ANNE OF AUSTRIA
TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE SHADE OF CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

In a room of the Palais Royal, formerly styled the Palais Cardinal, there sat a man in deep reverie, his head supported on his hands, leaning over a table, the corners of which were of silver-gilt, and which was covered with letters and papers. Behind this figure was a vast fire-place glowing with heat; large masses of wood blazed and crackled on the gilded conduits, and the flames shone upon the superb habiliments of the solitary inhabitant of the chamber, illumined in the foreground by a chandelier filled with wax-lights.

Any one who had happened at that moment to contemplate that red sable—the gorgeous robe of office—and the rich face—or who gazed upon that pale brow, bent in anxious meditation, might, in the solitude of that apartment, combined with the silence of the ante-chambers, and the measured paces of the guards upon the landing-place, have fancied that the shade of Cardinal Richelieu still lingered in his accustomed haunt.

But it was, almost only the ghost of former greatness. France increased, the authority of her sovereign rejected, her nobles returning to their former turbulence and insolence, her enemies within her frontiers—all proved that Richelieu was no longer in existence.

In truth, that the red sable which occupied his wonted place was his no longer, was still more strikingly obvious, from the isolation which seemed, as we have observed, more appropriate to a phantom than to a living creature—from the corridors, deserted by courtiers, and courts crowded with guards—from that spirit of latter titlede, which, arising from the streets below, penetrated through the very windows of that room, which resounded with the murmurs of a whole city leagued against the minister; as well as from the distant and incessant sounds of guns firing—let off, happily, without other end or aim, except to show to the guards, the Swiss troops, and the military who surrounded the Palais Royal, that the people were possessed of arms.

* The Palais Royal ceased to be called the Palace Cardinal before this epoch.
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The shade of Richelieu—was Mazarin. Now Mazarin was alone and defenceless—as he well knew.

"Foreigner!" he ejaculated, "Italian! that is their mean word of reproach—the watchword with which they assassinated, hanged, and made away with Council; and—if I gave them their way—they would assassinate, hang, and make away with me! in the same manner, although they have nothing to complain of, except a tax or two now and then. Idiot! ignorant of their real enemies, they do not perceive that it is not the Italian who speaks French badly, but those who can say fine things to them in the purest Parisian accent, who are their real foes.

"Yes, yes," Mazarin continued, whilst his wonted smile, full of subtility, gave a strange expression to his pale lips; "yes, these noises prove to me, indeed, that the destiny of favorites is precarious; but ye should know that I am no ordinary favorite. No! The Earl of Essex, his face, were a splendid ring, set with diamonds, given him by his royal mistress; whilst 1—1 have nothing but a simple circlet of gold, with a cipher on it and a date; but that ring has been blessed in the chapel of the Palais Royal, so they will never ruin me, as they would do; and whilst they shout, 'Down with Mazarin! Down with Mazarin! unknown and unperceived by them, invite them to cry out, 'Long live the Duke de Beaufort! one day; another, 'Long live the Prince de Conde! and again, 'Long live the Parliament!' And, at this word, the smile on the Cardinal's lips assumed an expression of hatred, of which his mild countenance seemed incapable.

'd They shall soon see how to dispose,' he continued, 'of the parliament! Both Orleans and Montargis are ours. It will be a work of time but those who have begun by crying out, 'Down with Mazarin!' will finish by shouting out, Down with all the people I have mentioned, each in his turn.

Richelieu, whom they hated during his lifetime, and whom they now praise after his death, was even less popular than I am. Often was he driven away—obscurer still had he a dread of being sent away. The queen will never banish me; and even were I obliged to yield to the populace, she would yield with me; if I fly, she will fly; and then we shall see how the rebels will get on without either king or queen.

'Oh, were I not a foreigner! were I but a Frenchman! would I have been merely a gentleman?'

The position of the Cardinal was, indeed, critical, and several recent events added to his difficulties. Discontent had long pervaded the lower ranks of society in France. Crushed and impoverished by taxation—imposed by Mazarin, whose avatars impelled him to grind them down to the very dust—the people, as the Advocate-General Telson described it, had nothing left to them except their murmurs; and as those could not be sold by auction, they began to report of brilliant victories gained by France: murders, however, were

* It is said that Mazarin, who, though a cardinal, had not taken such vows as to prevent it, was secretly married to Anne of Austria.—La Fontaine's Memoirs.
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not meat and drink; and the people had for some time been in a state of discontent.

