, which frightened the enemy with their fanciful crests. His bristled with ten iron beaks, so that Jehan could have disputed with Nestor's Homeric vessel the redoubtable title of dexeubolos.

"What do I mean to do with it, august king of Thunes? Do you see that row of statues which have such idiotic expressions, yonder, above the three portals?"

"Yes. Well?"

"'Tis the gallery of the kings of France."

"What is that to me?" said Clopin.

"Wait! At the end of that gallery there is a door which is never fastened otherwise than with a latch, and with this ladder I ascend, and I am in the church."

"Child let me be the first to ascend."

"No, comrade, the ladder is mine. Come, you shall be the second."

"May Beelzebub strangle you!" said surly Clopin, "I won't be second to anybody."

"Then find a ladder, Clopin!"

Jehan set out on a run across the Place, dragging his ladder and shouting: "Follow me, lads!"

In an instant the ladder was raised, and propped against the balustrade of the lower gallery, above one of the lateral doors. The throng of vagabonds, uttering loud acclamations, crowded to its foot to ascend. But Jehan maintained his right, and was the first to set foot on the rungs. The passage was tolerably long. The gallery of the kings of France is to-day about sixty feet above the pavement. The eleven steps of the flight before the door, made it still higher. Jehan mounted slowly, a good deal incommoded by his heavy armor, holding his crossbow in one hand, and clinging to a rung with the other. When he reached the middle of the ladder, he cast a melancholy glance at the poor dead outcasts, with which the steps were strewn. "Alas!" said he, "here is a heap of bodies worthy of the fifth book of the Iliad!" Then he continued his ascent. The vagabonds followed him. There was one on every rung. At the sight of this line of cuirassed backs, undulating as they rose through the gloom, one would have pronounced it a serpent with steel scales, which was raising itself erect in front of the church. Jehan who formed the head, and who was whistling, completed the illusion.

The scholar finally reached the balcony of the gallery, and climbed over

it nimbly, to the applause of the whole vagabond tribe. Thus master of the citadel, he uttered a shout of joy, and suddenly halted, petrified. He had just caught sight of Quasimodo concealed in the dark, with flashing eye, behind one of the statues of the kings.

Before a second assailant could gain a foothold on the gallery, the formidable hunchback leaped to the head of the ladder, without uttering a word, seized the ends of the two uprights with his powerful hands, raised them, pushed them out from the wall, balanced the long and pliant ladder, loaded with vagabonds from top to bottom for a moment, in the midst of shrieks of anguish, then suddenly, with superhuman force, hurled this cluster of men backward into the Place. There was a moment when even the most resolute trembled. The ladder, launched backwards, remained erect and standing for an instant, and seemed to hesitate, then wavered, then suddenly, describing a frightful arc of a circle eighty feet in radius, crashed upon the pavement with its load of ruffians, more rapidly than a drawbridge when its chains break. There arose an immense imprecation, then all was still, and a few mutilated wretches were seen, crawling over the heap of dead.

A sound of wrath and grief followed the first cries of triumph among the besiegers. Quasimodo, impassive, with both elbows propped on the balustrade, looked on. He had the air of an old, bushy-headed king at his window.

As for Jehan Frollo, he was in a critical position. He found himself in the gallery with the formidable bellringer, alone, separated from his

companions by a vertical wall eighty feet high. While Quasimodo was dealing with the ladder, the scholar had run to the postern which he believed to be open. It was not. The deaf man had closed it behind him when he entered the gallery. Jehan had then concealed himself behind a stone king, not daring to breathe, and fixing upon the monstrous hunchback a frightened gaze, like the man, who, when courting the wife of the guardian of a menagerie, went one evening to a love rendezvous, mistook the wall which he was to climb, and suddenly found himself face to face with a white bear.

For the first few moments, the deaf man paid no heed to him; but at last he turned his head, and suddenly straightened up. He had just caught sight of the scholar.

Jehan prepared himself for a rough shock, but the deaf man remained motionless; only he had turned towards the scholar and was looking at him.

"Ho ho!" said Jehan, "what do you mean by staring at me with that solitary and melancholy eye?"

As he spoke thus, the young scamp stealthily adjusted his crossbow.

"Quasimodo!" he cried, "I am going to change your surname: you shall be called the blind man."

The shot sped. The feathered vireton* whizzed and entered the

hunchback's left arm. Quasimodo appeared no more moved by it than by a scratch to King Pharamond. He laid his hand on the arrow, tore it from his arm, and tranquilly broke it across his big knee; then he let the two pieces drop on the floor, rather than threw them down. But Jehan had no opportunity to fire a second time. The arrow broken, Quasimodo breathing heavily, bounded like a grasshopper, and he fell upon the scholar, whose armor was flattened against the wall by the blow.

* An arrow with a pyramidal head of iron and copper spiral wings by which a rotatory motion was communicated.

Then in that gloom, wherein wavered the light of the torches, a terrible thing was seen.

Quasimodo had grasped with his left hand the two arms of Jehan, who did not offer any resistance, so thoroughly did he feel that he was lost. With his right hand, the deaf man detached one by one, in silence, with sinister slowness, all the pieces of his armor, the sword, the daggers, the helmet, the cuirass, the leg pieces. One would have said that it was a monkey taking the shell from a nut. Quasimodo flung the scholar's iron shell at his feet, piece by piece. When the scholar beheld himself disarmed, stripped, weak, and naked in those terrible hands, he made no attempt to speak to the deaf man, but began to laugh audaciously in his face, and to sing with his intrepid heedlessness of a child of sixteen, the then popular ditty:--

"Elle est bien habillée,

La ville de Cambrai;

Marafin l'a pillée..."*

* The city of Cambrai is well dressed. Marafin plundered it.

He did not finish. Quasimodo was seen on the parapet of the gallery, holding the scholar by the feet with one hand and whirling him over the abyss like a sling; then a sound like that of a bony structure in contact with a wall was heard, and something was seen to fall which halted a third of the way down in its fall, on a projection in the architecture. It was a dead body which remained hanging there, bent double, its loins broken, its skull empty.

A cry of horror rose among the vagabonds.

"Vengeance!" shouted Clopin. "To the sack!" replied the multitude. "Assault! assault!"

There came a tremendous howl, in which were mingled all tongues, all dialects, all accents. The death of the poor scholar imparted a furious ardor to that crowd. It was seized with shame, and the wrath of having been held so long in check before a church by a hunchback. Rage found ladders, multiplied the torches, and, at the expiration of a few

minutes, Quasimodo, in despair, beheld that terrible ant heap mount on all sides to the assault of Notre-Dame. Those who had no ladders had knotted ropes; those who had no ropes climbed by the projections of the carvings. They hung from each other's rags. There were no means of resisting that rising tide of frightful faces; rage made these fierce countenances ruddy; their clayey brows were dripping with sweat; their eyes darted lightnings; all these grimaces, all these horrors laid siege to Quasimodo. One would have said that some other church had despatched to the assault of Notre-Dame its gorgons, its dogs, its drées, its demons, its most fantastic sculptures. It was like a layer of living monsters on the stone monsters of the façade.

Meanwhile, the Place was studded with a thousand torches. This scene of confusion, till now hid in darkness, was suddenly flooded with light. The parvis was resplendent, and cast a radiance on the sky; the bonfire lighted on the lofty platform was still burning, and illuminated the city far away. The enormous silhouette of the two towers, projected afar on the roofs of Paris, and formed a large notch of black in this light. The city seemed to be aroused. Alarm bells wailed in the distance. The vagabonds howled, panted, swore, climbed; and Quasimodo, powerless against so many enemies, shuddering for the gypsy, beholding the furious faces approaching ever nearer and nearer to his gallery, entreated heaven for a miracle, and wrung his arms in despair.

CHAPTER V. THE RETREAT IN WHICH MONSIEUR LOUIS OF FRANCE SAYS HIS PRAYERS.

The reader has not, perhaps, forgotten that one moment before catching sight of the nocturnal band of vagabonds, Quasimodo, as he inspected Paris from the heights of his bell tower, perceived only one light burning, which gleamed like a star from a window on the topmost story of a lofty edifice beside the Porte Saint-Antoine. This edifice was the Bastille. That star was the candle of Louis XI. King Louis XI. had, in fact, been two days in Paris. He was to take his departure on the next day but one for his citadel of Montilz-les-Tours. He made but seldom and brief appearance in his good city of Paris, since there he did not feel about him enough pitfalls, gibbets, and Scotch archers.

