"You are going already?" he said.
"One of the last, as you see; if you hear anything of Monsieur
Voltaire, he so kind as to send me word to-morrow."
"Oh!" said Scourren, "he may die now."
"Why?" asked the young girl with the velvet eyes.
"Certainly—his puerulcy has been uttered.
They parted, laughing; she, turning back to gaze at the poor
puerulcy man with interest, he, looking after her with eyes of love.
So the invalid disappeared soon afterward, and went into his sleep-
ing room; and one by one the lights in the salon of La Rue des
Tournelles were extinguished.

CHAPTER XXII.
SAINT DENIS.

The day had begun to break when Athos rose and dressed himself;
it was plain, by a paleness still greater than usual, and by those
traces which loss of sleep leaves on the face, that he must have passed
almost the whole of the night without sleeping. Contrary to the
custom of a man so firm and decided, there was this morning in his
personal appearance something slow and irresolute. He was evidently
occupying himself in preparations for the departure of
Raoul; after employing nearly an hour in those cares, he opened the
door of the room in which the vicomte slept, and entered
The sun, already high, penetrated into the room through the win-
dow, the curtain of which Raoul had neglected to close on the pre-
vious evening. He was still sleeping, his head gracefully reposing
on his arm.

Athos approached, and hung over the youth in an attitude full of
tender melancholy; he looked long on this young man, whose smil-
ing mouth, and half-closed eyes, bespoke soft dreams and light slum-
bers, as if his guardian angel watched over him with solitude and
affection. By degrees Athos gave himself up to the charms of his
reverie in the proximity of youth, so pure, so fresh. His own youth
seemed to re-appear, bringing with it all those soft remembrances,
which are like perfumes more than thoughts. Between the past and
the present there was an abyss. But imagination has the flight of an
angel of light, and travels over the sea where we have been almost
shipwrecked—the darkness in which our associations are lost—the
precipice, whence our happiness has been hurled and swallowed up.
He remembered that all the first part of his life had been embittered
by a woman, and he thought with alarm of the influence which love
might possess over so fine, and, at the same time, so vigorous an
organization as that of Raoul.

In recalling all that he had suffered, he foresaw all that Raoul
would suffer; and the expression of the deep and tender compassion
which throbbled in his heart was pictured in the moist eye with which
he gazed on the young man.

At this moment Raoul awoke, without a cloud on his face—with-
out weariness or lassitude; his eyes were fixed on those of Athos,
and he, perhaps, comprehended all that passed in the heart of the
man who was awaiting his awakening as a lover awaits the awakening of his mistress, for his return, in his turn, had all the tenderness of infinite love.

"You are there, sire?" he said, respectfully.

"Yes, Raoul," replied the count.

"And you did not awaken me?"

"I wished to leave you still to enjoy some moments of sleep, my child; you must be fatigued from yesterday."

"Oh, sire, how good you are!"

Athos smiled.

"How are you?" he asked.

"Perfectly well, quite rested, sir."

"You are still growing." Athos continued, with that charming and paternal interest felt by a grown man for a youth.

"Oh, sir, I beg your pardon!" exclaimed Raoul, ashamed of so much attention; "in an instant I shall be dressed."

Athos then called Olivain.

"Everything," said Olivain to Athos, "has been done according to your directions; the horses are waiting."

"And I was asleep," cried Raoul, "whilst you, sir, you had the kindness to attend to all these details. Truly, sir, you overwhelm me with benefits!"

"Therefore you love me a little, I hope," replied Athos, in a tone of emotion.

"Oh, sir! God knows that I love, I reverence you."

"See that you forget nothing," said Athos, appearing to look about him that he might hide his emotion.

"No, indeed, sir," answered Raoul.

The servant then approached Athos, and said, hesitatingly:

"Monsieur le Vicomte has no sword."

"Ts well," said Athos. "I will take care of that."

They went down stairs; Raoul looking every now and then at the count to see if the moment of farewell was at hand, but Athos was silent. When they reached the steps, Raoul saw three horses.

"Oh, sir! then you are going with me?"

"I shall conduct you part of the way," said Athos.