Had this been all, it might not, perhaps, have greatly signified, for when the lower classes alone complained, the court of France separated as it was from the poor by the intervening classes of the country and the bourgeoisie, seldom listened to their voice; but, unluckily, Mazarin had had the imprudence to attack the magistrates, and had sold no less than ten appointments in the Court of Requests, at a high price; and, as the officers of that court paid very dear for their places, and as the addition of twelve new colleagues would necessarily lower the value of each place, the old functionaries formed a union amongst themselves, and, enraged, swore on the Bible not to allow of this addition to their number, but to resist all the persecutions which might ensue; and should any one of them chance to forfeit his post by this resistance, to combine to indemnify him for his loss.

Now the following occurrences had taken place between the two contending parties.

On the seventh of January, between seven and eight hundred tradesmen had assembled in Paris to discuss a new tax which was to be levied on wine property. They deputed ten of their number to wait upon the Duke of Orleans, who, according to custom, affected popularity. The duke received them, and they informed him that they were resolved not to pay this tax, even if they were obliged to defend themselves against the collectors of it by force of arms. They were listened to with great politeness by the duke, who held out hopes of more moderate measures; promised them to speak in their behalf to the queen; and dismissed them with the ordinary expression of royalty—"We shall see what we can do."

Two days afterward these same magistrates appeared before the Cardinal, and the spokesman among them addressed Mazarin with so much fearlessness and determination, that the minister was astounded, and sent the deputation away with the same answer as it had received from the Duke of Orleans—that he would see what could be done; and, in accordance with that intention, a council of state was assembled, and the superintendent of finance was summoned.

This man, named Emery, was the object of popular detestation—in the first place, because he was superintendent of finance, and every superintendent of finance deserved to be hated; in the second place, because he rather deserved the odium which he had incurred.

He was the son of a banker at Lyons, named Particelli, who, after becoming a bankrupt, chose to change his name to Emery; and Cardinal Richelieu, having discovered in young Emery great financial aptitude, had introduced him with a strong recommendation to Louis XIII, under his assumed name, in order that he might be appointed to the post which he subsequently held.

"You surprise me!" exclaimed the monarch, "I am rejoiced to hear you speak of Monsieur d'Emery as calculated for a post which requires a man of probity. I was really afraid that you were going to force that villain Particelli upon me."

"Sire," replied Richelieu, "rest assured that Particelli—the man to whom your majesty refers—has been hanged."
"Ah, so much the better!" exclaimed the king. "It is not for nothing that I am styled Louis the Just"—and he signed Emery's appointment.

This was the same Emery who had become eventually superintendent of finance.

He was sent for by the ministers, and he came before them pale and trembling, declaring that his son had very nearly been assassinated the day before near the palace. The mob had insulted him on account of the ostentatious luxury of his wife, whose house was hung with red velvet, edged with gold fringe. This lady was the daughter of Nicolas de Cunus, who had arrived in Paris with twenty francs in his pocket—had become secretary of state—and had accumulated wealth enough to divide nine millions of francs among his children, and to keep forty thousand for himself.

The facts were that Emery's son had run a great chance of being suffocated; one of the rioters having proposed to squeeze him until he gave up all the gold he had swallowed. Nothing therefore was settled, that day, as Emery's head was not steady enough for business after such an occurrence.

Other disturbances followed this outrage.

Mathieu Mole, chief president of the parliament, esteemed equal in courage to Condé and De Beaufort, had been insulted and threatened. The queen, in going to mass at Notre Dame, as she always did on Saturdays, was followed by more than two hundred women, demanding justice. These poor creatures had no bad intentions. They wished only to be allowed to fall on their knees before their sovereign, and that they might move her to compassion; but they were prevented by the royal guard, and the queen proceeded on her way, haughtily disdainful of their entreaties.

At length parliament was convened—the authority of the king was to be maintained.