He had come, that day, to sleep at the Bastille. The great chamber five toises* square, which he had at the Louvre, with its huge chimney-piece loaded with twelve great beasts and thirteen great prophets, and his grand bed, eleven feet by twelve, pleased him but little. He felt himself lost amid all this grandeur. This good bourgeois king preferred the Bastille with a tiny chamber and couch. And then, the Bastille was stronger than the Louvre.

* An ancient long measure in France, containing six feet and nearly five inches English measure.

This little chamber, which the king reserved for himself in the famous state prison, was also tolerably spacious and occupied the topmost story of a turret rising from the donjon keep. It was circular in form, carpeted with mats of shining straw, ceiled with beams, enriched with fleurs-de-lis of gilded metal with interjoists in color; wainscoated with rich woods sown with rosettes of white metal, and with others painted a fine, bright green, made of orpiment and fine indigo.

There was only one window, a long pointed casement, latticed with brass wire and bars of iron, further darkened by fine colored panes with the arms of the king and of the queen, each pane being worth two and twenty sols.

There was but one entrance, a modern door, with a fiat arch, garnished with a piece of tapestry on the inside, and on the outside by one of those porches of Irish wood, frail edifices of cabinet-work curiously wrought, numbers of which were still to be seen in old houses a hundred and fifty years ago. "Although they disfigure and embarrass the places," says Sauvel in despair, "our old people are still unwilling to get rid of them, and keep them in spite of everybody."

In this chamber, nothing was to be found of what furnishes ordinary apartments, neither benches, nor trestles, nor forms, nor common stools in the form of a chest, nor fine stools sustained by pillars and counter-pillars, at four sols a piece. Only one easy arm-chair, very

magnificent, was to be seen; the wood was painted with roses on a red ground, the seat was of ruby Cordovan leather, ornamented with long silken fringes, and studded with a thousand golden nails. The loneliness of this chair made it apparent that only one person had a right to sit down in this apartment. Beside the chair, and quite close to the window, there was a table covered with a cloth with a pattern of birds. On this table stood an inkhorn spotted with ink, some parchments, several pens, and a large goblet of chased silver. A little further on was a brazier, a praying stool in crimson velvet, relieved with small bosses of gold. Finally, at the extreme end of the room, a simple bed of scarlet and yellow damask, without either tinsel or lace; having only an ordinary fringe. This bed, famous for having borne the sleep or the sleeplessness of Louis XI., was still to be seen two hundred years ago, at the house of a councillor of state, where it was seen by old Madame Pilou, celebrated in Cyrus under the name "Arricidie" and of "la Morale Vivante".

Such was the chamber which was called "the retreat where Monsieur Louis de France says his prayers."

At the moment when we have introduced the reader into it, this retreat was very dark. The curfew bell had sounded an hour before; night was come, and there was only one flickering wax candle set on the table to light five persons variously grouped in the chamber.

The first on which the light fell was a seigneur superbly clad in breeches and jerkin of scarlet striped with silver, and a loose coat

with half sleeves of cloth of gold with black figures. This splendid costume, on which the light played, seemed glazed with flame on every fold. The man who wore it had his armorial bearings embroidered on his breast in vivid colors; a chevron accompanied by a deer passant. The shield was flanked, on the right by an olive branch, on the left by a deer's antlers. This man wore in his girdle a rich dagger whose hilt, of silver gilt, was chased in the form of a helmet, and surmounted by a count's coronet. He had a forbidding air, a proud mien, and a head held high. At the first glance one read arrogance on his visage; at the second, craft.

He was standing bareheaded, a long roll of parchment in his hand, behind the arm-chair in which was seated, his body ungracefully doubled up, his knees crossed, his elbow on the table, a very badly accoutred personage. Let the reader imagine in fact, on the rich seat of Cordova leather, two crooked knees, two thin thighs, poorly clad in black worsted tricot, a body enveloped in a cloak of fustian, with fur trimming of which more leather than hair was visible; lastly, to crown all, a greasy old hat of the worst sort of black cloth, bordered with a circular string of leaden figures. This, in company with a dirty skull-cap, which hardly allowed a hair to escape, was all that distinguished the seated personage. He held his head so bent upon his breast, that nothing was to be seen of his face thus thrown into shadow, except the tip of his nose, upon which fell a ray of light, and which must have been long. From the thinness of his wrinkled hand, one divined that he was an old man. It was Louis XI. At some distance behind them, two men dressed in garments of Flemish style were conversing, who were not sufficiently lost in the shadow to

prevent any one who had been present at the performance of Gringoire's mystery from recognizing in them two of the principal Flemish envoys, Guillaume Rym, the sagacious pensioner of Ghent, and Jacques Coppenole, the popular hosier. The reader will remember that these men were mixed up in the secret politics of Louis XI. Finally, quite at the end of the room, near the door, in the dark, stood, motionless as a statue, a vigorous man with thickset limbs, a military harness, with a surcoat of armorial bearings, whose square face pierced with staring eyes, slit with an immense mouth, his ears concealed by two large screens of flat hair, had something about it both of the dog and the tiger.

All were uncovered except the king.

The gentleman who stood near the king was reading him a sort of long memorial to which his majesty seemed to be listening attentively. The two Flemings were whispering together.

"Cross of God!" grumbled Coppenole, "I am tired of standing; is there no chair here?"

Rym replied by a negative gesture, accompanied by a discreet smile.

"Croix-Dieu!" resumed Coppenole, thoroughly unhappy at being obliged to lower his voice thus, "I should like to sit down on the floor, with my legs crossed, like a hosier, as I do in my shop."

"Take good care that you do not, Master Jacques."

"Ouais! Master Guillaume! can one only remain here on his feet?"

"Or on his knees," said Rym.

At that moment the king's voice was uplifted. They held their peace.

"Fifty sols for the robes of our valets, and twelve livres for the mantles of the clerks of our crown! That's it! Pour out gold by the ton! Are you mad, Olivier?"

As he spoke thus, the old man raised his head. The golden shells of the collar of Saint-Michael could be seen gleaming on his neck. The candle fully illuminated his gaunt and morose profile. He tore the papers from the other's hand.

"You are ruining us!" he cried, casting his hollow eyes over the scroll. "What is all this? What need have we of so prodigious a household? Two chaplains at ten livres a month each, and, a chapel clerk at one hundred sols! A valet-de-chambre at ninety livres a year. Four head cooks at six score livres a year each! A spit-cook, an herb-cook, a sauce-cook, a butler, two sumpter-horse lackeys, at ten livres a month each! Two scullions at eight livres! A groom of the stables and his two aids at four and twenty livres a month! A porter, a pastry-cook, a baker, two carters, each sixty livres a year! And the farrier six score livres! And the master of the chamber of our funds, twelve hundred livres! And the comptroller five hundred. And how do I know what else? 'Tis ruinous. The

wages of our servants are putting France to the pillage! All the ingots of the Louvre will melt before such a fire of expenses! We shall have to sell our plate! And next year, if God and our Lady (here he raised his hat) lend us life, we shall drink our potions from a pewter pot!"

So saying, he cast a glance at the silver goblet which gleamed upon the table. He coughed and continued,--

"Master Olivier, the princes who reign over great lordships, like kings and emperors, should not allow sumptuousness in their houses; for the fire spreads thence through the province. Hence, Master Olivier, consider this said once for all. Our expenditure increases every year. The thing displease us. How, pasque-Dieu! when in '79 it did not exceed six and thirty thousand livres, did it attain in '80, forty-three thousand six hundred and nineteen livres? I have the figures in my head. In '81, sixty-six thousand six hundred and eighty livres, and this year, by the faith of my body, it will reach eighty thousand livres! Doubled in four years! Monstrous!"

He paused breathless, then resumed energetically,--

"I behold around me only people who fatten on my leanness! you suck crowns from me at every pore."

All remained silent. This was one of those fits of wrath which are allowed to take their course. He continued,--

"'Tis like that request in Latin from the gentlemen of France, that we should re-establish what they call the grand charges of the Crown! Charges in very deed! Charges which crush! Ah! gentlemen! you say that we are not a king to reign dapifero nullo, buticulario nullo! We will let you see, pasque-Dieu! whether we are not a king!"

Here he smiled, in the consciousness of his power; this softened his bad humor, and he turned towards the Flemings,--

"Do you see, Gossip Guillaume? the grand warden of the keys, the grand butler, the grand chamberlain, the grand seneschal are not worth the smallest valet. Remember this, Gossip Coppenole. They serve no purpose, as they stand thus useless round the king; they produce upon me the effect of the four Evangelists who surround the face of the big clock of the palace, and which Philippe Brille has just set in order afresh. They are gilt, but they do not indicate the hour; and the hands can get on without them."