They set out, passing over the Pont Neuf; they pursued their way along the quay then called L'Abreuvoir Pepin, and went along by the walls of the Grand Châtelet. They proceeded to the Rue St. Denis.

After passing through the Porto Saint Denis, Athos looked at Raoul's horse, and said:

"Take care, Raoul! I have already often told you of this; you must not forget it; for it is a great defect in a rider. Seat your horse as he trots already, he trots at the mouth, whilst mine looks as if he had only just left the stable. You hold the bit too tight, and so make his mouth hard; so that you will not be able to make him maneuver quickly. The safety of a cavalier often depends on the prompt obedience of his horse. In a week, remember, you will not longer be performing your maneuvers, as a practice, but on a field of battle."

Then suddenly, in order not to give too much importance to this observation:
"See, Raoul!" he resumed; "what a fine plain for partridge shooting!"

"I have remarked also another thing," said Athos, "which is, that if firing off your pistol, you hold your arm too much stretched out. This tension lessens the accuracy of the shot. So, in twelve times you triple miss the mark."

"Which you, sir, struck twelve times," answered Raoul, smiling.

"Because I bent my arm, and rested my hand on my elbow—so—do you understand what I mean?"

"Yes, sir. I fired since in that manner, and was completely successful."

"What a cold wind!" resumed Athos. "A wintry blast. Approach, if you fire—and you will do so, for you are recommended to a young general who is very fond of powder—remember that in single combat (which often takes place in the cavalry) never to fire the first shot. He who fires the first shot rarely hits his man, for he fires with the apprehension of being disarmed, before an armed foe; then whilst he fire, make your horse rear; that maneuver has saved my life several times."

"I shall do so, if only in gratitude for—""

"Eh!" cried Athos, "are not those postiers whom they have arrested yours? They are. Then another important thing, Raoul; should you be wounded in a battle, and fall from your horse—if you have any strength left, disentangle yourself from the line that your regiment has formed; otherwise, it may be driven back, and you will be trampled to death by the horses. At all events, if you should be wounded, write to me the very instant, or make some one write to me. We are judges of wounds, we old soldiers," Athos added, smiling.

"Thank you, sir," answered the young man, much moved.

They arrived that very moment at the gate of the town, guarded by two sentinels.

"Here comes a young gentleman," said one of them, "who seems as if he were going to join the army."

"How do you find that out?" inquired Athos.

"By his manner, sir, and his age; he's the second to-day."

"Has a young man, such as I am, gone through this morning, then?" asked Raoul.

"Faith, yes, with a haughty presence, a fine equipage; such as the son of a noble house would have."

"He was to be my companion on the journey, sir," cried Raoul. "Ah! he cannot make me forget what I shall have lost!"

Thus talking, they traversed the streets, full of people on account of the fête, and arrived opposite the old cathedral where the first mass was going on.

"Let us alight, Raoul," said Athos. "Olivan, take care of our horses, and give me my sword."

The two gentlemen then went into the church. Athos gave Raoul some of the holy water. A love as tender as that of a lover for his mistress dwells, undoubtedly, in some paternal hearts for a son.

"Come, Raoul," he said. "let us follow this man."

The verger opened the iron grating which guarded the royal tombs,
and stood on the topmost step, whilst Athos and Raoul descended. The depths of the sepulchral descent were dimly lighted by a silver lamp, on the lowest step; and just below this lamp there was laid, wrapped in a large mantle of violet velvet, worked with fleurs-de-lis of gold, a casket of jewels resting upon a treasure of oak. The young man, prepared for this scene by the state of his own feelings which were mournful, and by the majesty of the cathedral, which he had passed through, had descended in a slow and solemn manner, and stood, with his head uncovered, before these mortal relics of the last king, who was not to be placed by the side of his forefathers until his successor should take his place there; and who appeared to abide on that spot, that he might thus address human pride, so sure to be exalted by the glories of a throne: "Dust of the earth! I await thee!"

There was a profound silence.