One day—it was the morning of that when my story begins—the king, Louis XIV., then ten years of age, went in state, under pretext of returning thanks for his recovery from the small-pox, to Notre Dame. He took the opportunity of calling out his guard, the Swiss troops, and the Musketeers, and he had planted them round the Palais Royal, on the quays, and on the Pont Neuf. After mass, the young monarch drove to the parliament house, where, upon the throne, he hastily confirmed not only the edicts which he had already passed, but issued new ones; each one, according to Cardinal de Retz, more ruinous than the others—a proceeding which drew forth a strong remonstrance from the chief president, Mole—whilst President Blancmesnil and Councilor Broussel raised their voices in indignation against fresh taxes.

The king returned amidst the silence of a vast multitude to the Palais Royal. All minds were uneasy—most were foreboding—many of the people used threatening language.

At first, indeed, they were doubtful whether the king's visit to the parliament had been in order to lighten or to increase their burdens; but scarcely was it known that the taxes were even to be increased, than cries of "Down with Mazarin!" "Long live Broussel!" "Long live Blancmesnil!" resounded through the city. All attempts to disperse the groups now collected in the streets, or to silence their ex-
clamations, were in vain. Orders had just been given to the royal
guards, and to the Swiss Guards, not only to stand firm, but to send
out patrols to the streets of Saint-Denis and Saint-Marcel, where the
people thronged, and where they were the most vociferous, when
the Mayor of Paris was announced at the Palais Royal.

He was shown in directly; he came to say that if these offensive
precautions were not discontinued, in two hours Paris would be un-
der arms.

Deliberations were being held, when a lieutenant in the Guards,
named Comminges, made his appearance, with his clothes all torn,
his face streaming with blood. The queen, on seeing him, uttered
a cry of surprise, and asked him what was going on.

As the mayor had foreseen, the sight of the Guards had ex-
sasperated the mob. The tocsin was sounded. Comminges had
arrested one of the ringleaders, and had ordered him to be hanged
near the cross of Du Tralhoir; but, in attempting to execute this
command, the soldiery were attacked in the market-places with stones
and halberds; the delinquents all escaped to the Rue des Lombards,
and rushed into a house. They broke open the doors, and searched
the dwelling, but in vain. Comminges, wounded by a stone which
had struck him on the forehead, had left a picket in the street, and
returned to the Palais Royal, followed by a menacing crowd, to tell
his story.

This account confirmed that of the mayor. The authorities were
not in a condition to contend with a serious revolt. Mazarin en-
davored to circulate among the people a report that troops had only
been stationed on the quays, and on the Pont Neuf, on account of
the ceremonial of the day; and that they would soon withdraw. In
fact, about four o'clock they were all concentrated about the Palais
Royal; the courts and ground floors of which were filled with
Musketeers and Swiss Guards, and there awaited the event of all this
disturbance.

Such was the state of affairs at the very moment when we intro-
duced our readers into the study of Cardinal Mazarin—once that of
Cardinal Richelieu. We have seen in what state of mind he listened
to the murmurs from below, which even reached him in his seclu-
sion, and to the guns, the firing of which resounded in that room.
All at once he raised his head; his brow slightly contracted like
that of a man who has formed a resolution; he fixed his eyes upon
an enormous clock which was about to strike ten and tugging at a
whistle of silver gilt, which was placed on the table near him, he
whistled twice.

A door hidden in the tapestry opened noiselessly, and a man in
black stood behind the chair on which Mazarin sat.

"Bernouin," said the Cardinal, not turning round, for, having
whistled, he knew that it was his valet-de-chambre who was behind
him; "what Musketeers are there in the palace?"

"The Black Musketeers, my lord."

"What company?"

"Treville's company."

"Is there any officer belonging to this company in the ante-cham-
ber?"

"Lieutenant d'Artagnan."
“A man on whom we can depend, I hope.”
“‘Yes, my lord.’
“Give me an uniform of one of these Musketeers, and help me to
dress.”

The valet went out, as silently as he came in, and appeared in a
few minutes bringing the dress which was asked for.

The Cardinal, in deep thought, and in silence, began to take off
the robes of state which he had assumed in order to be present at
the sitting of parliament, and to attire himself in the military coat,
which he wore with a certain degree of easy grace, owing to his
former campaigns in Italy. When he was completely dressed, he
said:
“Bring Monsieur d’Artagnan hither.”

The valet went out of the room this time by the center door, but
still as silently as before; one might have fancied him an apparition.