He remained in thought for a moment, then added, shaking his aged head,--

"Ho! ho! by our Lady, I am not Philippe Brille, and I shall not gild the great vassals anew. Continue, Olivier."

The person whom he designated by this name, took the papers into his hands again, and began to read aloud,--

"To Adam Tenon, clerk of the warden of the seals of the provostship of Paris; for the silver, making, and engraving of said seals, which have been made new because the others preceding, by reason of their antiquity and their worn condition, could no longer be successfully used, twelve livres parisis.

"To Guillaume Frère, the sum of four livres, four sols parisis, for his trouble and salary, for having nourished and fed the doves in the two dove-cots of the Hôtel des Tournelles, during the months of January, February, and March of this year; and for this he hath given seven sextiers of barley.

"To a gray friar for confessing a criminal, four sols parisis."

The king listened in silence. From time to time he coughed; then he raised the goblet to his lips and drank a draught with a grimace.

"During this year there have been made by the ordinance of justice, to the sound of the trumpet, through the squares of Paris, fifty-six proclamations. Account to be regulated.

"For having searched and ransacked in certain places, in Paris as well as elsewhere, for money said to be there concealed; but nothing hath been found: forty-five livres parisis."

"Bury a crown to unearth a sou!" said the king.

"For having set in the Hôtel des Tournelles six panes of white glass in the place where the iron cage is, thirteen sols; for having made and delivered by command of the king, on the day of the musters, four shields with the escutcheons of the said seigneur, encircled with garlands of roses all about, six livres; for two new sleeves to the king's old doublet, twenty sols; for a box of grease to grease the boots of the king, fifteen deniers; a stable newly made to lodge the king's black pigs, thirty livres parisis; many partitions, planks, and trap-doors, for the safekeeping of the lions at Saint-Paul, twenty-two livres."

"These be dear beasts," said Louis XI. "It matters not; it is a fine magnificence in a king. There is a great red lion whom I love for his pleasant ways. Have you seen him, Master Guillaume? Princes must have these terrific animals; for we kings must have lions for our dogs and tigers for our cats. The great befits a crown. In the days of the pagans of Jupiter, when the people offered the temples a hundred oxen and a hundred sheep, the emperors gave a hundred lions and a hundred eagles. This was wild and very fine. The kings of France have always had roarings round their throne. Nevertheless, people must do me this justice, that I spend still less money on it than they did, and that I possess a greater modesty of lions, bears, elephants, and leopards.--Go on, Master Olivier. We wished to say thus much to our Flemish friends."

Guillaume Rym bowed low, while Coppenole, with his surly mien, had the air of one of the bears of which his majesty was speaking. The king paid no heed. He had just dipped his lips into the goblet, and he spat out

the beverage, saying: "Foh! what a disagreeable potion!" The man who was reading continued:--

"For feeding a rascally footpad, locked up these six months in the little cell of the flayer, until it should be determined what to do with him, six livres, four sols."

"What's that?" interrupted the king; "feed what ought to be hanged! Pasque-Dieu! I will give not a sou more for that nourishment. Olivier, come to an understanding about the matter with Monsieur d'Estouteville, and prepare me this very evening the wedding of the gallant and the gallows. Resume."

Olivier made a mark with his thumb against the article of the "rascally foot soldier," and passed on.

"To Henriet Cousin, master executor of the high works of justice in Paris, the sum of sixty sols parisis, to him assessed and ordained by monseigneur the provost of Paris, for having bought, by order of the said sieur the provost, a great broad sword, serving to execute and decapitate persons who are by justice condemned for their demerits, and he hath caused the same to be garnished with a sheath and with all things thereto appertaining; and hath likewise caused to be repointed and set in order the old sword, which had become broken and notched in executing justice on Messire Louis de Luxembourg, as will more fully appear."

The king interrupted: "That suffices. I allow the sum with great good will. Those are expenses which I do not begrudge. I have never regretted that money. Continue."

"For having made over a great cage..."

"Ah!" said the king, grasping the arms of his chair in both hands, "I knew well that I came hither to this Bastille for some purpose. Hold, Master Olivier; I desire to see that cage myself. You shall read me the cost while I am examining it. Messieurs Flemings, come and see this; 'tis curious."

Then he rose, leaned on the arm of his interlocutor, made a sign to the sort of mute who stood before the door to precede him, to the two Flemings to follow him, and quitted the room.

The royal company was recruited, at the door of the retreat, by men of arms, all loaded down with iron, and by slender pages bearing flambeaux. It marched for some time through the interior of the gloomy donjon, pierced with staircases and corridors even in the very thickness of the walls. The captain of the Bastille marched at their head, and caused the wickets to be opened before the bent and aged king, who coughed as he walked.

At each wicket, all heads were obliged to stoop, except that of the old man bent double with age. "Hum," said he between his gums, for he had no longer any teeth, "we are already quite prepared for the door of the

sepulchre. For a low door, a bent passer."

At length, after having passed a final wicket, so loaded with locks that a quarter of an hour was required to open it, they entered a vast and lofty vaulted hall, in the centre of which they could distinguish by the light of the torches, a huge cubic mass of masonry, iron, and wood. The interior was hollow. It was one of those famous cages of prisoners of state, which were called "the little daughters of the king." In its walls there were two or three little windows so closely trellised with stout iron bars; that the glass was not visible. The door was a large flat slab of stone, as on tombs; the sort of door which serves for entrance only. Only here, the occupant was alive.

The king began to walk slowly round the little edifice, examining it carefully, while Master Olivier, who followed him, read aloud the note.

"For having made a great cage of wood of solid beams, timbers and wall-plates, measuring nine feet in length by eight in breadth, and of the height of seven feet between the partitions, smoothed and clamped with great bolts of iron, which has been placed in a chamber situated in one of the towers of the Bastille Saint-Antoine, in which cage is placed and detained, by command of the king our lord, a prisoner who formerly inhabited an old, decrepit, and ruined cage. There have been employed in making the said new cage, ninety-six horizontal beams, and fifty-two upright joists, ten wall plates three toises long; there have been occupied nineteen carpenters to hew, work, and fit all the said wood in the courtyard of the Bastille during twenty days."

"Very fine heart of oak," said the king, striking the woodwork with his fist.

"There have been used in this cage," continued the other, "two hundred and twenty great bolts of iron, of nine feet, and of eight, the rest of medium length, with the rowels, caps and counterbands appertaining to the said bolts; weighing, the said iron in all, three thousand, seven hundred and thirty-five pounds; beside eight great squares of iron, serving to attach the said cage in place with clamps and nails weighing in all two hundred and eighteen pounds, not reckoning the iron of the trellises for the windows of the chamber wherein the cage hath been placed, the bars of iron for the door of the cage and other things."

"'Tis a great deal of iron," said the king, "to contain the light of a spirit."

"The whole amounts to three hundred and seventeen livres, five sols, seven deniers."

"Pasque-Dieu!" exclaimed the king.

At this oath, which was the favorite of Louis XI., some one seemed to awaken in the interior of the cage; the sound of chains was heard, grating on the floor, and a feeble voice, which seemed to issue from the tomb was uplifted. "Sire! sire! mercy!" The one who spoke thus could not be seen.

"Three hundred and seventeen livres, five sols, seven deniers," repeated Louis XI. The lamentable voice which had proceeded from the cage had frozen all present, even Master Olivier himself. The king alone wore the air of not having heard. At his order, Master Olivier resumed his reading, and his majesty coldly continued his inspection of the cage.

"In addition to this there hath been paid to a mason who hath made the holes wherein to place the gratings of the windows, and the floor of the chamber where the cage is, because that floor could not support this cage by reason of its weight, twenty-seven livres fourteen sols parisis."

The voice began to moan again.

"Mercy, sire! I swear to you that 'twas Monsieur the Cardinal d'Angers and not I, who was guilty of treason."

"The mason is bold!" said the king. "Continue, Olivier." Olivier continued,--

"To a joiner for window frames, bedstead, hollow stool, and other things, twenty livres, two sols parisis."

The voice also continued.

"Alas, sire! will you not listen to me? I protest to you that 'twas

not I who wrote the matter to Monseigneur do Guyenne, but Monsieur le Cardinal Balue."

"The joiner is dear," quoth the king. "Is that all?"

"No, sire. To a glazier, for the windows of the said chamber, forty-six sols, eight deniers parisis."

