even a most delectable smell of roast meat, and to see the scullions in a row by the hedge, halting our approach. Ah! sir, what a cook must Monsieur Porthos have, when he was so fond of eating and drinking, even whilst he was only called Monsieur Porthos!"

"Say no more!" cried D'Artagnan. "If the reality corresponds with appearances, I'm lost; for a man so well off will never change this happy condition—and I shall fall with him, as I have already done with Aramis."

CHAPTER XI.

HOW D'ARTAGNAN, IN DISCOVERING THE RETREAT OF Porthos, PERCEIVES THAT WEALTH DOES NOT PRODUCE HAPINESS.

D'Artagnan passed through the iron gate, and arrived in front of the château. He alighted—as he saw a species of plant on the steps. Let us do justice to D'Artagnan; that, independent of every selfish wish, his heart palpitated with joy when he saw that tall form and martial demeanour, which recalled to him a good and brave man.

He ran to Porthos and threw himself into his arms; the whole body of servants, arranged in a circle at a respectful distance, looked on with humble curiosity. Musquetais, at the head of them, wiped his eyes. Porthos put his arm in that of his friend.

"Ah! how delightful to see you again, dear friend!" he cried, in a voice which was now changed from a baritone into a bass; "you've not then forgotten me?"

"Forget you! oh! dear Du Vallon, does one forget the happiest days of one's youth—one's dearest friends—the dangers we have dared together? On the contrary, there is an hour that we have passed together that is not present to my memory."

"Yes, yes," said Porthos, trying to give to his mustache a curl which it had lost whilst he had been alone. "Yes, we did some fine things in our time, and we gave that poor Cardinal some thread to unravel."

And he heaved a sigh.

"Under any circumstances," he resumed, "you are welcome, my dear friend; you will help me to recover my spirits; to-morrow we will hunt the hare on my plain, which is a superb tract of land, or we'll pursue thedeer in my woods, which are magnificent. I have four hunting-grounds, which are considered the swiftest in our county, and a pack of hounds which are unequalled for twenty leagues round."

And Porthos heaved another sigh.

"But, first," interposed D'Artagnan, "you must present me to Madame du Vallon."

"A third sigh from Porthos."

"I lost Madame du Vallon two years ago," he said, "and you find me still in affliction on that account. That was the reason why I left my Château du Vallon, near Corbeil, and came to my estate, Bracoci. Poor Madame du Vallon! her temper was uncertain, but she came at last to accustom herself to my ways and to understand my little wishes."
"So, you are free now—and rich?"

"Alas!" replied Porthos, "I am a widower, and have forty thousand francs a year. Let us go to breakfast."

"I shall be happy to do so; the morning air has made me hungry."

"Yes," said Porthos; "my air is excellent."

They went into the chateau; there was nothing but gilding, high and low; the cornices were gilt, the mouldings were gilt, the legs and arms of the chairs were gilt. A table, really set out, awaited them.

"You see," said Porthos, "this is my usual style."

"Devil take me!" answered D'Artagnan. "I wish you joy of it."

The king has nothing like this."

"No," answered Porthos; "I heard it said that he is very badly fed by the Cardinal, Monsieur de Mazarin. Taste this cutlet, my dear D'Artagnan; 'tis off one of my sheep."

"You have very tender mutton, and I wish you joy of it," said D'Artagnan.

"Yes, the sheep are fed in my meadows, which are excellent pasture."

"Give me another—" "let."

"No, try this hare, which I had killed yesterday in one of my warrens."

"Zounds! what a flavor!" cried D'Artagnan; "ah! they are fed on thyme only, your hares."

"And how do you like my wine?" asked Porthos; "it is pleasant, isn't it?"

"Capital!"

"It's nothing, however, but a wine of the country."

"Really."

"Yes, a small declivity to the south, yonder, on my hill; gives me twenty hogsheads."

"Quite a vineyard, hey?"

Porthos sighed for the fifth time—D'Artagnan had counted his sighs. He became curious to solve the problem.

"Well, now," he said, "it seems, my dear friend, that something vexes you; you are ill, perhaps? That health, which ——"

"Excellent, my dear friend; better than ever. I could kill an ox with a blow of my fist."

"Well, then, family affairs, perhaps?"

"Family! I have, happily, only myself in the world to care for."

"But what makes you sigh?"

"My dear fellow," replied Porthos, "to be candid with you, I am not happy."

"You are not happy, Porthos? You who have a chateau, meadows, hills, woods—you who have forty thousand francs a year—you not happy?"

"My dear friend, all those things I have, but I am alone in the midst of them."

"Surrounded, I suppose, only by clod-hoppers, with whom you could not associate."

Porthos turned rather pale, and drank off a large glass of wine.