When he was left alone, the Cardinal looked at himself in the
glass with a feeling of self-satisfaction. Still young—for he was
 scarcely forty-six years of age—he possessed great elegance of form,
and was above the middle height; his complexion was brilliant and
beautiful; his glance full of expression: his nose, though large, was
well proportioned; his forehead broad and majestic: his hair, of a
chestnut color, was rather frizzed; his beard, which was darker
than his hair, was turned carefully with a curling iron, a practice
which greatly improved it. After a short time the Cardinal arranged
his shoulder belt, then looked with great complacency at his hands,
which were very beautiful, and of which he took the greatest care;
and throwing on one side the large kid gloves which he tried on at
first, as belonging to the uniform, he put on others of silk only. At
this instant the door opened.

“Monsieur d’Artagnan,” said the valet-de-chambre.

An officer, as he spoke, entered the apartment. He was a man
between thirty-nine and forty years of age, of a small but well-pro-
portioned figure; thin, with an intellectual and animated physiog-
nomy; his beard black, and his hair turning gray, as often happens
when people have found this life either too gay or too sad, more es-
pecially when they happen to be of a dark complexion.

D’Artagnan advanced a few steps into the apartment. How per-
cettly he remembered his former entrance into that very room. See-
ing, however, no one there except a Musketeer of his own troop, he
fixed his eyes upon the supposed soldier, in whose dress, neverthe-
less, he recognized, at the first glance, the Cardinal.

The lieutenant remained standing in a dignified but respectful
posture; such as become a man of good birth, who had in the course
of his life been frequently in the society of the highest nobles.

The Cardinal looked at him with a glance cunning rather than
serious; yet he examined his countenance with attention, and after
a momentary silence said:

“You are Monsieur d’Artagnan?”

“I am that individual,” replied the officer.

Mazarin paused once more at a countenance full of intelligence; the
play of which had been, nevertheless, subdued by age and experi-
ence; and D’Artagnan received the penetrating glance like one who
had formerly sustained many a searching look, very different, in
deed, from those which were inquiringly directed toward him at that
instant.
"Sir," resumed the Cardinal, "you arc to come with me, or
rather I am to go with you."
"I am at your command, my lord," returned D'Artagnan,
"I wish to visit in person the outposts which surround the Palais
Royal; do you suppose that there is any danger in so doing?"
"Danger, my lord!" exclaimed D'Artagnan, with a look of as
shameful as it was dangerous.
"I am told that there is a general insurrection.
"The uniform of the King's Musketeers carries a certain respect
with it; and even if that were not the case, I would engage, with
four of my men, to put to flight a hundred of these clowns.
"Did you witness the injury sustained by Comminges?"
"Monsieur de Comminges is in the Guards, and not in the Mus-
kteers—"
"Which means, I suppose, that the Musketeers are better soldiers
than the Guards." The Cardinal smiled as he spoke.
"Every one likes his own uniform best, my lord."
"Myself excepted," and again Mazarin smiled; "for you per-
ceive that I have left off mine, and put on yours."
"Lord bless us! this is modesty, indeed," cried D'Artagnan.
"Had I such an uniform as your Eminence possesses, I protest I
should be mighty content; and I would take an oath never to wear
any other costume—"
"Yes, but for to-night's adventure, I don't suppose my dress
would have been a very safe one. Give me my felt hat, Bernouin."
The valet instantly brought to his master a regimental hat with a
wide brim. The Cardinal put it on in a military style.
"Your horses are all ready saddled in their stables, are they not?"
he said, turning to D'Artagnan,
"Yes, my lord."
"Well, let us set out."
"How many men does your Eminence wish to escort you?"
"You say that with four men you will undertake to disperse a
hundred low fellows: as it may happen that we shall have to en-
counter two hundred, take eight—"
"As many as my lord wishes."
"I shall follow you. This way—light us downstairs, Bernouin."
The valet held a wax-light; the Cardinal took a key from his
bureau, and, opening the door of a secret stair, descended into the
court of the Palais Royal.

CHAPTER II
A NIGHTLY PATROL

In ten minutes Mazarin and his party were traversing the street
"Les Bons Enfans" behind the theater built by Richelieu expressly
for the play of "Miroir," and in which Mazarin, who was an amateur
of music, but not of literature, had introduced into France the
first opera that was ever acted in that country.