"Have mercy, sire! Is it not enough to have given all my goods to my judges, my plate to Monsieur de Torcy, my library to Master Pierre Doriolle, my tapestry to the governor of the Roussillon? I am innocent. I have been shivering in an iron cage for fourteen years. Have mercy, sire! You will find your reward in heaven."

"Master Olivier," said the king, "the total?"

"Three hundred sixty-seven livres, eight sols, three deniers parisis.

"Notre-Dame!" cried the king. "This is an outrageous cage!"

He tore the book from Master Olivier's hands, and set to reckoning it himself upon his fingers, examining the paper and the cage alternately. Meanwhile, the prisoner could be heard sobbing. This was lugubrious in the darkness, and their faces turned pale as they looked at each other.

"Fourteen years, sire! Fourteen years now! since the month of April, 1469. In the name of the Holy Mother of God, sire, listen to me! During

all this time you have enjoyed the heat of the sun. Shall I, frail creature, never more behold the day? Mercy, sire! Be pitiful! Clemency is a fine, royal virtue, which turns aside the currents of wrath. Does your majesty believe that in the hour of death it will be a great cause of content for a king never to have left any offence unpunished? Besides, sire, I did not betray your majesty, 'twas Monsieur d'Angers; and I have on my foot a very heavy chain, and a great ball of iron at the end, much heavier than it should be in reason. Eh! sire! Have pity on me!"

"Olivier," cried the king, throwing back his head, "I observe that they charge me twenty sols a hogshead for plaster, while it is worth but twelve. You will refer back this account."

He turned his back on the cage, and set out to leave the room. The miserable prisoner divined from the removal of the torches and the noise, that the king was taking his departure.

"Sire! sire!" he cried in despair.

The door closed again. He no longer saw anything, and heard only the hoarse voice of the turnkey, singing in his ears this ditty,--

"Maître Jean Balue,
A perdu la vue
De ses évêchés.

Monsieur de Verdun.

N'en a plus pas un;

Tous sont dépêchés."*

* Master Jean Balue has lost sight of his bishoprics. Monsieur of Verdun has no longer one; all have been killed off.

The king reascended in silence to his retreat, and his suite followed him, terrified by the last groans of the condemned man. All at once his majesty turned to the Governor of the Bastille,--

"By the way," said he, "was there not some one in that cage?"

"Pardieu, yes sire!" replied the governor, astounded by the question.

"And who was it?"

"Monsieur the Bishop of Verdun."

The king knew this better than any one else. But it was a mania of his.

"Ah!" said he, with the innocent air of thinking of it for the first time, "Guillaume de Harancourt, the friend of Monsieur the Cardinal Balue. A good devil of a bishop!"

At the expiration of a few moments, the door of the retreat had opened again, then closed upon the five personages whom the reader has seen at the beginning of this chapter, and who resumed their places, their whispered conversations, and their attitudes.

During the king's absence, several despatches had been placed on his table, and he broke the seals himself. Then he began to read them promptly, one after the other, made a sign to Master Olivier who appeared to exercise the office of minister, to take a pen, and without communicating to him the contents of the despatches, he began to dictate in a low voice, the replies which the latter wrote, on his knees, in an inconvenient attitude before the table.

Guillaume Rym was on the watch.

The king spoke so low that the Flemings heard nothing of his dictation, except some isolated and rather unintelligible scraps, such as,--

"To maintain the fertile places by commerce, and the sterile by manufactures....--To show the English lords our four bombards, London, Brabant, Bourg-en-Bresse, Saint-Omer....--Artillery is the cause of war being made more judiciously now....--To Monsieur de Bressuire, our friend....--Armies cannot be maintained without tribute, etc."

Once he raised his voice,--

"Pasque Dieu! Monsieur the King of Sicily seals his letters with

yellow wax, like a king of France. Perhaps we are in the wrong to permit him so to do. My fair cousin of Burgundy granted no armorial bearings with a field of gules. The grandeur of houses is assured by the integrity of prerogatives. Note this, friend Olivier."

Again,--

"Oh! oh!" said he, "What a long message! What doth our brother the emperor claim?" And running his eye over the missive and breaking his reading with interjection: "Surely! the Germans are so great and powerful, that it is hardly credible--But let us not forget the old proverb: 'The finest county is Flanders; the finest duchy, Milan; the finest kingdom, France.' Is it not so, Messieurs Flemings?"

This time Coppenole bowed in company with Guillaume Rym. The hosier's patriotism was tickled.

The last despatch made Louis XI. frown.

"What is this?" he said, "Complaints and fault finding against our garrisons in Picardy! Olivier, write with diligence to M. the Marshal de Rouault:--That discipline is relaxed. That the gendarmes of the unattached troops, the feudal nobles, the free archers, and the Swiss inflict infinite evils on the rustics.--That the military, not content with what they find in the houses of the rustics, constrain them with violent blows of cudgel or of lash to go and get wine, spices, and other unreasonable things in the town.--That monsieur the king knows this.

That we undertake to guard our people against inconveniences, larcenies and pillage.--That such is our will, by our Lady!--That in addition, it suits us not that any fiddler, barber, or any soldier varlet should be clad like a prince, in velvet, cloth of silk, and rings of gold.--That these vanities are hateful to God.--That we, who are gentlemen, content ourselves with a doublet of cloth at sixteen sols the ell, of Paris.--That messieurs the camp-followers can very well come down to that, also.--Command and ordain.--To Monsieur de Rouault, our friend.--Good."

He dictated this letter aloud, in a firm tone, and in jerks. At the moment when he finished it, the door opened and gave passage to a new personage, who precipitated himself into the chamber, crying in affright,--

"Sire! sire! there is a sedition of the populace in Paris!" Louis XI.'s grave face contracted; but all that was visible of his emotion passed away like a flash of lightning. He controlled himself and said with tranquil severity,--

"Gossip Jacques, you enter very abruptly!"

"Sire! sire! there is a revolt!" repeated Gossip Jacques breathlessly.

The king, who had risen, grasped him roughly by the arm, and said in his ear, in such a manner as to be heard by him alone, with concentrated rage and a sidelong glance at the Flemings,--

"Hold your tongue! or speak low!"

The new comer understood, and began in a low tone to give a very terrified account, to which the king listened calmly, while Guillaume Rym called Coppenole's attention to the face and dress of the new arrival, to his furred cowl, (caputia fourrata), his short cape, (epitogia curta), his robe of black velvet, which bespoke a president of the court of accounts.

Hardly had this personage given the king some explanations, when Louis XI. exclaimed, bursting into a laugh,--

"In truth? Speak aloud, Gossip Coictier! What call is there for you to talk so low? Our Lady knoweth that we conceal nothing from our good friends the Flemings."

"But sire..."

"Speak loud!"

Gossip Coictier was struck dumb with surprise.

"So," resumed the king,--"speak sir,--there is a commotion among the louts in our good city of Paris?"

"Yes, sire."

"And which is moving you say, against monsieur the bailiff of the Palais-de-Justice?"

"So it appears," said the gossip, who still stammered, utterly astounded by the abrupt and inexplicable change which had just taken place in the king's thoughts.

Louis XI. continued: "Where did the watch meet the rabble?"

"Marching from the Grand Truanderie, towards the Pont-aux-Changeurs. I met it myself as I was on my way hither to obey your majesty's commands. I heard some of them shouting: 'Down with the bailiff of the palace!'"

"And what complaints have they against the bailiff?"

"Ah!" said Gossip Jacques, "because he is their lord."

"Really?"

"Yes, sire. They are knaves from the Cour-des-Miracles. They have been complaining this long while, of the bailiff, whose vassals they are. They do not wish to recognize him either as judge or as voyer?"*

* One in charge of the highways.

"Yes, certainly!" retorted the king with a smile of satis-faction which he strove in vain to disguise.

"In all their petitions to the Parliament, they claim to have but two masters. Your majesty and their God, who is the devil, I believe."

"Eh! eh!" said the king.

He rubbed his hands, he laughed with that inward mirth which makes the countenance beam; he was unable to dissimulate his joy, although he endeavored at moments to compose himself. No one understood it in the least, not even Master Olivier. He remained silent for a moment, with a thoughtful but contented air.

"Are they in force?" he suddenly inquired.

"Yes, assuredly, sire," replied Gossip Jacques.

"How many?"

"Six thousand at the least."

The king could not refrain from saying: "Good!" he went on,--

"Are they armed?"

"With scythes, pikes, hackbuts, pickaxes. All sorts of very violent weapons."

The king did not appear in the least disturbed by this list. Jacques considered it his duty to add,--

"If your majesty does not send prompt succor to the bailiff, he is lost."