"No; but just think, there are paltry country squires who have all some title or another, and pretend to go back as far as Charle
mange, or at least to Hugh Capet. When I first came here, being the last comer, it was to me to make the first advances. I made them, but, you know, my dear friend, Madame de Vaillant—"

Porthos, in pronouncing these words, seemed to gulp down something.

"Madame de Vaillant was of doubtful gentility. She had, in her first marriage (I don't think, D'Artagnan, I am telling you anything now), married a lawyer; they thought that 'suitors' you cannot understand that's a word but enough to make one kill thirty thousand men. I have killed two, which has made people hold their tongues, but has not made me their friend. So that I have no society—"I live alone: I am sick of it—my mind preys on itself."

D'Artagnan smiled. He now saw where the breast-plate was weak, and prepared the blow. But now," he said, "that you are a widower, your wife's connections cannot injure you."

"Yes, but understand me; not being of a race of historic fame, like the De Courcy, who were content to be plain sirs, or the Ro-"

kins, who didn't wish to be dukes, all these people, who are all either vicomtes or comtes, go before me at church, in all the ceremonies, and I can say nothing to them. Ah! If I were merely a——"

"A Baron, don't you mean?" cried D'Artagnan, finishing his friend's sentence.

"Ah!" cried Porthos; "would I were but a baron!"

"Well my friend, I am come to give you this very title which you wish for so much."

Porthos gave a jump which shook all the room; two or three bottles fell and were broken. Musqueton ran thither, hearing the noise.

Porthos waved his hand to Musqueton to pick up the bottles.

"I am glad to see," said D'Artagnan, "that you have still that honest lad with you."

"He's my steward," replied Porthos; "he will never leave me. Go away now, Mouston."

"So he's called Mouston," thought D'Artagnan; "its too long a word to pronounce, Musqueton."

"Well," he said aloud, "let us resume our conversation later—your people may suspect something—there may be spies about. You can suppose, Porthos, what I have to say relates to important matters."

"Devil take them, let us walk in the park," answered Porthos, "for the sake of digestion."

"Egad," said D'Artagnan, "the park is like everything else, and there are as many fish in your pond as rabbits in your warren; you're a happy man, my friend, since you have retained your love of the chase, and acquired that of fishing."

"My friend," replied Porthos, "I leave fishing to Musqueton— it is a vulgar pleasure; but I shoot sometimes, that is to say, when I am dull, and I sit on one of those marble seats, have my gun brought to me, my favorite dog, and I shoot rabbits."

"Really, how very amusing!"'

"Yes," replied Porthos, with a sigh; "it is very amusing."
TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

D'Artagnan now no longer counted the sighs.
"However, what have you to say to me?" he resumed, "let us return to that subject."
"With pleasure," replied D'Artagnan; "I must, however, first frankly tell you that you must change your mode of life."
"How?"
"Go into harness again, girl on the sword, run after adventures, and leave, as in old times, a little of your fat on the roadside."
"Ah! hang it!" said Portos.
"I see you are spoiled, dear friend, you are corrompt, your arm has no longer that movement of which the late Cardinal's Guards has so many proofs."
"Ah! my fist is strong enough, I swear," cried Portos, extending a hand like a shoulder of mutton.
"So much the better."
"Are we then to go to war?"
"By my troth, yes."
"Against whom?"
"Are you a politician, my friend?"
"Not in the least."
"Are you for Mazarin, or for the princes?"
"I am for no one."
"That is to say you are for us. Well, I tell you that I come to you from the Cardinal."

This speech was heard by Portos in the same sense as if it had still been in the year 1640, and related to the true Cardinal.
"Ho! no! what are the wishes of his Eminence?"
"He wishes to have you in his service. Rochefort has spoken of you—and since, the queen—and, to inspire us with confidence, she has even placed in Mazarin's hands that famous diamond—you know about it—that I had sold to Monsieur des Essarts, and of which I don't know how she regained possession."
"But it seems to me," said Portos, "that she would have done much better to give it back to you."
"So I think," replied D'Artagnan; "but kings and queens are strange beings, and have odd fancies; nevertheless, since it is they who have riches and honors, one is devoted to them."
"Yes, one is devoted to them," repeated Portos; "and you to whom are you devoted now?"
"To the king, the queen, and to the Cardinal; moreover, I have answered for your devotion also, for, notwithstanding your forty thousand francs a year, and, perhaps, even for the very reason that you have forty thousand francs a year, it seems to me that a little correct would do well on your carriage, hey?"
"Yes, indeed," said Portos.
"Well, my dear friend, win it—it is at the point of our swords. We shall not interfere with each other—your object is a title; mine, money. If I can get enough to repay Artagnan, which my ancestors, impoverished by the Crusades, allowed to fall into ruins, and to buy thirty acres of land about it, it is all I wish. I shall retire, and die tranquilly there."
"For my part," said Portos. "I wish to be made a baron."
"You shall be one."
"And have you not seen any of our other friends?"
"Yes, I have seen Aramis."
"And what does he wish? To be a bishop?"
"Aramis," answered D'Artagnan, who did not wish to deceive.