Then Athos raised his hand, and pointing to the coffin:

"This temporary sepulture is," he said, "that of a man of feeble mind; yet whose reign was full of great events: because, over this king watched the spirit of another man, even as this lamp keeps vigil over this coffin, and illumines it. He whose intellect was thus supreme, was, Raoul, the actual sovereign; the other, nothing but a phantom to whom he gave a soul; and yet, so powerful is majesty amongst us, this man has not even the honor of a tomb even at the feet of him in whose service his life was wore away. Remember, Raoul, this! If Richelieu made the king, by comparison, small—he made royalty great. The palace of the Louvre contains two things—the king, who must die—and royalty, which cloths not. The minister, so feared, so hated by his master, has descended into the tomb, drawing after him the king—whom he would not leave alone on earth, lest he should destroy what he had done. So blind were his contemporaries that they regarded the Cardinal's death as a deliverance; and I, even I, opposed the designs of the great man who held the destinies of France in his hands. Raoul, learn how to distinguish the king from royalty; the king is but a man; royalty is the gift of God. Whenever you hesitate as to whom you ought to serve, abandon the exterior, the material appearance for the invisible principle: for the invisible principle is everything. Raoul, I seem to read your future destiny as through a cloud. It will be happier, I think, than ours has been. Different in your fate to us—you will have a king without a minister; whom you may serve, love, respect. Should the king prove a tyrant, for power begets tyranny, serve, love, respect, that Divine right, that celestial spark which makes this dust still powerful, and holy, so that we—gentlemen, nevertheless, of rank and condition—are as nothing in comparison with that cold corpse extended here."

"I shall adore God, sir," said Raoul. "I shall respect royalty.
I shall serve the king, and I shall, if death be my lot, hope to die for the king, for royalty, and for God. Have I, sir, comprehended your instructions?"

Athos smiled.

"Yours is a noble nature," he said; "here is your sword."

Raoul bent his knee to the ground.

"It was worn by my father, a loyal gentleman. I have worn it in my turn, and it has sometimes not been disgraced when the"
was in my hand, and the sheath at my side. Should your hand still be too weak to use this sword, Raoul, so much the better. You will have more time to learn to draw it only when it ought to be used."

"Sir," replied Raoul, putting the sword to his lips as he received it from the count. "I owe everything to you, and yet this sword is the most precious gift you have made me. I shall wear it, I swear to you, as a grateful man should do."

"Tis well—arise, vicecomte, embrace me,"

Raoul rose, and threw himself with emotion into the count’s arms.

"Adieu," faltered the count, who felt his heart die away within him; "adieu, and think of me.

"O! Oh! for ever and ever!" cried the youth; "oh! I swear to you, sir, should any harm happen to me, your name shall be the last name that I shall utter—the remembrance of you, my last thought.

Athos hastened up stairs to conceal his emotion, and resumed, with hurried steps, the porch where Oliver was waiting with the horses.

"Oliver," said Athos, showing the servant Raoul’s shoulder-belt; "tighten the hilt of this sword which fails a little too much. You will accompany Mounseur le Vicecomte till Grimaud has rejoined you. You know, Raoul, Grimaud is an old and zealous servant, he will follow you."

"Yes, sir," answered Raoul.

"Now to horse, that I may see you depart."

Raoul obeyed.

"Adieu, Raoul," said the count; "adieu, my dear boy.

"Adieu, sir—adieu—my beloved protector."

Athos waved his hand; he dared not trust himself to speak; and Raoul went away, his head uncovered. Athos remained motionless, looking after him until he turned the corner of the street.

Then the count threw the bridle of his horse into the hands of a peasant, mounted again the steps, went into the cathedral, there to kneel down in the darkest corner, and to pray.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ONE OF THE FORTY METHODS OF ESCAPE OF THE DUC DE BEAUFORT.

The game at tennis, which, upon a sign from Grimaud, Monseur de Beauffort had consented to play, began in the afternoon. The Duke was in full force, and beat La Ramée completely.

Four of the guards, who were constantly near the prisoner, assisted in picking up the tennis balls. When the game was over, the duke, laughing at La Ramée for his bad play, offered these men two leagues' d’or to go and drink his health, with their four other comrades.

The guards asked permission of La Ramée, who gave it to them, but not till the evening, however—until then he had business, and the prisoner was not to be left alone.

Six o'clock came, and, although they were not to sit down to table until seven o’clock, dinner was ready, and served up. Upon