"We will send," said the king with an air of false seriousness. "It is well. Assuredly we will send. Monsieur the bailiff is our friend. Six thousand! They are desperate scamps! Their audacity is marvellous, and we are greatly enraged at it. But we have only a few people about us to-night. To-morrow morning will be time enough."

Gossip Jacques exclaimed, "Instantly, sire! there will be time to sack the bailiwick a score of times, to violate the seignory, to hang the bailiff. For God's sake, sire! send before to-morrow morning."

The king looked him full in the face. "I have told you to-morrow morning."

It was one Of those looks to which one does not reply. After a silence, Louis XI. raised his voice once more,--

"You should know that, Gossip Jacques. What was--"

He corrected himself. "What is the bailiff's feudal jurisdiction?"

"Sire, the bailiff of the palace has the Rue Calendre as far as the Rue de l'Herberie, the Place Saint-Michel, and the localities vulgarly known as the Mureaux, situated near the church of Notre-Dame des Champs (here Louis XI. raised the brim of his hat), which hotels number thirteen, plus the Cour des Miracles, plus the Maladerie, called the Banlieue, plus the whole highway which begins at that Maladerie and ends at the Porte Sainte-Jacques. Of these divers places he is voyer, high, middle, and low, justiciary, full seigneur."

"Bless me!" said the king, scratching his left ear with his right hand, "that makes a goodly bit of my city! Ah! monsieur the bailiff was king of all that."

This time he did not correct himself. He continued dreamily, and as though speaking to himself,--

"Very fine, monsieur the bailiff! You had there between your teeth a pretty slice of our Paris."

All at once he broke out explosively, "Pasque-Dieu! What people are those who claim to be voyers, justiciaries, lords and masters in our domains? who have their tollgates at the end of every field? their gallows and their hangman at every cross-road among our people? So that as the Greek believed that he had as many gods as there were fountains,

and the Persian as many as he beheld stars, the Frenchman counts as many
kings as he sees gibbets! Pardieu! 'tis an evil thing, and the confusion of it displeases me. I should greatly like to know whether it be the mercy of God that there should be in Paris any other lord than the king, any other judge than our parliament, any other emperor than ourselves in this empire! By the faith of my soul! the day must certainly come when there shall exist in France but one king, one lord, one judge, one headsman, as there is in paradise but one God!"

He lifted his cap again, and continued, still dreamily, with the air and accent of a hunter who is cheering on his pack of hounds: "Good, my people! bravely done! break these false lords! do your duty! at them! have at them! pillage them! take them! sack them!... Ah! you want to be kings, messeigneurs? On, my people on!"

Here he interrupted himself abruptly, bit his lips as though to take back his thought which had already half escaped, bent his piercing eyes in turn on each of the five persons who surrounded him, and suddenly grasping his hat with both hands and staring full at it, he said to it: "Oh! I would burn you if you knew what there was in my head."

Then casting about him once more the cautious and uneasy glance of the fox re-entering his hole,--

"No matter! we will succor monsieur the bailiff. Unfortunately, we have but few troops here at the present moment, against so great a populace.

We must wait until to-morrow. The order will be transmitted to the City and every one who is caught will be immediately hung."

"By the way, sire," said Gossip Coictier, "I had forgotten that in the first agitation, the watch have seized two laggards of the band. If your majesty desires to see these men, they are here."

"If I desire to see them!" cried the king. "What! Pasque-Dieu! You forget a thing like that! Run quick, you, Olivier! Go, seek them!"

Master Olivier quitted the room and returned a moment later with the two prisoners, surrounded by archers of the guard. The first had a coarse, idiotic, drunken and astonished face. He was clothed in rags, and walked with one knee bent and dragging his leg. The second had a pallid and smiling countenance, with which the reader is already acquainted.

The king surveyed them for a moment without uttering a word, then addressing the first one abruptly,--

"What's your name?"

"Gieffroy Pincebourde."

"Your trade."

"Outcast."

"What were you going to do in this damnable sedition?" The outcast stared at the king, and swung his arms with a stupid air.

He had one of those awkwardly shaped heads where intelligence is about as much at its ease as a light beneath an extinguisher.

"I know not," said he. "They went, I went."

"Were you not going to outrageously attack and pillage your lord, the bailiff of the palace?"

"I know that they were going to take something from some one. That is all."

A soldier pointed out to the king a billhook which he had seized on the person of the vagabond.

"Do you recognize this weapon?" demanded the king.

"Yes; 'tis my billhook; I am a vine-dresser."

"And do you recognize this man as your companion?" added Louis XI., pointing to the other prisoner.

"No, I do not know him."

"That will do," said the king, making a sign with his finger to the

silent personage who stood motionless beside the door, to whom we have already called the reader's attention.

"Gossip Tristan, here is a man for you."

Tristan l'Hermite bowed. He gave an order in a low voice to two archers, who led away the poor vagabond.

In the meantime, the king had approached the second prisoner, who was perspiring in great drops: "Your name?"

"Sire, Pierre Gringoire."

"Your trade?"

"Philosopher, sire."

"How do you permit yourself, knave, to go and besiege our friend, monsieur the bailiff of the palace, and what have you to say concerning this popular agitation?"

"Sire, I had nothing to do with it."

"Come, now! you wanton wretch, were not you apprehended by the watch in that bad company?"

"No, sire, there is a mistake. 'Tis a fatality. I make tragedies. Sire,

I entreat your majesty to listen to me. I am a poet. 'Tis the melancholy way of men of my profession to roam the streets by night. I was passing there. It was mere chance. I was unjustly arrested; I am innocent of this civil tempest. Your majesty sees that the vagabond did not recognize me. I conjure your majesty--"

"Hold your tongue!" said the king, between two swallows of his ptisan. "You split our head!"

Tristan l'Hermite advanced and pointing to Gringoire,--

"Sire, can this one be hanged also?"

This was the first word that he had uttered.

"Phew!" replied the king, "I see no objection."

"I see a great many!" said Gringoire.

At that moment, our philosopher was greener than an olive. He perceived from the king's cold and indifferent mien that there was no other resource than something very pathetic, and he flung himself at the feet of Louis XI., exclaiming, with gestures of despair:--

"Sire! will your majesty deign to hear me. Sire! break not in thunder over so small a thing as myself. God's great lightning doth not bombard a lettuce. Sire, you are an august and, very puissant monarch; have pity

on a poor man who is honest, and who would find it more difficult to stir up a revolt than a cake of ice would to give out a spark! Very gracious sire, kindness is the virtue of a lion and a king. Alas! rigor only frightens minds; the impetuous gusts of the north wind do not make the traveller lay aside his cloak; the sun, bestowing his rays little by little, warms him in such ways that it will make him strip to his shirt. Sire, you are the sun. I protest to you, my sovereign lord and master, that I am not an outcast, thief, and disorderly fellow. Revolt and brigandage belong not to the outfit of Apollo. I am not the man to fling myself into those clouds which break out into seditious clamor. I am your majesty's faithful vassal. That same jealousy which a husband cherisheth for the honor of his wife, the resentment which the son hath for the love of his father, a good vassal should feel for the glory of his king; he should pine away for the zeal of this house, for the aggrandizement of his service. Every other passion which should transport him would be but madness. These, sire, are my maxims of state: then do not judge me to be a seditious and thieving rascal because my garment is worn at the elbows. If you will grant me mercy, sire, I will wear it out on the knees in praying to God for you night and morning! Alas! I am not extremely rich, 'tis true. I am even rather poor. But not vicious on that account. It is not my fault. Every one knoweth that great wealth is not to be drawn from literature, and that those who are best posted in good books do not always have a great fire in winter. The advocate's trade taketh all the grain, and leaveth only straw to the other scientific professions. There are forty very excellent proverbs anent the hole-ridden cloak of the philosopher. Oh, sire! clemency is the only light which can enlighten the interior of so great a soul.

Clemency beareth the torch before all the other virtues. Without it they are but blind men groping after God in the dark. Compassion, which is the same thing as clemency, causeth the love of subjects, which is the most powerful bodyguard to a prince. What matters it to your majesty, who dazzles all faces, if there is one poor man more on earth, a poor innocent philosopher spluttering amid the shadows of calamity, with an empty pocket which resounds against his hollow belly? Moreover, sire, I am a man of letters. Great kings make a pearl for their crowns by protecting letters. Hercules did not disdain the title of Musagetes. Mathias Corvin favored Jean de Monroyal, the ornament of mathematics. Now, 'tis an ill way to protect letters to hang men of letters. What a stain on Alexander if he had hung Aristoteles! This act would not be a little patch on the face of his reputation to embellish it, but a very malignant ulcer to disfigure it. Sire! I made a very proper epithalamium for Mademoiselle of Flanders and Monseigneur the very august Dauphin. That is not a firebrand of rebellion. Your majesty sees that I am not a scribbler of no reputation, that I have studied excellently well, and that I possess much natural eloquence. Have mercy upon me, sire! In so doing you will perform a gallant deed to our Lady, and I swear to you that I am greatly terrified at the idea of being hanged!"