Porthos, "Aramis, fancy, has become a monk and a Jesuit, and lives like a bear. My offers could not arouse him.
"So much the worse! He was a clever man—and Athos?"
"I have not yet seen him. Do you know where I shall find him?"

"Near Blois. He is called Bragelonne. Only imagine, my dear friend, Athos, who was at as high birth as the Emperor, and who inherits one estate which gives him the title of Count, what is he to do with all these dignities—Count de la Fere, Count de Bragelonne!"
"And he has no children with all these titles?"

"Ah!" said Porthos, "I have heard that he had adopted a young man who resembles him greatly."
"What, Athos? Our Athos, who was as virtuous as Scipio? Have you seen him?"
"No."
"Well, I shall see him to-morrow, and tell him about you; but I'm afraid, 'entire nous,' that his liking for wine has aged and degraded him."
"Yes, he used to drink a great deal," replied Porthos.
"And then he was older than any of us," added D'Artagnan.

"Some years only. His gravity made him look older."
"Well, then, if we can get Athos, all will be well. If we cannot, we will do without him. We two are worth a dozen."

"Yes," said Porthos, smiling at the remembrance of his former exploits, "but we four, altogether, would be equal to thirty-six; more especially as you say the work will not be easy. Will it last long?"

"By'r lady—two or three years, perhaps."

"So much the better," cried Porthos. "You have no idea, my friend, how my hours ache since I came here. Sometimes, on a Sunday, I take a ride in the fields, and on the property of my neighbors, in order to pick up some nice little quarrel, which I am really in want of, but nothing happens. Either they respect or they fear me, which is more likely, but they let me trample down the clover with my dogs, insult and obstruct every one, and I come back still more weary and low-spirited—that's all. At any rate, tell me—there's more chance of fighting at Paris, is there not?"

"In that respect, my dear friend, it's delightful. No more edicts, no more of the Cardinal's Guards, no more De Jussac, nor other bloodhounds. P'Gad! underneath a lamp, in an inn, anywhere, they ask, 'Are you one of the Proudys?' They unmask, and that's all that is said. The Duke de Guise killed Monseigneur de Coligny in the Place Royale, and nothing was said of it."

"Ah, things go on well, then," said Porthos.

"Besides which, in a short time," resumed D'Artagnan, "we shall have set battles, cannonades, conflagrations, and there will be great variety."
TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

"Well, then, I decide."
"I have your word, then?"
"Yes, 'ts given. I shall fight heart and soul for Mazarin; but—"
"But!"
"But he must make me a baron."
"Zounds!" said D'Artagnan, "that's settled already. I answer for your barony."

On this promise being given, Porthos, who had never doubted his friend's assurance, turned back with him toward the castle.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT IF PORTHOS WERE DISCONTENTED WITH HIS CONDITION, MUSQUETON WAS COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH HIS.

As they returned toward the castle, D'Artagnan thought of the miseries of poor human nature, always dissatisfied with what it has, always desirous of what it has not.

In the position of Porthos, D'Artagnan would have been perfectly happy; and, to make Porthos contented, there was wanting—what?—five letters to put before his three names, and a little coronet to paint upon the panel of his carriage!

"I shall pass all my life," thought D'Artagnan, "in seeking for a man who is really contented with his lot."

Whilst making this reflection, chance seemed, as it were, to give him the key direct. When Porthos had left him to give some orders, he saw Musqueton approaching. The face of the steward, despite one slight shade of care, light as a summer cloud, seemed one of perfect felicity.

"Here is what I am looking for," thought D'Artagnan; "but, alas! the poor fellow does not know the purpose for which I am here."

He then made a sign for Musqueton to come to him.

"Sir," said the servant, "I have a favor to ask you."

"Speak out, my friend."

"I am afraid to do so. Perhaps you will think, sir, that prosperity has spoiled me?"

"Art thou happy, friend?" asked D'Artagnan.

"As happy as possible; and yet, sir, you may make me even happier than I am."

"Well, speak, if it depends on me."

"Oh, sir! It depends on you only."

"I listen—I am waiting to hear."

"Sir, the favor I have to ask of you is, not to call me 'Musque-
ton,' but 'Mouston.' Since I have had the honor of being my lord's steward, I have taken the last name as more dignified, and endeavored to make my inferior respect me. You, sir, know how necessary subordination is in an establishment of servants."

D'Artagnan smiled—Porthos lengthened out his name—Musque-
ton cut his short.