So saying, the unhappy Gringoire kissed the king's slippers, and Guillaume Rym said to Coppenole in a low tone: "He doth well to drag himself on the earth. Kings are like the Jupiter of Crete, they have ears only in their feet." And without troubling himself about the Jupiter of Crete, the hosier replied with a heavy smile, and his eyes fixed on Gringoire: "Oh! that's it exactly! I seem to hear Chancellor

Hugonet craving mercy of me."

When Gringoire paused at last, quite out of breath, he raised his head tremblingly towards the king, who was engaged in scratching a spot on the knee of his breeches with his finger-nail; then his majesty began to drink from the goblet of ptisan. But he uttered not a word, and this silence tortured Gringoire. At last the king looked at him. "Here is a terrible bawler!" said, he. Then, turning to Tristan l'Hermite, "Bali! let him go!"

Gringoire fell backwards, quite thunderstruck with joy.

"At liberty!" growled Tristan "Doth not your majesty wish to have him detained a little while in a cage?"

"Gossip," retorted Louis XI., "think you that 'tis for birds of this feather that we cause to be made cages at three hundred and sixty-seven livres, eight sous, three deniers apiece? Release him at once, the wanton (Louis XI. was fond of this word which formed, with Pasque-Dieu, the foundation of his joviality), and put him out with a buffet."

"Ugh!" cried Gringoire, "what a great king is here!"

And for fear of a counter order, he rushed towards the door, which Tristan opened for him with a very bad grace. The soldiers left the room with him, pushing him before them with stout thwacks, which Gringoire

bore like a true stoical philosopher.

The king's good humor since the revolt against the bailiff had been announced to him, made itself apparent in every way. This unwonted clemency was no small sign of it. Tristan l'Hermite in his corner wore the surly look of a dog who has had a bone snatched away from him.

Meanwhile, the king thrummed gayly with his fingers on the arm of his chair, the March of Pont-Audemer. He was a dissembling prince, but one who understood far better how to hide his troubles than his joys. These external manifestations of joy at any good news sometimes proceeded to very great lengths thus, on the death, of Charles the Bold, to the point of vowing silver balustrades to Saint Martin of Tours; on his advent to the throne, so far as forgetting to order his father's obsequies.

"Hé! sire!" suddenly exclaimed Jacques Coictier, "what has become of the acute attack of illness for which your majesty had me summoned?"

"Oh!" said the king, "I really suffer greatly, my gossip. There is a hissing in my ear and fiery rakes rack my chest."

Coictier took the king's hand, and begun to feel of his pulse with a knowing air.

"Look, Coppenole," said Rym, in a low voice. "Behold him between Coictier and Tristan. They are his whole court. A physician for himself, a headsman for others."

As he felt the king's pulse, Coictier assumed an air of greater and greater alarm. Louis XI. watched him with some anxiety. Coictier grew visibly more gloomy. The brave man had no other farm than the king's bad health. He speculated on it to the best of his ability.

"Oh! oh!" he murmured at length, "this is serious indeed."

"Is it not?" said the king, uneasily.

"Pulsus creber, anhelans, crepitans, irregularis," continued the leech.

"Pasque-Dieu!"

"This may carry off its man in less than three days."

"Our Lady!" exclaimed the king. "And the remedy, gossip?"

"I am meditating upon that, sire."

He made Louis XI. put out his tongue, shook his head, made a grimace, and in the very midst of these affectations,--

"Pardieu, sire," he suddenly said, "I must tell you that there is a receivership of the royal prerogatives vacant, and that I have a nephew."

"I give the receivership to your nephew, Gossip Jacques," replied the king; "but draw this fire from my breast."

"Since your majesty is so clement," replied the leech, "you will not refuse to aid me a little in building my house, Rue Saint-André-des-Arcs."

"Heugh!" said the king.

"I am at the end of my finances," pursued the doctor; "and it would really be a pity that the house should not have a roof; not on account of the house, which is simple and thoroughly bourgeois, but because of the paintings of Jehan Fourbault, which adorn its wainscoating. There is a Diana flying in the air, but so excellent, so tender, so delicate, of so ingenuous an action, her hair so well coiffed and adorned with a crescent, her flesh so white, that she leads into temptation those who regard her too curiously. There is also a Ceres. She is another very fair divinity. She is seated on sheaves of wheat and crowned with a gallant garland of wheat ears interlaced with salsify and other flowers. Never were seen more amorous eyes, more rounded limbs, a nobler air, or a more gracefully flowing skirt. She is one of the most innocent and most perfect beauties whom the brush has ever produced."

"Executioner!" grumbled Louis XI., "what are you driving at?"

"I must have a roof for these paintings, sire, and, although 'tis but a

small matter, I have no more money."

"How much doth your roof cost?"

"Why a roof of copper, embellished and gilt, two thousand livres at the most."

"Ah, assassin!" cried the king, "He never draws out one of my teeth which is not a diamond."

"Am I to have my roof?" said Coictier.

"Yes; and go to the devil, but cure me."

Jacques Coictier bowed low and said,--

"Sire, it is a repellent which will save you. We will apply to your loins the great defensive composed of cerate, Armenian bole, white of egg, oil, and vinegar. You will continue your ptisan and we will answer for your majesty."

A burning candle does not attract one gnat alone. Master Olivier, perceiving the king to be in a liberal mood, and judging the moment to be propitious, approached in his turn.

"Sire--"

"What is it now?" said Louis XI. "Sire, your majesty knoweth that Simon Radin is dead?"

"Well?"

"He was councillor to the king in the matter of the courts of the treasury."

"Well?"

"Sire, his place is vacant."

As he spoke thus, Master Olivier's haughty face quitted its arrogant expression for a lowly one. It is the only change which ever takes place in a courtier's visage. The king looked him well in the face and said in a dry tone,--"I understand."

He resumed,

"Master Olivier, the Marshal de Boucicaut was wont to say, 'There's no master save the king, there are no fishes save in the sea.' I see that you agree with Monsieur de Boucicaut. Now listen to this; we have a good memory. In '68 we made you valet of our chamber: in '69, guardian of the fortress of the bridge of Saint-Cloud, at a hundred livres of Tournay in wages (you wanted them of Paris). In November, '73, by letters given to Gergeole, we instituted you keeper of the Wood of Vincennes, in the place of Gilbert Acle, equerry; in '75, gruyer* of the forest of

Rouvray-lez-Saint-Cloud, in the place of Jacques le Maire; in '78, we graciously settled on you, by letters patent sealed doubly with green wax, an income of ten livres parisis, for you and your wife, on the Place of the Merchants, situated at the School Saint-Germain; in '79, we made you gruyer of the forest of Senart, in place of that poor Jehan Daiz; then captain of the Château of Loches; then governor of Saint-Quentin; then captain of the bridge of Meulan, of which you cause yourself to be called comte. Out of the five sols fine paid by every barber who shaves on a festival day, there are three sols for you and we have the rest. We have been good enough to change your name of Le Mauvais (The Evil), which resembled your face too closely. In '76, we granted you, to the great displeasure of our nobility, armorial bearings of a thousand colors, which give you the breast of a peacock. Pasque-Dieu! Are not you surfeited? Is not the draught of fishes sufficiently fine and miraculous? Are you not afraid that one salmon more will make your boat sink? Pride will be your ruin, gossip. Ruin and disgrace always press hard on the heels of pride. Consider this and hold your tongue."

* A lord having a right on the woods of his vassals.

These words, uttered with severity, made Master Olivier's face revert to its insolence.

"Good!" he muttered, almost aloud, "'tis easy to see that the king is

ill to-day; he giveth all to the leech."

Louis XI. far from being irritated by this petulant insult, resumed with some gentleness, "Stay, I was forgetting that I made you my ambassador to Madame Marie, at Ghent. Yes, gentlemen," added the king turning to the Flemings, "this man hath been an ambassador. There, my gossip," he pursued, addressing Master Olivier, "let us not get angry; we are old friends. 'Tis very late. We have terminated our labors. Shave me."

Our readers have not, without doubt, waited until the present moment to recognize in Master Olivier that terrible Figaro whom Providence, the great maker of dramas, mingled so artistically in the long and bloody comedy of the reign of Louis XI. We will not here undertake to develop that singular figure. This barber of the king had three names. At court he was politely called Olivier le Daim (the Deer); among the people Olivier the Devil. His real name was Olivier le Mauvais.

Accordingly, Olivier le Mauvais remained motionless, sulking at the king, and glancing askance at Jacques Coictier.

"Yes, yes, the physician!" he said between his teeth.

"Ah, yes, the physician!" retorted Louis XI., with singular good humor; "the physician has more credit than you. 'Tis very simple; he has taken hold upon us by the whole body, and you hold us only by the chin. Come, my poor barber, all will come right. What would you say and what would become of your office if I were a king like Chilperic, whose gesture

consisted in holding his beard in one hand? Come, gossip mine, fulfil your office, shave me. Go get what you need therefor."

Olivier perceiving that the king had made up his mind to laugh, and that there was no way of even annoying him, went off grumbling to execute his orders.

The king rose, approached the window, and suddenly opening it with extraordinary agitation,--

"Oh! yes!" he exclaimed, clapping his hands, "yonder is a redness in the sky over the City. 'Tis the bailiff burning. It can be nothing else but that. Ah! my good people! here you are aiding me at last in tearing down the rights of lordship!"

Then turning towards the Flemings: "Come, look at this, gentlemen. Is it not a fire which gloweth yonder?"

The two men of Ghent drew near.

"A great fire," said Guillaume Rym.

"Oh!" exclaimed Coppenole, whose eyes suddenly flashed, "that reminds me of the burning of the house of the Seigneur d'Hymbercourt. There must be a goodly revolt yonder."

"You think so, Master Coppenole?" And Louis XI.'s glance was almost as

joyous as that of the hosier. "Will it not be difficult to resist?"

"Cross of God! Sire! Your majesty will damage many companies of men of war thereon."

"Ah! I! 'tis different," returned the king. "If I willed." The hosier replied hardily,--

"If this revolt be what I suppose, sire, you might will in vain."

"Gossip," said Louis XI., "with the two companies of my unattached troops and one discharge of a serpentine, short work is made of a populace of louts."

The hosier, in spite of the signs made to him by Guillaume Rym, appeared determined to hold his own against the king.

"Sire, the Swiss were also louts. Monsieur the Duke of Burgundy was a great gentleman, and he turned up his nose at that rabble rout. At the battle of Grandson, sire, he cried: 'Men of the cannon! Fire on the villains!' and he swore by Saint-George. But Advoyer Scharnachtal hurled himself on the handsome duke with his battle-club and his people, and when the glittering Burgundian army came in contact with these peasants in bull hides, it flew in pieces like a pane of glass at the blow of a pebble. Many lords were then slain by low-born knaves; and Monsieur de Château-Guyon, the greatest seigneur in Burgundy, was found dead, with his gray horse, in a little marsh meadow."

"Friend," returned the king, "you are speaking of a battle. The question here is of a mutiny. And I will gain the upper hand of it as soon as it shall please me to frown."

The other replied indifferently,--

"That may be, sire; in that case, 'tis because the people's hour hath not yet come."

Guillaume Rym considered it incumbent on him to intervene,--

"Master Coppenole, you are speaking to a puissant king."

"I know it," replied the hosier, gravely.

"Let him speak, Monsieur Rym, my friend," said the king; "I love this frankness of speech. My father, Charles the Seventh, was accustomed to say that the truth was ailing; I thought her dead, and that she had found no confessor. Master Coppenole undeceiveth me."

Then, laying his hand familiarly on Coppenole's shoulder,--

"You were saying, Master Jacques?"

"I say, sire, that you may possibly be in the right, that the hour of the people may not yet have come with you."

Louis XI. gazed at him with his penetrating eye,--

"And when will that hour come, master?"

"You will hear it strike."

"On what clock, if you please?"

Coppenole, with his tranquil and rustic countenance, made the king approach the window.

"Listen, sire! There is here a donjon keep, a belfry, cannons, bourgeois, soldiers; when the belfry shall hum, when the cannons shall roar, when the donjon shall fall in ruins amid great noise, when bourgeois and soldiers shall howl and slay each other, the hour will strike."

Louis's face grew sombre and dreamy. He remained silent for a moment, then he gently patted with his hand the thick wall of the donjon, as one strokes the haunches of a steed.

"Oh! no!" said he. "You will not crumble so easily, will you, my good Bastille?"

And turning with an abrupt gesture towards the sturdy Fleming,--

"Have you never seen a revolt, Master Jacques?"

"I have made them," said the hosier.

"How do you set to work to make a revolt?" said the king.

"Ah!" replied Coppenole, "'tis not very difficult. There are a hundred ways. In the first place, there must be discontent in the city. The thing is not uncommon. And then, the character of the inhabitants. Those of Ghent are easy to stir into revolt. They always love the prince's son; the prince, never. Well! One morning, I will suppose, some one enters my shop, and says to me: 'Father Coppenole, there is this and there is that, the Demoiselle of Flanders wishes to save her ministers, the grand bailiff is doubling the impost on shagreen, or something else,'--what you will. I leave my work as it stands, I come out of my hosier's stall, and I shout: 'To the sack?' There is always some smashed cask at hand. I mount it, and I say aloud, in the first words that occur to me, what I have on my heart; and when one is of the people, sire, one always has something on the heart: Then people troop up, they shout, they ring the alarm bell, they arm the louts with what they take from the soldiers, the market people join in, and they set out. And it will always be thus, so long as there are lords in the seignories, bourgeois in the bourgs, and peasants in the country."

"And against whom do you thus rebel?" inquired the king; "against your bailiffs? against your lords?"

"Sometimes; that depends. Against the duke, also, sometimes."

Louis XI. returned and seated himself, saying, with a smile,--

"Ah! here they have only got as far as the bailiffs."

At that instant Olivier le Daim returned. He was followed by two pages, who bore the king's toilet articles; but what struck Louis XI. was that he was also accompanied by the provost of Paris and the chevalier of the watch, who appeared to be in consternation. The spiteful barber also wore an air of consternation, which was one of contentment beneath, however. It was he who spoke first.

"Sire, I ask your majesty's pardon for the calamitous news which I bring."

The king turned quickly and grazed the mat on the floor with the feet of his chair,--

"What does this mean?"

"Sire," resumed Olivier le Daim, with the malicious air of a man who rejoices that he is about to deal a violent blow, "'tis not against the bailiff of the courts that this popular sedition is directed."

"Against whom, then?"

"Against you, sire?'

The aged king rose erect and straight as a young man,--

"Explain yourself, Olivier! And guard your head well, gossip; for I swear to you by the cross of Saint-Lô that, if you lie to us at this hour, the sword which severed the head of Monsieur de Luxembourg is not so notched that it cannot yet sever yours!"

The oath was formidable; Louis XI. had only sworn twice in the course of his life by the cross of Saint-Lô.

Olivier opened his mouth to reply.

"Sire--"

"On your knees!" interrupted the king violently. "Tristan, have an eye to this man."

Olivier knelt down and said coldly,--

"Sire, a sorceress was condemned to death by your court of parliament. She took refuge in Notre-Dame. The people are trying to take her from thence by main force. Monsieur the provost and monsieur the chevalier of the watch, who have just come from the riot, are here to give me the lie if this is not the truth. The populace is besieging Notre-Dame."

"Yes, indeed!" said the king in a low voice, all pale and trembling with wrath. "Notre-Dame! They lay siege to our Lady, my good mistress in her cathedral!--Rise, Olivier. You are right. I give you Simon Radin's charge. You are right. 'Tis I whom they are attacking. The witch is under the protection of this church, the church is under my protection. And I thought that they were acting against the bailiff! 'Tis against myself!"

Then, rendered young by fury, he began to walk up and down with long strides. He no longer laughed, he was terrible, he went and came; the fox was changed into a hyaena. He seemed suffocated to such a degree that he could not speak; his lips moved, and his fleshless fists were clenched. All at once he raised his head, his hollow eye appeared full of light, and his voice burst forth like a clarion: "Down with them, Tristan! A heavy hand for these rascals! Go, Tristan, my friend! slay! slay!"

This eruption having passed, he returned to his seat, and said with cold and concentrated wrath,--

"Here, Tristan! There are here with us in the Bastille the fifty lances of the Vicomte de Gif, which makes three hundred horse: you will take them. There is also the company of our unattached archers of Monsieur de Châteaupers: you will take it. You are provost of the marshals; you have the men of your provostship: you will take them. At the Hôtel Saint-Pol you will find forty archers of monsieur the dauphin's new guard: you will take them. And, with all these, you will hasten to Notre-Dame.

Ah! messieurs, louts of Paris, do you fling yourselves thus against the crown of France, the sanctity of Notre-Dame, and the peace of this commonwealth! Exterminate, Tristan! exterminate! and let not a single one escape, except it be for Montfauçon."

Tristan bowed. "'Tis well, sire."

He added, after a silence, "And what shall I do with the sorceress?"

This question caused the king to meditate.

"Ah!" said he, "the sorceress! Monsieur d'Estouteville, what did the people wish to do with her?"

"Sire," replied the provost of Paris, "I imagine that since the populace has come to tear her from her asylum in Notre-Dame, 'tis because that impunity wounds them, and they desire to hang her."

The king appeared to reflect deeply: then, addressing Tristan l'Hermite, "Well! gossip, exterminate the people and hang the sorceress."

"That's it," said Rym in a low tone to Coppenole, "punish the people for willing a thing, and then do what they wish."

"Enough, sire," replied Tristan. "If the sorceress is still in Notre-Dame, must she be seized in spite of the sanctuary?"

"Pasque-Dieu! the sanctuary!" said the king, scratching his ear. "But the woman must be hung, nevertheless."

Here, as though seized with a sudden idea, he flung himself on his knees before his chair, took off his hat, placed it on the seat, and gazing devoutly at one of the leaden amulets which loaded it down, "Oh!" said he, with clasped hands, "our Lady of Paris, my gracious patroness, pardon me. I will only do it this once. This criminal must be punished. I assure you, madame the virgin, my good mistress, that she is a sorceress who is not worthy of your amiable protection. You know, madame, that many very pious princes have overstepped the privileges of the churches for the glory of God and the necessities of the State. Saint Hugues, bishop of England, permitted King Edward to hang a witch in his church. Saint-Louis of France, my master, transgressed, with the same object, the church of Monsieur Saint-Paul; and Monsieur Alphonse, son of the king of Jerusalem, the very church of the Holy Sepulchre. Pardon me, then, for this once. Our Lady of Paris, I will never do so again, and I will give you a fine statue of silver, like the one which I gave last year to Our Lady of Ecouys. So be it."

He made the sign of the cross, rose, donned his hat once more, and said to Tristan,--

"Be diligent, gossip. Take Monsieur Châteaupers with you. You will cause the tocsin to be sounded. You will crush the populace. You will seize the witch. 'Tis said. And I mean the business of the execution to be done by you. You will render me an account of it. Come, Olivier, I shall

not go to bed this night. Shave me."

Tristan l'Hermite bowed and departed. Then the king, dismissing Rym and Coppenole with a gesture,--

"God guard you, messieurs, my good friends the Flemings. Go, take a little repose. The night advances, and we are nearer the morning than the evening."

Both retired and gained their apartments under the guidance of the captain of the Bastille. Coppenole said to Guillaume Rym,--

"Hum! I have had enough of that coughing king! I have seen Charles of Burgundy drunk, and he was less malignant than Louis XI. when ailing."

"Master Jacques," replied Rym, "'tis because wine renders kings less cruel than does barley water."

CHAPTER VI. LITTLE SWORD IN POCKET.

On emerging from the Bastille, Gringoire descended the Rue Saint-Antoine with the swiftness of a runaway horse. On arriving at the Baudoyer gate, he walked straight to the stone cross which rose in the middle of that place, as though he were able to distinguish in the darkness the figure of a man clad and cloaked in black, who was seated on the steps of the cross.

"Is it you, master?" said Gringoire.

The personage in black rose.

"Death and passion! You make me boil, Gringoire. The man on the tower of Saint-Gervais has just cried half-past one o'clock in the morning."

"Oh," retorted Gringoire, "'tis no fault of mine, but of the watch and the king. I have just had a narrow escape. I always just miss being hung. 'Tis my predestination."

"You lack everything," said the other. "But come quickly. Have you the password?"

"Fancy, master, I have seen the king. I come from him. He wears fustian

breeches. 'Tis an adventure."

"Oh! distaff of words! what is your adventure to me! Have you the password of the outcasts?"

"I have it. Be at ease. 'Little sword in pocket.'"

"Good. Otherwise, we could not make our way as far as the church. The outcasts bar the streets. Fortunately, it appears that they have encountered resistance. We may still arrive in time."

"Yes, master, but how are we to get into Notre-Dame?"

"I have the key to the tower."

"And how are we to get out again?"

"Behind the cloister there is a little door which opens on the Terrain and the water. I have taken the key to it, and I moored a boat there this morning."

"I have had a beautiful escape from being hung!" Gringoire repeated.

"Eh, quick! come!" said the other.

Both descended towards the city with long strides.

CHAPTER VII. CHATEAUPERS TO THE RESCUE.

The reader will, perhaps, recall the critical situation in which we left Quasimodo. The brave deaf man, assailed on all sides, had lost, if not all courage, at least all hope of saving, not himself (he was not thinking of himself), but the gypsy. He ran distractedly along the gallery. Notre-Dame was on the point of being taken by storm by the outcasts. All at once, a great galloping of horses filled the neighboring streets, and, with a long file of torches and a thick column of cavaliers, with free reins and lances in rest, these furious sounds debouched on the Place like a hurricane,--

"France! France! cut down the louts! Châteaupers to the rescue! Provostship! Provostship!"

The frightened vagabonds wheeled round.

Quasimodo who did not hear, saw the naked swords, the torches, the irons of the pikes, all that cavalry, at the head of which he recognized Captain Phoebus; he beheld the confusion of the outcasts, the terror of some, the disturbance among the bravest of them, and from this unexpected succor he recovered so much strength, that he hurled from the church the first assailants who were already climbing into the gallery.

It was, in fact, the king's troops who had arrived. The vagabonds behaved bravely. They defended themselves like desperate men. Caught on the flank, by the Rue Saint-Pierre-aux-Boeufs, and in the rear through the Rue du Parvis, driven to bay against Notre-Dame, which they still assailed and Quasimodo defended, at the same time besiegers and besieged, they were in the singular situation in which Comte Henri Harcourt, Taurinum obsessor idem et obsessus, as his epitaph says, found himself later on, at the famous siege of Turin, in 1640, between Prince Thomas of Savoy, whom he was besieging, and the Marquis de Leganez, who was blockading him.

The battle was frightful. There was a dog's tooth for wolf's flesh, as P. Mathieu says. The king's cavaliers, in whose midst Phoebus de Châteaupers bore himself valiantly, gave no quarter, and the slash of the sword disposed of those who escaped the thrust of the lance. The outcasts, badly armed foamed and bit with rage. Men, women, children, hurled themselves on the cruppers and the breasts of the horses, and hung there like cats, with teeth, finger nails and toe nails. Others struck the archers' in the face with their torches. Others thrust iron hooks into the necks of the cavaliers and dragged them down. They slashed in pieces those who fell.

One was noticed who had a large, glittering scythe, and who, for a long time, mowed the legs of the horses. He was frightful. He was singing a ditty, with a nasal intonation, he swung and drew back his scythe incessantly. At every blow he traced around him a great circle of severed limbs. He advanced thus into the very thickest of the cavalry,

with the tranquil slowness, the lolling of the head and the regular breathing of a harvester attacking a field of wheat. It was Chopin Trouillefou. A shot from an arquebus laid him low.

In the meantime, windows had been opened again. The neighbors hearing the war cries of the king's troops, had mingled in the affray, and bullets rained upon the outcasts from every story. The Parvis was filled with a thick smoke, which the musketry streaked with flame. Through it one could confusedly distinguish the front of Notre-Dame, and the decrepit Hôtel-Dieu with some wan invalids gazing down from the heights of its roof all checkered with dormer windows.

At length the vagabonds gave way. Weariness, the lack of good weapons, the fright of this surprise, the musketry from the windows, the valiant attack of the king's troops, all overwhelmed them. They forced the line of assailants, and fled in every direction, leaving the Parvis encumbered with dead.

When Quasimodo, who had not ceased to fight for a moment, beheld this rout, he fell on his knees and raised his hands to heaven; then, intoxicated with joy, he ran, he ascended with the swiftness of a bird to that cell, the approaches to which he had so intrepidly defended. He had but one thought now; it was to kneel before her whom he had just saved for the second time.

When he entered the cell, he found it empty.